

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

2015/2016 ACTION PLAN

Other Areas of Distinction

Other Areas of Distinction - Please describe your university's admirable characteristics and accomplishments, including services, programs, student success, and community engagement.

HEAT Institute

The HEAT (Heat Illness Evaluation Avoidance and Treatment) Institute housed at West Chester University supports nationally recognized independent research on heat illness prevention, evaluation, analysis and treatment.

The HEAT Institute is dedicated to conducting independent research related to the evaluation, avoidance and treatment of heat-related illness in athletes. It is committed to raising funds from sources not associated with a corporation that could benefit from this on-going research. The HEAT Institute is interested in collaborating with individuals and private foundations seeking to support and promote independent and unbiased research on thermoregulation and body fluid balance in athletes at risk for heat illness.

The institute's research is published in peer-reviewed journals such as the *American Journal of Sports Medicine*, *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, *Journal of Athletic Training and Medicine* and *Science in Sports and Exercise*. The institute's numerous studies involve athletes who routinely practice and play in environmentally stressful conditions and include investigations into the following:

- core temperature responses
- sweat rates and fluid turnover
- sweat sodium losses
- hypovolemic hyponatremia
- fluid and electrolyte replacement
- mechanisms implicated in exercise-associated muscle cramping

Assurance of Student Learning

The Academic Affairs division has instituted a process for evaluating student learning assessment plans for all graduate and undergraduate programs. The goal of this process was to better understand the quality of program-level assessment plans and communicate a consistent message to faculty as to what needs to be included in a high-quality assessment plan. Through the use of the assurance of student learning (ASL) rubric there is now more transparency with regard to the institutional expectation related to academic program student learning assessment. Under the direction of the faculty associate for teaching, learning, and assessment, the university assessment advisory committee and the associate deans have been responsible for reviewing program plans each year and providing feedback (using the rubric as a guide) to programs. In addition to scores for each element of the rubric, feedback is provided so programs can improve plan where appropriate in an effort to obtain better student learning outcome results.

Dr. Edwin Cottrell Entrepreneurial Leadership Center

The Dr. Edwin Cottrell Entrepreneurial Leadership Center serves as a catalyst for regional economic development by promoting entrepreneurship at West Chester University, in Chester County, and throughout southeastern Pennsylvania. The center offers seminars and workshops, guest lectures, and online resources. Each year, the center participates in Global Entrepreneurship Week, designed to celebrate entrepreneurship around the globe; hosts the Annual WCU Business Idea Competition; and partners with the Pennsylvania State System to host a business plan competition.

Center for Social and Economic Policy Research

The Center for Social & Economic Policy Research specializes in public opinion research. The center provides up-to-date quantitative research, combining superior service with academic expertise. The center supports local economic development by providing expertise and support in conducting marketing and opinion surveys, evaluation studies and other types of attitudinal research.

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Other Areas of Distinction *(Continued)*

WCU's Marching Band

The Golden Rams Incomparable Marching Band is truly a program of distinction. At 325 students strong from all the colleges at WCU, this ensemble frequently presents shows throughout the region, winning numerous prizes and awards. Most recently, the Golden Rams were chosen out of 170 bands to appear as one of 10 marching bands in the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The band is the only band from Pennsylvania appearing, and will be seen by more than 50 million people nationally on all three major television networks as well as by 3.5 million people along the parade route.

Twardowski Career Development Center

The Career Development Center supports student and alumni success by providing programs, services, employment and networking opportunities that give WCU graduates a competitive edge in the job market. The center assisted individuals via 1,743 appointments and drop-ins in 2014-15, a 10 percent increase from the previous year. The center conducted more than 220 programs, class presentations, and career events, serving more than 6,000 participants. Ram Career Network, WCU's centralized career management system, connects hundreds of employers and students via on-campus recruiting, job postings, and career fairs. There were more than 61,000 visits to the site in 2014-15. The On-Campus Recruiting Program connected 68 organizations with WCU students and alumni, for a total of 808 interviews. In addition, six career fairs and networking events brought 191 hiring organizations to campus to connect with some 1,200 students and alumni.

Student Involvement

The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement saw new participation records this past academic year. A total of 2,180 students enrolled in formal leadership training programs in the 2013-14 academic year, a 65% increase over the previous year. Multicultural student participation represented 21% of total program enrollment. Of particular note, involvement in academic/professional clubs rose from 1,855 participants the previous year to 2,771—a 47% increase.

Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs

The Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs experienced a very successful 2013-2014 academic year, with a 42% increase in service-learning courses. In 2013-2014, WCU students performed more than 600,000 hours of community service, setting a new record. Additionally, students raised \$106,527 for local organizations.

In 2015, Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs facilitated three international and three domestic Alternative Break service trips, during which WCU students volunteered with community organizations.

As a result of the University's culture of community service, WCU was selected for the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. WCU also is the recipient of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's Community Engagement Classification, which recognizes outstanding outreach and partnerships, as well as community engagement efforts.

Demonstration and Application Center

The Demonstration and Application Center is a hands-on technology center hosting new and emerging products offered by the technology industry and WCU business partners. The center provides a platform for sharing ideas and access to cutting-edge technology and resources. Information Services team members, faculty, staff and students are able to analyze usability and integration of technology within the context of higher education settings. In addition, Information Services team members work with business partners to understand their technology product offerings and determine feasibility, potential use and benefits of the technology via product demonstrations or training presented at the center.

RECAP Conference

Since 1996, WCU's Information Services has hosted the RECAP (Resources for the Electronic Classroom: A Faculty-Student Partnership) conference, which brings faculty and IT professionals together to share knowledge on technology use in the classroom. This year's conference included participants from 16 universities statewide, as well as the Office of the Chancellor and five other educational organizations. The conference shares best practices and innovations, encourages collaboration, and addresses current topics of interest in the use of technology in the classroom.