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Institutional Assessment at Western Washington University for the 1993-1995 Biennium: November, 1993

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Foreword and Overview

The following report is a summary of the status of the projects and activities generated from Western Washington University's Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing (OIAT) during the last quarter of the 1991-1993 biennium. A summary of significant activities and outcomes that have occurred since 1989 precedes the plan. The report also contains a list of assessment activities projected to occur during the 1993-1995 biennium; a few of the projects have already been initiated. The projected activities for the 1993-1995 biennium represent a partial list. Other projects will be added during the two-year period that will be stimulated by outcomes generated from on-going studies, recommendations from existing academic and student services committees, and directions and policies emanating from the Provost's and President's offices at WWU, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the legislature.

Projects and activities are presented in two sections. Section A contains a list of OIAT's projects organized according to the HECB's general assessment categories; a summary paragraph follows each activity describing the nature of the research or project. Section B contains a lengthy series of one page detailed descriptions of the activities that includes, among several pieces of information, the projected budget amounts scheduled to be dedicated to each activity. A summary of the projected budget expenditures for the 1993-1994 fiscal year appears at the end of this report.

Summary of Assessment Activities at Western Washington University - 1989 to 1993

Since 1989, the point when institutional assessment became an organizational unit at Western, the OIAT has produced over 25 technical reports, several data-based memoranda, and instituted an "InfoFact" series of brief summaries of assessment findings. Over the course of the past four-and-a-half years Western's activities assessment activities have been driven by the following: 1) strategic action plans contained in Western's Strategic Plan, adopted by the University's Board of Trustees in February, 1992. During the early stages of the strategic planning process assessment-related data was used to guide the identification of the strategic principles and actions plans; 2) six general assessment categories identified by the HECB; 3) recommendations from academic and student services programs and committees; 4) findings and recommendations generated from previous studies; and 5) recommendations and findings found in the institutional research and assessment literature in higher education.

In identifying and organizing its research and program evaluation plan the OIAT strives to obtain data and information that attempts to provide answers, in some form or another, to the following general questions: 1) What do we look like as an institution and how can we improve the quality of the academic and sociocultural climate? 2) What factors contribute to general and specific changes in Western students' development, attitudes, knowledge, and skills? 3) How can we enrich classroom and instructional experiences to advance and promote effective learning? 4) How successful is each component of the curricular and program activities and what changes are produced from the implementation of recommended changes? and 5) What are we like as an institution and what is the effect of administrative decisions on policy, the overall climate, faculty,

students, parents, alumni, boards, and agencies? To obtain information that will shed light on these questions the OIAT organizes its assessment activities according to a holistic framework. Student matriculation and learning is influenced by much more than just the academic sphere; every sphere of influence existing within the University affects the student experience. Consequently these influences must be identified and included in the assessment process.

Over the course of recent years, assessment and evaluation projects included: 1) the conduct of surveys dealing with alumni and employer satisfaction with the Western educational experience; 2) the development of an "end-of-program" interview and evaluation procedure, including an inventory of departmental- and unit-level assessment practices; 3) the compilation of baseline data concerning freshmen persistence and retention, attitudes and perceptions, level of academic preparation, and proficiency measures concerning basic academic subjects (writing, quantitative skills, etc.); 4) the development of a methodological procedure to evaluate changes in writing skills as they occur across the curriculum and the course of a student's academic career; 5) the identification of procedures to assess intermediate levels of knowledge and skill development occurring at the departmental- and unit-level involving the use of quantitative- and qualitative-based analytic techniques; and 6) the study of student health attitudes and behaviors concerning their orientations to physical and mental health, including special attention to the effect of alcohol and drug use both in and out of the classroom and its possible effect on personal and academic success.

How do changes occur at Western as a result of findings generated from the institutional assessment process? To answer that question adequately, it should first be established that change of any kind in a large organization is rarely the result of any one office's or individual's inputs or recommendations, but rather include input from many sources. Assessment work at Western is not seen as an isolated activity carrying out a singular mandate to improve the quality of undergraduate education. Indeed, because the field of assessment is so rapidly expanding, the OIAT, as well as generating its own data and reports, sees part of its job as that of a clearing house for information generated by other campus assessment offices, by on- and off-campus offices not directly involved in assessment activities but producing data that could be put to assessment use, and periodicals and journals publishing both assessment findings and findings that may be related.

