

**Western Illinois University**  
**Academic Affairs, Annual Reporting Documents — Deans**  
**Academic Year 2023–2024**

Due to Provost's Office: **May 17, 2024**

## **College of Business & Technology**

### **The Purpose of These Documents**

With this annual report, Deans and Chairpersons/Directors will align past and future work in their programs and in the colleges as a whole with wider planning in the Division of Academic Affairs, as well as with the University's larger Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education, 2017-2027 (HVHE)*. Among other things, in the report Deans will describe what is unique about their College, document progress on enrollment, program development, and faculty development; document and develop recruitment and retention initiatives; and, finally, record and celebrate faculty, staff, and student successes and achievements.

In order to understand the context for these documents, please review the current version of the University's strategic planning document, as well as the supplemental planning documents on recruitment, retention, University distinctiveness, QC planning, and so on. All of these documents can be found at [http://www.wiu.edu/aasp/university\\_planning/](http://www.wiu.edu/aasp/university_planning/). Also, when reading the University's planning documents, please note the following vision, mission, and core values of the institution:

### **WIU Vision**

Western Illinois University will be the leader in educational quality, opportunity, and affordability among regional public universities.

### **WIU Mission**

Western Illinois University empowers students, faculty, and staff to lead dynamic and diverse communities. We provide student-centered undergraduate and graduate programs characterized by innovative teaching, research, and service, grounded in interdisciplinary, regional and global perspectives. We engage our students in educational opportunities guided by a professional and diverse faculty and staff in collaboration with alumni and community partners.

### **WIU Core Values**

#### ***Academic Excellence***

Central to our history and tradition is the commitment to teaching, to the individual learner, and to active involvement in the teaching-learning process. WIU's highly qualified, diverse faculty promotes critical thinking, engaged learning, research, and creativity in a challenging, supportive learning community. Western is committed to an academic environment that encourages lifelong development as learners, scholars, teachers, and mentors.

#### ***Educational Opportunity***

Western values educational opportunity and welcomes those who show promise and a willingness to work toward achieving shared educational goals. WIU is committed to providing accessible, high quality educational programs and financial support for our students.

#### ***Personal Growth***

Because Western values the development of the whole person, WIU is committed to providing opportunities for personal growth in an environment that supports the development of wellness, ethical decision making, and personal responsibility.

#### ***Social Responsibility***

Western is committed to equity, social justice, and diversity, and will maintain the highest standards of integrity in our work with others. WIU serves as a resource for and stimulus to economic, educational, cultural, environmental, and community development in our region and well beyond.

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## **1. What is unique and special about your College?**

At the core of our vision and mission is a commitment to advancing social mobility by championing development-oriented curricula that foster inclusive opportunities for all. Collectively, the college seeks to empower individuals and communities. By supporting value-added educational opportunities, facilitating career preparation, promoting personal development, and nurturing creativity and innovation, we enhance our student's individual potential and create opportunity for broader social mobility.

We recognize that an affordable, accessible high-quality education is the cornerstone for our students to thrive and achieve productive employment and decent work resulting in societal growth. We strive to enable individuals from all walks of life to achieve upward social mobility, thereby creating a more equitable and prosperous future for all. We believe the success of our students directly influences the communities and regions in which they will work and live.

Realizing our vision requires dedicated faculty who are excellent teachers and recognized professionally for their work, collaborative relationships with industry to facilitate student opportunity, and a focus on applied research relevant to our region and communities.

The College of Business and Technology is among an elite group of fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide that are accredited at both the undergraduate and graduate levels by the AACSB International— It is among a select number of business schools worldwide that hold additional specialized AACSB accreditation for their accountancy programs.

The College of Business and Technology also maintains accreditation of its Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, and General Engineering programs through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Globally, ABET accredits over 4,500 programs at 895 colleges and universities in 40 countries. Furthermore, the School of Computer Sciences is recognized as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyberdefense (CAE-CD) by the National Security Agency and the National Cryptologic College.

## **2. Enrollment growth possibilities in your College**

*Include in this description, where possible, market data, audience profiles, national trends, employment data, and other indicators of market potential.*

Any examination of the enrollment is based on the concept of Derived Demand. In short, the demand for majors within the college is highly dependent upon multiple other factors. To varying degrees, a combination of the following significantly contribute to enrollment possibilities:

1. **Industry Demand:** Perceptions of job availability and potential earnings significantly impact enrollment. If industries like technology or finance are booming and offering lucrative career opportunities, more students are likely to enroll in related programs.
2. **Economic Conditions:** Economic factors, such as unemployment rates and GDP growth, can influence enrollment trends. In times of economic downturn, students may be more inclined to pursue degrees in fields perceived as recession-proof, such as technology and business.
3. **Technological Advancements:** Rapid technological advancements drive interest in technology-related fields. Emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain, and cybersecurity can attract students seeking to be at the forefront of innovation.
4. **Perceived Return on Investment (ROI):** Students often consider the potential return on investment when choosing a college major. Fields with high earning potential and clear career paths, such as computer science and finance, may attract more students.
5. **Marketing and Outreach Efforts:** Colleges and universities' marketing efforts play a significant role in attracting students to business and technology programs. Effective outreach campaigns

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highlighting program strengths, faculty expertise, and career outcomes can influence enrollment numbers.

6. **Industry Partnerships and Internship Opportunities:** Collaboration with industry partners and the availability of internship opportunities can enhance the attractiveness of business and technology programs. Students are more likely to enroll in programs that offer hands-on experience and connections to potential employers.
7. **Faculty Expertise and Reputation:** The reputation of faculty members and their expertise in specific areas of business and technology can attract students to particular programs. Strong faculty-student relationships and mentorship opportunities contribute to a positive learning environment and may increase enrollment.
8. **Access to Resources and Facilities:** Access to state-of-the-art facilities, labs, and resources can enhance the appeal of business and technology programs. Students are more likely to enroll in programs that offer opportunities for practical skill development and experimentation.
9. **Demographic Trends:** Demographic shifts, such as an increase in the number of tech-savvy Gen Z students entering college, can impact enrollment in technology-related programs. WIU must adjust offerings and marketing strategies to align with changing demographics. The most significant demographic trend that affects the college is simply fewer traditional age college students due to birth rate anomalies 18 years ago.
10. **Reputation and Rankings:** The reputation and ranking of a college or university's business and technology programs influence student enrollment decisions. Institutions with strong reputations for producing successful graduates and high-quality research may attract more applicants.

Of the list above, we believe that the most important driver of a decision to major in a business and technology related field is job opportunities. Students and their parents want to know that, upon degree completion, a real opportunity for employment exists and that the degree will provide the necessary skill set to succeed. Towards that end, high level job creation expectations are summarized below.

- **Job Growth in Cybersecurity:** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment of information security analysts is projected to grow by 31% from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the average for all occupations.
- **Opportunities in Agriculture:** The agricultural sector is experiencing a shift towards precision agriculture and agri-tech solutions, leading to increased demand for graduates with expertise in data analytics, IoT, and robotics.
- **Business and Accounting:** The BLS projects a 5% growth in employment for business and financial occupations from 2020 to 2030, driven by globalization and regulatory changes.
- **Engineering Opportunities:** Various engineering disciplines, such as software engineering and mechanical engineering, are experiencing steady growth, with job opportunities across sectors ranging from technology to manufacturing.
- **Manufacturing Technologies:** The adoption of advanced manufacturing technologies, including additive manufacturing and automation, is driving job growth in the manufacturing sector.
- **Emerging Technologies:** Opportunities exist in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT), where businesses are seeking talent to innovate and stay competitive.
- **Skills Shortages:** Despite the abundance of opportunities, there is a reported shortage of skilled professionals in areas such as cybersecurity and data science, making graduates with relevant expertise highly sought after.

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- **Industry Partnerships:** Collaboration between academia and industry through initiatives like internships, co-op programs, and industry-sponsored projects provides valuable experience and networking opportunities for graduates.

In summary, college graduates in business and technology fields are entering a dynamic job market characterized by rapid technological advancements, global connectivity, and a growing emphasis on sustainability. Opportunities abound across sectors such as cybersecurity, agriculture, business, engineering, and manufacturing, driven by evolving market trends and the demand for skilled talent.

### **3. Barriers to growth in your College**

Barriers to growth remain static with little change and factors affecting growth of the college are largely part of the larger, external environment external. It should be noted that of the controllable factors, the single most important is competency and coordination in recruiting efforts. The university continues to recruit in geographic manner rather than organize recruiting activities around specialist areas such as STEM, Arts, Professional, etc. . .

- Mass migration of students to out-of-state institutions.
- Inefficient or nonexistent information systems at the institutional level.
- Reduced budgets resulting in support staffing reduction leading to decreased ability to deliver, and most importantly, implement a communications strategy featuring uniqueness of the WIU/CBT programs and experiences.
- Institutional culture reflecting general faculty apathy towards recruiting and retention efforts magnified by the viewpoint that “it is not my job.”
- Lack of residential options for traditional QC students.
- Enrollment decline due to reduced number of traditional students.
- Competitive pressure from other in-state institutions.
- General public and industry viewpoint that a 4 year comprehensive degree is “optional” in today’s workforce.

Assessing operational risk factors is crucial to the formulation of strategy as it provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and vulnerabilities the WIU College of Business and Technology may face in its day-to-day operations. Operational risks encompass a wide range of potential disruptions, including technological failures, funding issues, regulatory changes, and broader environmental factors that may only be partially mitigated. By systematically evaluating these factors, the College of Business and Technology can identify potential threats that may impede the execution of its strategic objectives. It is hoped that this proactive approach allows for the development of contingency plans, risk mitigation strategies, and a more resilient operational framework. Effectively addressing operational risks not only safeguards the organization against unforeseen challenges but also enhances its ability to adapt and innovate in a dynamic educational environment, thereby contributing to the development and execution of a more robust and successful long-term strategy.

Multiple constituencies were asked to provide input into operational risk factors. Individual feedback items were submitted to a thematic analysis for the purpose of summarizing broad risk categories to be considered when formulating broader strategies. Individual risk items, likelihood of occurrence, and impact on operations, and associated mitigating responses are mapped as part of comprehensive contingency guideline.

- **Theme 1: Automation and Changing Business Landscape** - The risk of many business fields becoming automated and the need to prepare students for AI in business highlight a theme of adapting to the evolving job market. Concerns about jobs connecting to degree programs being eliminated by AI and lower starting salaries due to job market changes underscore the importance of aligning education with industry needs.
- **Theme 2: Disruptions in Higher Education** - Challenges to the value of higher education, increasing for-profit educators, and the risk of students no longer wanting to attend on-campus

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- programs constitute a theme related to the evolving landscape of education. This includes the competition for international students, changes in visa policies, and the potential impact of online education becoming more convenient.
- **Theme 3: Financial and Enrollment Stability** - Financial stability, budget constraints, and risks related to enrollment and retention form a theme centered on the economic aspects of educational institutions. Concerns about state funding, bankruptcy, and the potential shift towards more online and asynchronous learning contribute to this theme.
  - **Theme 4: Recruitment and Industry Engagement** - Issues surrounding timely faculty recruitment, strong student recruitment strategies, and the importance of listening to industry needs form a theme emphasizing the significance of effective recruitment and industry collaboration. This includes concerns about the urban-rural divide, employer preferences for specific job training programs, and the risk of not addressing sustainability skills.
  - **Theme 5: Technological and Educational Changes** - The risks associated with online programs not fostering strong student-school connections, the potential impact of AI on job markets, and the integration of AI in learning underscore a theme focused on technological and educational transformations. This includes concerns about standards-based grading, instructional modes, and the impact of big-name schools on education delivery.
  - **Theme 6: External Factors and Globalization** - External factors such as another pandemic, natural disasters, and the urban-rural divide contribute to a theme highlighting the vulnerability of educational institutions to unforeseen events. The risk of losing Amtrak service, the potential consolidation of public universities, and the impact of free tuition for community college programs underscore the need for adaptability in the face of external changes.
  - **Theme 7: Sustainability and Industry Trends** - The theme of addressing sustainability skills, the demand for such skills in the business sector, and the risk of falling behind in addressing growing demands on a global scale highlight the importance of aligning educational offerings with current industry trends. This includes concerns about the explosion of business demand for sustainability skills and the potential disadvantage for graduates employed by smaller companies.

As a final significant individual threat, the CBT would like to stress the importance of Leadership Continuity and the open lines of communication throughout all parts of the institution. WIU biggest enemy in terms of stability and growth is itself. The complete lack of leadership continuity leads to a continuous stream of changing priorities without depth of focus.

#### **4. Enrollment**

*Institutional Research will create a "College Profile" for Deans and Chairpersons/Directors. Please note that most information can be found in the Fact Book. Include the following:*

- a. *5 years of headcount enrollment by new freshmen, new transfer, new graduate, and continuing undergraduate and graduate students in your College*
- b. *5 years of headcount enrollment by race/ethnicity, gender, and country of origin*
- c. *5 years total credit hour production by Department/School*
- d. *Identify faculty-student ratio by College and Department/School, with explanation of disciplinary norms*

Data Unavailable. Please contact Office of Institutional Research

#### **5. Degrees conferred**

*Include the following:*

- a. *Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year*
- b. *Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year per department and/or program*
- c. *Number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year per race/ethnicity, gender, country of origin*

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Data Unavailable. Please contact Office of Institutional Research.

## **6. Retention of students**

*List retention initiatives for the following:*

- a. *Current students*
- b. *Transfer students*

- **WIU College of Business and Technology Partners with Knack Peer Tutoring to Scale Support to Business and Technology Students** - The Western Illinois University College of Business and Technology (CBT) is eager to announce the upcoming partnership with Knack Tutoring. Beginning Fall 2023, enrolled CBT students will have access to free on-demand tutoring services, fostering an environment of growth and exceptional achievement. The CBT believes that the Knack peer tutoring platform will empower students, foster personal growth and support students' academic success in business and technology fields. By supporting student retention, peer tutoring will help the WIU College of Business and Technology achieve its goal of preparing the next generation of business and technology innovators to thrive in an evolving, interconnected global economic environment.
- **Career Readiness for Engineering Students** - Track I and startup of Track II of a S-STEM project to recruit and retain 20 (two cohorts of eight starting in Year 1 Year 2, respectively) domestic, low-income, and academically talented students into its target baccalaureate of science majors of engineering and engineering technology. The program: improving Career Readiness for Engineering Students Through a mentored Living-Learning-Community (iCREST), started in the Summer of 2023 and it is sponsored through an NSF grant. Track I for \$750,000.00; Track II for up to \$2,000,000.00.

### **School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Decision Sciences**

- Retention: Incentivized current students to connect with us via social media to increase our online presence to others in their social networks.
- Retention: Continued to offer in-person and virtual tutoring to all AFED undergrads enrolled in principles and business core courses (ACCT 201, 202, 307, FIN 301, 311, 331, ECON 100, 231, 232, and DS 303).

### **School of Agriculture**

- Retention: School of Agriculture LLC (Had a dinner guest on a three-week interval throughout the academic year)
- Retention: Establish a mentor program in our Agri 120 course (freshmen orientation course). Each freshmen was paired with an agriculture alum.
- Retention: Hosted a Back-to-School event in September and January (Ag Council)
- Retention: Attended National Arborist Trade Show in St. Louis (Forestry Club)

### **School of Management & Marketing**

- WIU SCM program's SCM Day welcomed 24 professionals including representatives from our largest industry partners (ADM, John Deere, CAT Logistics, JB Hunt, Dot Foods, Alpine Supply Chain Professionals, and Iowa 80 group) for advisory board meeting and career/internship fair.
- WIU SCM students and faculty attended the Promat 2023 conference in Chicago, IL in March 2024. Over 1000 companies display products to over 50,000 attendees, providing students with opportunities to interact with industry experts.
- The WIU Supply Chain Management Student Association (SCMSA) and the Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) Quad Cities chapter will co-host the "Night of Networking" event at WIU-QC in Moline, IL. The event, which includes networking, dinner, and a keynote presentation, gives students an opportunity to meet and interact with supply

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chain professionals from the region, many of which are WIU alumni.

- WIU SCM students and faculty will tour John Deere's Harvester Works manufacturing facility in East Moline, IL. Facility tours give students first hand exposure to supply chain practices employed by successful global corporations, such as John Deere. After the tour of the manufacturing plant, students will hear from WIU alumni currently working in supply chain roles for the Fortune 100 company headquartered in Moline, IL. Deere employs more than 500 WIU Alumni globally according to LinkedIn
- Women in Business continues to organize a mentorship program for our members. It is voluntary, and members are paired with a professional woman who works in a similar career path. We hope to grow this program over the next few years. In addition, we started giving scholarships to members based on involvement, professionalism, and financial need.
- School of Management and Marketing co-hosted a welcome back for business students with the School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Decision Sciences, Sept. 2023 an end of the year celebration on April 2024.
- Business Living and Learning Community engagements 2-3 per semester with faculty
- MM Faculty coordinated with AFED faculty to develop content for a new BAT 190 course (0 s.h.) that is focused on retention and fundamental skills needs for new business majors

## **7. Recruitment of students**

*List recruitment initiatives for the following:*

- a. *First-year students*
- b. *Graduate students*

- **WIU MBA Partners with IMEG Corp**- WIU's online MBA program will serve as one of three national options for employees of the IMEG Corp interested in completing graduate business education with employer tuition assistance. The IMEG Corp headquartered in Rock Island, IL is a leading engineering design firm with over 2,200 employees working across 75 locations within the US and abroad. The WIU MBA program has been home for many regional employees seeking a graduate credential, but this new partnership places WIU in a position enhance employee education delivered to IMEG employees.
- **Future Business Leaders of America Hosted on Campus** - WIU hosted approximately 250 students from 10 area high schools for the annual Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) regional conference. The day long event featured several meetings for the students, guest speakers, and featured an interactive "Meet the Majors" event in which the students interacted with over a dozen WIU faculty and students to learn more about the different majors in Business and Cybersecurity.
- **Engineering Week Engages the Next Generation** – On February 21<sup>st</sup>, 85 middle school students and several STEM teachers participated in a coding workshop in Riverfront Hall in Moline. They were divided into four groups to do a variety of activities, including hands-on coding activities and campus/lab tours (Electrical Engineering Lab, Maker Space, Machine Shop, WQPT, ESports Room, RF Atrium, and QCC Atrium). The event was coordinated and conducted by Engineering students, including the ACE officers. Participating teachers expressed their gratitude and commitment to bring more students to events and activities of this kind.
- **Dual Credit Opportunity: MGT 125/CEO cohorts:** -The Western Illinois University College of Business and Technology is partnering with the McDonough County Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program in a variety of ways. The CEO program is a year-long course for high school students that teaches them entrepreneurial concepts, partners them with area businesses and provides an opportunity to start their own businesses. Many WIU faculty and staff members serve as presenters, mentors and board members for the CEO program. This fall we began offering a dual enrollment credit course

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(MGT 125) for students in the McDonough County CEO program. The dual credit opportunity was expanded in the spring to include students from Brown-Schulyer County and Central County. We intend to add another cohort next year, and then begin work on scaling this endeavor to more counties within Illinois and beyond.

- **CEO Project/Midland Institute Partners with CBT** - The College of Business & Technology welcomed four regional high-school CEO programs to Stipes Hall for an inaugural CEO Summit on Friday, November 10. The event featured students from the CEO programs in McDonough County, Central Illinois, Brown-Schulyer, and Knox County. These entrepreneurial-minded students received advice from distinguished alum and founder of WestWave Capital LLC, Mr. Warren "Bunny" Weiss, and learned about branding from Ms. Cathy Onion and Mr. Tim Rice. The summit provided the students an opportunity to build their network, hone their business skills, and explore the broader WIU campus.
- **GenCyber Summer Camp Planning Begins** - The School of Computer Sciences has entered into a coalition with University of North Texas (lead), University of Nebraska - Omaha, and San Jacinto College in an effort to bring a GenCyber Summer Camp to WIU in 2025. Continued participation in the DoD Scholarship program will ultimately allow WIU to participate as a lead institution.
- **Supply Chain Management Program Hosts Second Annual ConNEXT Conference** - Western Illinois University and Black Hawk Region Pathways co-hosted the Supply Chain Management ConNEXT conference on the WIU Quad Cities campus in Moline. The event was designed to allow regional high school students to explore high-paying, in-demand careers in supply chain management and logistics. Supply Chain Management includes the business functions that plan, source, make and deliver. Attendees learned about different careers in sourcing and procurement, manufacturing and operations, distribution and warehousing, and transportation.
- **AFED Hosts "Finance Forward"** - Exploring Career Opportunities and Financial Literacy Essentials- Preston Gray, Edward Jones Financial Advisor, and WIU alum, presented two sessions to WIU students related to understanding personal financial health and outlining critical steps necessary to increasing short term and long-term wealth. The day concluded with a panel of finance professionals sharing insights about the diverse array of professional opportunities in finance.
- **CBT Maintains Atlantis Partnership** - Atlantis is a Transatlantic Degree Program that provides students an opportunity to live and study in France, Sweden, and the U.S. and obtain 3 degrees in 4 years. Students save an entire year of educational expenses. WIU applies financial aid toward tuition, fees and other costs during their year overseas. Scholarships are also available through the Office of Study Abroad and Outreach. Mr. Donna Wiencek of the School of Management and Marketing serves a program coordinator for Western Illinois University.
- **Future Business Leaders of America** - Western Regional Conference -For over 25 years, the College of Business and Technology has hosted the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) regional conference at the WIU Macomb campus. This January, we welcomed 250 high school students from 10 schools within the Western Illinois region. WIU professor, Dr. Honey Zimmerman led an interactive workshop titled "The Art of Networking". Immediately following the workshop, the FBLA students were able to put their newly-learned skills to the test by engaging in networking social with WIU faculty, students, and Admissions staff. Although WIU does officially sponsor the conference, we use this experience to welcome students to campus and promote WIU as a top choice for business education for future business leaders

**School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Decision Sciences**

- Recruitment: Discover Western Table Fairs and Major Sessions with follow-up contacts after each meeting
- Recruitment: Met with visiting prospective students and included existing students in the



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- meetings
- Recruitment: Hosted a Fall “Open House” events that provided information about each undergraduate major in an interactive event and then followed up with all students that visited.
  - Recruitment: Emails to all prospective undergraduate and graduate students about department events, scholarships, and assistantship opportunities.
  - Recruitment: Emailed all senior undergraduate majors about bridge and graduate opportunities within the department
  - Retention: Incentivized current students to connect with us via social media to increase our online presence to others in their social networks.
  - Recruitment: Finance faculty member presented financial literacy information to a school conference in Rushville
  - Recruitment: Coordinated with M&M regarding recruitment at NBEA/IBEA/IACTE teachers' conferences
  - Recruitment: Participated in WIUs semesterly Grad fair to promote department's graduate programs
  - Recruitment: Hosted the annual Accounting challenge (on the Macomb campus) that specifically recruits area high school students and offers scholarships to competition winners.
  - Recruitment: Expanded the ACCT/FIN/ECON/DS 197 curriculum to specifically address critical issues in retention Topics included academic integrity, advising, scholarships/financial aid, student group engagement, degree information, career options, and 1:1 meetings with instructor/department chair.
  - Recruitment: Hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Accounting Careers Exploration Event (ACE) in the QC with approximately 20 community college students in attendance along with current WIU students.

**School of Agriculture**

- Recruitment: Department specific Open House (spring & fall semesters) for prospective students (Ag Vocators)
- Retention: School of Agriculture LLC (Had a dinner guest on a three-week interval throughout the academic year)
- Recruitment: Hosted Section 11 FFA Agronomy contest (Agronomy Club)
- Recruitment: Hosted a Beef, Swine, and Sheep show for junior exhibitors (Hoof-n-Horn)
- Recruitment: Hosted Ag Mechanics invitational FFA contest (Ag Mech Club/CFFA)
- Recruitment: Department hosted/sponsored “Ground Zero” conference, which is an Illinois FFA Association leadership conference
- Recruitment: Had a booth at Martin Tractor “Proving Grounds” event
- Recruitment: Hosted FFA/4H/JUCO livestock judging invitational contest (Hoof-n-Horn)
- Recruitment: Attended the National FFA Convention (Ag Vocators)
- Recruitment: Attended the Illinois FFA Convention (Ag Vocators)
- Recruitment: Attended the Iowa FFA Convention (Ag Vocators)
- Recruitment: Attended the Missouri FFA Convention (Ag Vocators)
- Recruitment: Numerous high school and community college visits (Ag Vocators)
- Recruitment: Held the Ag Expo in Western Hall (Ag Mech Club)

**8. Recruitment and retention of faculty and staff**

*Describe the following:*

- a. Initiatives to retain faculty and staff*

Retention of Faculty and Staff remain problematic within the College of Business and Technology.

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The issues that were raised in previous reports remain. Disciplines within the college suffer from significant salary inversion, perceived “fatigue,” and a desire to work fully remote. The salary inversion issue creates an unstable staffing environment in which faculty feel they are underappreciated. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that they have not received any measurable raises and have seen real incomes decline (including summer compensation) in the face of increased expenses. However, it should also be noted that many faculty have chosen to live well beyond the geographic area at which the campus is delivered, thus increasing commute expenses based on their choices. This fact is, however, ignored in their general expression of discontent. Their choice of living location further contributes to the desire to work remote and thus reduce commute expenses. Unfortunately, the college has seen a decline in engagement activities such as student organization advisors due to 1) working remote and 2) no services being expected from Associate Faculty. The Unit A faculty simply are not engaging students in a meaningful way. The final contributing factor that makes retention and issue is simply the age of faculty. The number of expected retirements in the next five years is significant.

Thus, retention of qualified faculty is a significant and ongoing concern that cannot be fixed at the college level. It is a systemic issue that will need addressed by broader administrative policies. Yet, the college has attempted several programs to incentivize retention of high performing faculty.

- **“Grown your Own Program”** – The college has implemented and maintained a program in which Associate Faculty (Unit B) who desire to acquire additional, discipline relevant qualifications are incentivized to complete advanced degrees. To date, 3 Associate Faculty have successfully completed DBA (doctorate of business administration) degree credentials and been converted to tenure track Unit A faculty. Within the business disciplines, this is critical as it contributes to faculty qualification credentials that support AACSB accreditation efforts. These faculty include:
  - Dr. Steve Gray (Finance)
  - Dr. Sarah Shike (Management)
  - Dr. Honey Zimmerman (Supply Chain Management)
  - Ms. Lisa Ludlum (Accounting- ABD)

Each faculty was incentivized with a 1 course per semester load reduction while completing coursework and at their discretion, a 1 semester educational leave to complete dissertation related research. A fourth faculty member in Accounting is progressing though the doctoral process and is at the dissertation proposal defense state.

- **Targeted Research Impact Program (TRIP)** - A two tier system of Aspirational Impact Journals and Basic Impact Journals has been implemented . Initial inclusion of a scholarly publication in either category was, by necessity, discipline based with input from Director/Chairs to ensure strategic alignment with department goals. Periodic review of the metrics and discipline categories will be performed but the Dean of the College of Business and Technology retains final approval over outlet acceptability to ensure alignment with college level goals in subsequent years. It should be noted that while other outlets may be deemed acceptable for retention/promotion purposes, this goal of this incentive program is on increasing scholarly output in high impact publication outlets. Faculty in all college, regardless of contract type are eligible for participation. The goal is to encourage/reward increased levels of quality for in-discipline publishing activity.

**Publication in Aspirational Impact Journals** - \$1,200 stipend per manuscript. In the event of multiple WIU based authors, the stipend is attached to the manuscript and thus, split equally among WIU based authors. Cover page, table of contents, and full article must be submitted in order to initiate stipend payment. Stipends will not be released until the manuscript is published.

Operationalization of Aspirational Impact Journals: Publications achieving a SNIP score

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above 0.85 or a CITESCORE above 0.9 in relevant categories identified by Directors/Chairs based on the SCOPUS database (See Appendix A).

**Publication in Basic Impact Journals** - \$600 stipend per manuscript. In the event of multiple WIU based authors, the stipend is attached to the manuscript and thus, split equally among WIU based authors. Cover page, table of contents, and full article must be submitted in order to initiate stipend payment. Stipends will not be released until the manuscript is published.

Operationalization of Basic Impact Journals: Publications achieving a SNIP score above 0.4 or a CITESCORE above 0.5 in relevant categories identified by Directors/Chairs based on the SCOPUS database.

The first year of the program has resulted that, on average, a greater percentage of the college's peer reviewed journal articles were indexed by SCOPUS (41.7% of last year's portfolio as compared to 53.6% of this year's). The average CITEScore and SNIP (of those indexed by SCOPUS) also increased from 2.3 and 1.0 to 4.2 and 1.3 respectively.

b. Plans to hire faculty and staff

- Based on resignations, retirements, and expansion of graduate related programs, the following positions were requested and searches initiated within the college.
  - Director of Engineering and Technology – An internal search has been initiated after the failure of a national search for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time.
  - 1 tenure track faculty in Agriculture (resignation in crop sciences area).
  - 1 tenure track faculty in Computer Sciences (1 retirement, 1 open position remaining).
  - 1 Supplemental Administrative contract for Institute for Cyber Security Education (in-process). While the search was unsuccessful through FY 23. Modification of the parameters of the position have been discussed in an attempt to utilize the existing faculty talent pool.
  - 1 Graduate Student Advisor
- **Weed Suppression Research Collaboration** - The Organic Research Program will be hosting a visiting professor from Italy this spring to study microorganisms impact on weed suppression at the Allison Organic Research Farm. Dr. Mauro Senatore will be with us for about two months this spring.

## 9. Courses

*Include the following:*

a. *Total number of general education courses*

Natural Sciences and Mathematics

- Computer Science: CS 114, 214

Social Sciences - Economics:

- ECON 100, 231, 232

Multicultural Studies

- Business and Technology: BAT 300
- Economics: ECON 350, 351
- Information Systems: IS 325
- International Agriculture: INAG 310

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Human Well-Being

- Finance: FIN 101

- b. Total number of FYE courses
- c. Total number of major courses
- d. Total number of independent study, internship, and other courses
- e. Total number of graduate courses
- f. Number of courses offered through Macomb campus
- g. Number of courses offered through QC campus
- h. Number of courses offered through Online campus

Click or tap here to enter text.

### 10. Number of new and revised academic programs

*Include the following:*

- a. New major options (include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program)
- b. New minors (include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program)
- c. New certificates, emphases, or other (include audience and aspect of mission served)

The College of Business and Technology addressed curricular efficiency and synergies this year putting forth 18 requests for consideration. The following table summarizes the nature of those initiatives:

**CBT Curricular Changes**

<b>Requests</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
Prerequisite	11	4	NA	4
Course Title and Description	2	1	NA	1
Course Description	15	1	NA	3
Course Title, Description, and Prerequisite	2	1	NA	0
Change in Credit Hours	0	1	NA	0
Change in Title, credit hours, and course description	0	1	NA	0
Cross-listing	1	1	NA	1
New Major	0	0	NA	0
New Minor	0	1	NA	0
Change in Major	5	2	NA	2
Change in Emphasis	0	1	NA	1
Change in Option	0	0	NA	3
New Courses	0	0	NA	1
Minor change forms	3	7	NA	2
<b>Total requests</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>18</b>

### 11. Eliminated academic programs

*List eliminated majors, minors, other*

- BB in Management-QC Availability
- BB in Data Analytics – QC Availability
- MS in Applied Statistics & Decision Analytics – QC Availability
- PBC in Data Analytics. – QC Availability

### 12. Faculty activities

*Include the following:*

- a. Achievements

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- b. *Professional development*
- c. *Outreach and significant service*
- d. *Research (books, articles, conference presentations, other)*

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the CBT Faculty actively engaged in scholarly activities producing a total of 69 peer-reviewed publications, 53 presentations, 1 published book, and 1 book chapter.

As another measure of research productivity, the College of Business and Technology utilizes a Targeted Research Impact Program (TRIP) award to provide college support for approved conference presentations and professional development activities for Unit B. During the 2023-2024 academic year, nine conference registrations were awarded subsidizing the cost of travel associated with active engagement in scholarly presentations and associated activities.

Further, the TRIP program strives to promote a culture of research productivity that elevates the quality of our portfolio of scholarly activities across the college by providing a monetary incentive for publishing in targeted scholarly journal outlets. Using a two-tiered system of Basic Impact Journals and Aspirational Journals defined through various quality metrics, faculty receive a monetary reward for in discipline publications that meet or exceed the criteria. During the 2023-2024 academic year, one Basic Impact Award and eight Aspirational Impact awards were earned by faculty. Overall, we see a continued increase in the quality of our portfolio of publications since the implementation of the TRIP program.

### **13. Grant activities and external funding**

- **Google Cybersecurity Clinic Grant Submitted for Consideration** - Drs. Tahir Khan and George Mangalaraj have submitted a proposal for a \$1M Google Cybersecurity Clinic. If funded, the Clinic will provide outreach and services to regional small businesses, local government, and the agriculture sector. The Clinic would partner with other regional entities to help identify and address cybersecurity challenges in underserved rural areas.
- **Renewable Energy Grant Application In-process** - A concept paper has been successfully submitted outlining grant activities proposed for The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) Solar Energy Evolution and Diffusion Studies 4 (SEEDS 4) funding opportunity. The program will award up to \$7 million for social science research that generates actionable insights that can improve large-scale solar (LSS) siting processes and outcomes for host communities.
- **Manure Grant Awarded** - Professor Winthrop Phippen of the School of Agriculture was awarded a five-year grant titled "Manure to Bio Char Nutrient Management on-farm trials". Dr. Phippen will be working with Quality Flow Inc for this five-year \$900,000+ grant to study the effects of Bio-Char in managing nutrient management in production agriculture practices. It will start in May of 2024 and continue until April of 2029.
- **SCM National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant Collaboration** -Dr. Zimmerman, School of Management and Marketing, and Dr. Christopher Merrett, Director, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, in conjunction with the Illinois Innovation Network, Governors State University, Southern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, and Eastern Illinois received a \$1,000,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant titled "NSF Engines: Type-1: Smart Logistics Engine". The Smart Logistics Engine (SLE) will bring together innovators across public and private sectors to advance use-inspired, translative research centered around core advances in transportation logistics that spurs the growth of industries in which all workers and their communities meaningfully participate. The WIU portion of the grant will engage the Illinois Waterway Port Statistical Area leveraging the expertise of our SCM faculty member, Dr. Zimmerman.
- **Ag Classroom Upgrades Funded** -Illinois Farm Bureau has provided \$10,000 to upgrade the technology in the Livestock Center classroom. This upgrade will include a large touch-

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screen with computer, classroom podium, and other instructional technologies to enhance this off-campus classroom. This classroom is utilized for course labs, hosting meetings, and a hub for judging competitions.

- **Alumni Support Agriculture Initiatives** - Mike Thurow, CEO of Spectrum Technologies, donated \$32,000 worth of technology to the School of Agriculture to enhance the research capabilities of our faculty. Items included in this donation include a new weather station, soil moisture probes, solar power modules, digital refractometer, and a light meter. These donated items will not only enhance our research programs, but also aid in writing and securing external grants.
- **Ag Scholarships Endowed** - Three new endowed scholarships will reside in the School of Agriculture and will be offered for the first-time in the fall 2023 semester. The first scholarship is the Wayne Whipps endowed scholarship, the second is the Henry Taylor and Lorraine Steinberg endowed scholarship, and third is the Dave Johnston endowed scholarship. We appreciate the student financial support dedicated by their donors.
- **Broad Band Ready Grant Updates** - The School Computer Sciences is finishing up its obligations with the School of AFED and the Institute for Rural Affairs for the Broadband READY grant. Plans include purchasing additional Chromebooks with remaining funds and issuing them to partner libraries. We eagerly anticipate a formal decision on new funding that will allow us to extend the Chromebook lending program and the educational outreach events through a second year.
- **School of Agriculture secures \$136,000 Grant** - Dr. Win Phippen was able to secure a \$136,000 grant from Illinois State University to conduct Pennycress field trials for ergonomic traits in the summer of 2024. The project title is: "Interrogating Pennycress natural and induced variation to improve abiotic stress tolerance and oilseed crop resilience."
- **Livestock Center Facility Improvement** - The School of Agriculture received a \$10,000 Compeer Community Building Grant to support an ongoing facility improvement project at the Livestock Center at the University Farm. This facility is one of the School of Agriculture's marquee facilities for recruitment and outreach events and renovations will positively impact the perceptions of visiting students. Additional funding from the Illinois Farm Bureau previously supported the acquisition of updated classroom technology that will greatly enhance instructional effectiveness.
- **Agriculture Facility Upgrade** - A \$25,000 renovation project is in progress at the Livestock Center on the University Farm. A Compeer grant and Ag Legacy funds will be utilized to lay new flooring in the main hallway, classroom, and bathroom facilities in the Livestock Center. These three spaces will also receive new baseboards along with the new flooring. New bathroom fixtures will also be installed with this renovation project.
- **DOE Solar Technologies Grant Engagement** - Application for a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO) Solar Energy Evolution and Diffusion Studies 4 (SEEDS 4) funding opportunity. The program will award up to \$7 million for social science research that generates actionable insights that can improve large-scale solar (LSS) siting processes and outcomes for host communities.
- **Ad Legacy Sale Results in Success** - The Ag Legacy Sale was conducted on April 16th, 2024. This year's sale had 247 different livestock related items up for auction. The one-day, on-line sale generated over \$150,000 to support the travel expenses associated with the Livestock Judging Team as well as support the Animal Science curriculum and activities. This year's sale broke last year's record, which was \$132,000. Big thanks to Dr. Mark Hoge and the Livestock Merchandising students for their hard work on this event.
- **Illinois Soybean Endowment Supports** - Research - Several research projects will be conducted this summer, which were supported by the Illinois Soybean Association Endowment, by several of the School of Agriculture faculty and staff. They are: "Reading soybean sign-language with a multi-spectral sensor" (Gruver & Venturi), "Effect of foliar application of malic acid on seed and oil yield in soybean" (Phippen & Wesley), "Soybean

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maturity group selection and golden pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*) establishment after soybean" (Phippen & Wesley).

- **IL Nutrient Research and Education Council (NREC) Research Continues** - In June 2023, Dr. Joel Gruver assumed the role of PI for a long-term multidisciplinary project titled "Integrating livestock grazing into the western Illinois corn-soybean cropping system to enhance farm profitability and reduce nutrient loss". The project, a collaboration between 3 WIU School of Agriculture faculty (Dr. Keela Trennepohl - Animal Science, Dr. Graciela Andrango - Agricultural Economics and Dr. Joel Gruver - Soil Science) and 1 WIU Environmental Studies faculty (Dr. Roger Viadero - Hydrology) has received renewed funding from the IL Nutrient Research and Education Council (NREC) each year since 2020. Dr. Gruver presented results of the project at the NREC conference in Feb 2024.

#### **14. Value of programming**

*Explain how departments, programs, and other aspects of your College add value to the educational experiences of Western's students.*

At the core of our vision and mission is a commitment to advancing social mobility by championing development-oriented curricula that foster inclusive opportunities for all. Collectively, the college seeks to empower individuals and communities. By supporting value-added educational opportunities, facilitating career preparation, promoting personal development, and nurturing creativity and innovation, we enhance our student's individual potential and create opportunity for broader social mobility.

We recognize that an affordable, accessible high-quality education is the cornerstone for our students to thrive and achieve productive employment and decent work resulting in societal growth. We strive to enable individuals from all walks of life to achieve upward social mobility, thereby creating a more equitable and prosperous future for all. We believe the success of our students directly influences the communities and regions in which they will work and live.

Realizing our vision requires dedicated faculty who are excellent teachers and recognized professionally for their work, collaborative relationships with industry to facilitate student opportunity, and a focus on applied research relevant to our region and communities.

#### **15. Student success**

*List the following:*

- a. *Student clubs and organizations in the College*
- b. *Results of any student surveys in your College, including surveys on student success, program development, student satisfaction, etc.*
- c. *All new initiatives in the College regarding student success*
- d. *All initiatives to support underrepresented student populations in your College*

- **Beta Alpha Psi Remains Active** - The WIU Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi remains active and engaged with accounting professionals. All of the events have had significant turn-outs, with nearly 30 students engaged in each session. The chapter has hosted three significant events including a sit-down with leaders from the Illinois CPA Society, an exciting presentation with WIU Foundation Board and Executive Committee member, Rhonda Haffner, and most recently a presentation on day-to-day experiences in corporate accounting with John Deere accountants and WIU alums, Patricia Brunner and Tabetha Dungan. The Beta Alpha Psi student leaders will kick off their spring break by traveling to Indianapolis for the mid-year national convention, March 8th and 9th.

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- **Cybersecurity Competition Announced** - The School of Computer Sciences, Cybersecurity faculty, and the Cybersecurity Enthusiasts Club will host a cybersecurity competition on April 27. The competition coincides with Discover Western, will be promoted to high schools and two year colleges, and will introduce potential freshman and transfer students to our program.
- **National Retail Federation Engaged** - Three undergraduate students represented WIU's School of Management and Marketing 2024 National Retail Federation-Student Program in January. Leah Ahlers-WIU Student Ambassador 2024 (Marketing), Madison Butts-Ray Greenly Scholar (Supply Chain Management), and Kaitlyn Moon-Rising Star Recipient (Management) attended the 2-Day program in New York City along with over 1300 college students. The students explored unique opportunities in retail and expanded their knowledge of the dynamic world of the retail industry. They heard from retail executives from various areas including Marketing, Management, Supply Chain, Entrepreneurship, Technology, and Human Resources. Career paths were also explored at the career fair featuring almost 30 retail companies. All three of the students attended the NRF-Student Program on Scholarships provided by the National Retail Federation.
- **Beta Alpha Psi Remains Active** - The WIU Chapter of Beta Alpha Psi remains active and engaged with accounting professionals. All of the events have had significant turn-outs, with nearly 30 students engaged in each session. The chapter has hosted three significant events including a sit-down with leaders from the Illinois CPA Society, an exciting presentation with WIU Foundation Board and Executive Committee member, Rhonda Haffner, and most recently a presentation on day-to-day experiences in corporate accounting with John Deere accountants and WIU alums, Patricia Brunner and Tabetha Dungan. The Beta Alpha Psi student leaders will kick off their spring break by traveling to Indianapolis for the mid-year national convention, March 8th and 9th.
- **Illinois Teacher of the Year Cohort Announced** - Two WIU Agricultural Education Alums have been recognized by ISBE for "Illinois Teacher of the Year Cohort" for their respective regions. Mallory Tolley '09 (Agriculture teacher at Knoxville HS) is the West Central Region finalist and Stacey Rickard '09 (Agriculture teacher at Salt Fork HS) is the East Central Region finalist. We are excited not only to have one alumnus selected, but two is even better.
- **Cybersecurity Competition Announced** - The School of Computer Sciences, Cybersecurity faculty, and the Cybersecurity Enthusiasts Club will host a cybersecurity competition on April 27. The competition coincides with Discover Western, will be promoted to high schools and two year colleges, and will introduce potential freshman and transfer students to our program.
- **Bull Test Sale Scheduled** - The 52nd Bull Test Sale will be held on March 8th at 6:00 pm at the Livestock Center, where the School of Agriculture will have four university bulls that were in the test up for sale that evening. We are super excited to showcase the seedstock that was raised at the university to livestock producers in attendance that night.
- **Engineering Continues Accreditation Efforts** - Ongoing efforts towards reaccreditation of the four Engineering degrees continues. Timely responses to all ABET requests have been submitted and final submission of documentation will be required in June. Additional accreditation activities for the WIU Construction and Facilities Management program are being explored via the American Council on Construction Education and the accreditation process will initiate in the Fall of 2024.
- **Scrambled Eggs Promote Engineering** - The WIU Women in Engineering (WIE) organized an Egg Drop challenge aimed at inspiring students from local high schools. The students competed at their respective schools first, and winning teams participated during Engineering Week at WIU. Each group was tasked with designing an optimal egg protection case using engineering techniques and scientific knowledge. In addition to the competition, WIE members led campus tours, showcasing facilities.



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- **SHRM Aligned Curriculum** - The Human Resource Management (HRM) program at WIU recently renewed its curriculum alignment with the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM). This recognition designates WIU as an official site to offer HR professionals continuing education credits (CPEs) for participation in HRM classes and activities. This announcement is further cause for celebration as the program recently celebrated its 57-year history on the Macomb campus and 10-year history on the QC campus on Thursday, November 2. The celebration featured a reception with various WIU dignitaries, a panel presentation on managing and implementing internship programs, and networking with over 3 dozen human resource professionals.
- **Economics Day 2023** was held on Tuesday, October 17, and featured 5 alumni in presentations on job opportunities in the field of economics and their overall professional experiences. The event culminated in a broader School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, & Decision Sciences open house outside Stipes Hall. Over 220 students attended the events and networked with our alumni.
- **WIU Accounting Student Posts a Win at "Project Run with It"** - Accounting major, Sara McGinnis, was one of only a handful of Beta Alpha Psi students chosen nationally to participate in the prestigious "Project Run with It" at this summer's national convention. 'Project Run with It' is an elite case competition in which Beta Alpha Psi students work in teams to develop solutions for a non-profit organization. Beta Alpha Psi is the premier honors organization for students in Accounting, Finance, and Business Analytics. The Macomb chapter is one of the most prestigious in the country and currently holds a 34-year streak for recognition as a superior chapter. Ms. McGinnis' Team won first place in the competition held on
- **Beta Alpha Psi Continues as a Superior Chapter** - WIU's chapter of Beta Alpha Psi, the International Honor Society for Financial Information Students, has again been recognized as a Superior Chapter at this year's annual convention. The chapter holds one of the longest streaks of such distinguished recognition nationally, with 34 consecutive awards. While the chapter excels wholistically, individual members thrive as well.
- **SHRM Chapters Receive Superior Merit Award** - Western Illinois University's Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) student chapters on the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses received a 2022-2023 Superior Merit award designation from the national chapter of SHRM for providing excellent growth and development opportunities to student chapter members. The SHRM student chapter merit award program encourages the development of more effective student chapters and distinguishes outstanding activities and projects. Chapters are recognized based on chapter operations, chapter programming and professional development of members, support of the human resource profession and SHRM engagement.
- **WIU 52<sup>nd</sup> Ag Mech Club's Farm Expo** - The Farm Expo is considered the largest student-run agricultural event in the country and will include displays of farm tractors and machinery, ag sales and service, ag management, emerging ag technology, livestock and crop supplies, conservation and ag structures. A variety of craft vendors will be available upstairs in Western Hall, as well as free children's activities, including a bouncy house, face painting, and glitter tattoos. Additionally, WIU faculty and students will display their research.
- **Data analytics Students Compete in the Iowa Business Analytics Case Competition** - The two-day competition provided an opportunity for the brightest graduate level analytics students in the country to come together and solve a real-world business problem. On site, teams were provided large data sets and performed a deep dive analysis using programming, data wrangling, and data visualization skills to identify a problem, and propose a unique solution. Students presented their findings and recommendations to panel of analytics experts.
- **The National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) Partners with John Deere** - Members of the WIU Student Chapter of the National Association of Black hosted an exclusive Meet the Firm event at the College of Business and Technology where they gained

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invaluable insights on interview strategies and career navigation from the John Deere HR specialists.

- **The School of AFED and Beta Alpha Psi Hold Accounting Career Exploration** – The event, held on the Quad Cities campus engaged high school students in leadership and team building activities culminating in an accounting competition to earn scholarship money to attend WIU and major in accounting. The half day event engaged corporate partners from RSM, Deloitte, and John Deere and hosted an alumni professional panel discussing the importance and relevance of accounting in business with WIU Accounting alums Joe Ellison and Joe Goetz.
- **Finance Students Make Stock Pitches** – MBA students enrolled in the Advanced Portfolio Course (FIN 575) presented their annual stock recommendations to members of the local investment community including representatives from Edward Jones, MidAmerica National Bank, Wealth Associates, and the WIU Foundation including. The course is designed so students obtain a deep understanding of stock investing by managing an actual portfolio of money and equities. Analysis of companies' business models, growth and valuation ratios, price charts, etc., is performed before buying stocks that fit in a well-diversified portfolio.
- **WIU-SHRM Student Leaders Show Excellence at SHRM Council Summit** - The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) Student Chapter of Western Illinois University recently showcased its excellence at the SHRM State Council Summit hosted by the University of Iowa's Tippie College of Business. This event provided networking and ongoing learning opportunities for University students who are leaders in human resources. Throughout the event, student members of WIU's SHRM Executive Board made a presentation, engaged in discussions, exchanged ideas, and built valuable connections with fellow attendees from various institutions. The event provided a platform for sharing insights, best practices, and emerging trends in the field of human resource management.
- **School of Agriculture Awards Banquet** - The annual School of Agriculture Banquet was held on April 17th at Park Place. There were 200 attendees at this event, which showcased student organization achievements, announced the Cliff Becker Agriculture Excellence Awards (which is new), announced "Outstanding Senior and Scholar", and recognized Dr. Keela Trennepohl as the outstanding faculty member within the department. It was also announced that the number of service hours accumulated this year by all of our student organizations was 3242 hours with Hoof-n-Horn leading the way with over 700 service hours.
- **IGVC '24 Competition Participation** - Engineering Senior Project Team Rock-E, best of two teams this academic year, will participate in the 31st Annual Intelligent Ground Vehicle Competition at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan from May 31 - June 3. Last year, the WIU team ranked 11 out of 26 teams.
- **SCM Students Place 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2024 ASCM Midwest Gateway Student Case Competition** - The competition was co-hosted by UMSL's SCM program and the ASCM Midwest Gateway St. Louis Chapter, and sponsored by Bunge, Bayer, and Ameren. The schools that participated included UMSL, SLU, Mizzou, and WIU. This was the first year of this competition, and they hope to have eight teams next year. John Burton, Madison Butts, Devin Hermsmeier, and Edgar Sanchez made up the WIU team, naming themselves Rocky's Refreshment Co. The simulation based competition focused on the impact of supply chain on broader company profitability for an orange juice manufacturing company based out of the Netherlands.
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## **16. Alumni highlights**

*List notable highlights from College alumni.*

- **Caterpillar Appoints Chief Operating Officer** – WIU College of Business and Technology alumni, Joseph E. Creed, group president of Energy & Transportation, was appointed to the newly created position of chief operating officer, effective Nov. 1, 2023, for Caterpillar, Inc.

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In this newly created position, Creed will report to Jim Umpleby, chairman and chief executive officer. His extensive financial experience across Caterpillar's engine and machine businesses, combined with his leadership of our Energy & Transportation segment, position him well for his new role," said Caterpillar Chairman and CEO Jim Umpleby. "Joe will help lead the continued execution of our strategy for profitable growth and pursue the market opportunities associated with the energy transition and growing global energy demand." Creed serves on the Western Illinois University President's National Advisory Council, was named as the 2021 College of Business and Technology Ferguson Lecturer, is an executive board member of the Caterpillar Foundation, and is the executive sponsor of the Caterpillar Employee Resource Group known as ADEPT (Able and Disabled Employees Partnering Together). He is also a member of the board and past chairman for EasterSeals of Central Illinois.

- **Ag Recognizes Distinguished Alumni** - Five distinguished alumni from the School of Agriculture were recognized on Feb 17th, 2024 for their efforts and accomplishments in the agricultural industry. This event was coordinated with the 2024 Ag Expo held in Western Hall on Feb 17th and 18th. Among these individuals are Trent Torrance, Rodney Main, Dennis Bowman, Dan Loy and Allan L. Watson.
- **WIU Ag Alums Sweep Illinois State Discovery Star Awards** - The Illinois State Discovery Star Awards, an event Western Illinois University has had a presence in with multiple alumni over the years, has swept this year's event with students of alumni from Western Illinois University's Agricultural Education (Ag) program taking all the awards. Junior High students from across the state showcased their excellence, with four students clinching the top awards in their respective categories.
- **Agriculture Alumnus Memorialized** - Through New Endowment Fund - The life and impressive career of WIU alumnus Cliff Becker are being memorialized through a new fund for the School of Agriculture. Becker, originally from Oak Park, IL, graduated from WIU with a degree in Agriculture in 1984. He was a fourth-generation farmer who had an impressive 39-year career in the agricultural field. Becker spent more than 10 years as executive vice president at Farm Journal and 23 years with Vance Publishing, where he served as senior vice president and publishing director for their food360 division. At his passing, Becker was the vice president of New Campus Development for the American Royal in Kansas City, MO. The fund maintains a balance of \$18,000.

## **17. Community and/or regional engagement from College:**

*List notable community and regional engagement activities.*

- **Executive in Residence: Jack Kolosky** - In keeping with a tradition of excellence, The College of Business and Technology was pleased to host Mr. Jack Kolosky as the 2023 Executive in Residence. His distinguished career is a poignant illustration of the guiding principles that define exemplary leadership in today's global service economy. Mr. Kolosky is currently the Executive Director of the Alliance of Dedicated Cancer Centers. In prior roles, Mr. Kolosky served as the Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer of Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, FL, and served as the President of Moffitt Hospital. Mr. Kolosky received his bachelor's degree in Accounting from Western Illinois University and an MBA in Finance from Drake University. He holds a Certificate from the Harvard University School of Public Health and is a Certified Public Accountant. Of the 130 student attendees at the Executive in Residence event held on October 30th, 23.5% were first generation students, 21.9% were international students, and 22.9% were transfer students. Students from all 5 colleges were represented including special invitees from the School of Nursing.

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- **Amanda Gore: Ferguson Lecture** - The CBT secured Amanda Gore as the Ferguson Lecturer. Amanda Gore is CEO of The Joy Project, a business woman, an author and award winning speaker. She is one of 4 Australians inducted into the USA Speaker Hall of Fame and works with small and large organizations in every industry - McDonalds, Westpac, KPMG, CISCO, AMP, MDRT, Flight Centre, Google, Remax, Disney, Hilton, The Direct Selling and many other associations, hospitals and schools to help them create cultures of joy and engagement and to bring the humanity and joy back into their organizations. Her presentations are very personal and funny experiences that embed powerful and relevant messages that are tailored to your desired outcomes, and connects with people's hearts. A corporate luncheon was attended by 83 community members. The keynote address was attended by approximately 500 students, WIU, and community members.
- **2nd Annual REALS** - The School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, & Decision Sciences hosted the second annual Real Estate & Appraisals Learning Summit (REALS) on Thursday, September 28. The summit featured presentations from finance alumni on real estate investment, appraisals, and market outlook, and open Q&A time with regional industry professionals. The highlight of the day featured a keynote luncheon with a Senior Economist from the Federal Reserve Bank as she presented the regional real estate market outlook to the broader professional community. Throughout the day over two dozen members of the business community engaged with WIU students.
- **Programmatic Exploration with John Deere Welding Engineering Technology Program** - Since early Fall 2023, meetings between John Deere engineers from all facilities in the Quad Cities, School of Engineering and Technology representatives, and members of Blackhawk College have been discussing and weighing options to develop and deliver an education degree for employees, from Deere and other companies in the region, that focuses on elements and requirements in the processing of welded elements and assemblies. After many discussions and shadowing events at facilities, the determination is that an emphasis area, including 18 hours of special course, for the current Engineering Technology degree will satisfy the needs that John Deere pursues.
- **The School of AFED Hosts Workshop on "Ethical Issue and Best Practices in Data and Data Analytics"** - In conjunction with the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Statistical Association (ASA), WIU welcomed a community of students, faculty, staff, professionals, and data enthusiasts to a discussion of the ethical issues surrounding data and data analytics with Dr. David Corliss, the Principal Data Scientist at Grafham Analytics. The day's events engaged audience participants in active conversations about the practical and applied understanding of ethical issues related to data ownership, data privacy, bias in analytics, and best practices in the field.
- **Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab Partnerships Revised** - Since November of 2023, the School has participated in the restructuring of the Quad Cities Manufacturing Laboratory, now deemed QCML 2.0, in partnership with the University of Illinois at Urbana Champagne and Iowa State University. WIU's previous operation in the Rock Island Arsenal is being dismantled and some of the equipment will be transferred to the Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center of the RIA as part of WIU's contribution towards the new partnership.
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## 18. Conclusion

Based on these risk factors previously presented, and a review of the formal SWOT Analysis, The college has formulated a comprehensive strategic plan that contains the themes of Student Success, Institutional Distinctiveness, Financial Sustainability and Legacy, Societal and Global Impact, The plan as designed provides a comprehensive framework under which units strive to contribute to the mission of the college as mapped to the university strategic plan. In addition, the college as engaged a comprehensive technology backbone to support tracking of relevant metrics and activities. The

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college remains steadfast in achieving its primary purpose of preparing the next generation of business and technology innovators to thrive in an evolving, interconnected global economic environment.