Thus stated, the following is a fictional account of how such changes might come about as a result of activities by the OIAT--if not in highly detailed terms at least fairly reflected. This account, although fictional, in order to respond credibly, does contain factual elements or elements based on facts.

One of those factual elements in this fictional scenario was a report completed in 1991, titled "Summary Report of Admissions and Graduation Requirements of Selected Units and Programs at Western Washington University"¹ Among other report findings was that a number of academic departments included a field capstone experience as part of their requirements for

¹McKinney, G.R., Thorndike, R.M., Trimble, J.E. (February, 1991). Report 1991-03. Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University.

graduation. (As will be made clear, the exact number and names of the departments do not matter. The important issue would be the value of field capstones experiences, per se.)

This particular piece of information in and of itself is neither significant nor insignificant; it is simply a fact of how certain departments have structured their departmental graduation requirements. It serves only as a launch pad for the fictional example that will from here out be expanded on, yet grounds the fiction on a situation that could easily be developed, even if the "facts" might turn out differently.

Imagine, then, that the report is read and interest in field capstone experiences is generated, and further information desired. Accordingly, the OIAT would begin a number of activities, the first of which might be the coordination with Western's Office of Survey Research of an alumni survey that would address, along with other issues gleaned from its "Department Requirement Survey", the issue of field capstone experiences within its questionnaire. After making the final tally of this fictitious questionnaire, it is discovered that students who graduated from departments with the field capstone experience as part of their graduation requirement have rated their satisfaction with Western 10-15% higher than students whose degree requirements did not contain a field capstone experience.

Similarly, a new survey of Western graduates' employers, cross-tabulated by degree area, would indicate that employers are more pleased with the performance of students whose degrees included a field capstone experience than those whose degrees did not.

Finally, the OIAT would coordinate with the Career Planning and Placement Center to develop from its annual Career Planning and Placement Activities Report a degree and entry-level salary cross-tabulation that indicates that graduates whose degrees included a field capstone enter their careers at a 15-20% higher salary range than students whose degrees do not.

Again, the above is fiction based on possibility. That such a situation could be played out, that such coordination could be accomplished, however, is not. Completion of all the activities involved would take time, but time is what any really productive assessment work requires. In this fiction, such findings, when presented to the university president and provost, to the deans of the colleges and individual department chairs, would speak volumes to the value of a field capstone experience in a student's academic career.

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What institutional changes might be adopted as a result of such findings would, of course, be up to the decision makers: the president and provost, the deans, administrators, department chairs, faculty, and appropriate committees, with input from student organizations and staff. Departments may develop a field capstone experience as part of their graduation requirements; or they may include it as an option; or they may feel that such a requirement is impossible to adapt to their particular field of study. On the other hand, if felt strongly enough, a decision to require all departments to include a field capstone might ensue.

Regardless of what decisions might be made, that phase of the OIAT's job would be complete. The next phase, predicated on implementation of field capstones to one degree or

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another, might be to generate follow up activities that would monitor the field experience aspect of undergraduate education at agreed-upon cycles. Or maybe the departments and administration would prefer to move cautiously and ask the OIAT to implement a more detailed follow-up report. In fact, the OIAT might be asked to assist in any number of areas to help implement, monitor, or reassess any changes that the institution, its colleges or departments may adopt in regard to field capstone experiences.

The above account is intentionally dramatic, the issue sweeping with its implications. In the long run, assessment may indeed instigate such changes; it may even be what is expected of it. At this point any number of scenarios are possible.

Yet over the past four-and-a-half years, assessment outcomes and activities had already led to a variety of changes in several spheres of the University. Many of the changes are in direct response to the agenda outlined in the University's Strategic Plan. Other changes occurred because a program or academic unit requested specific information; in these instances, results led to changes in policy, program emphasis, services, and organizational structure. Still other changes occurred because a set of findings in one or another study pointed to the need to provide a remedy for a problem or to expand a service. Some of the many changes that have occurred since 1989 are listed below under appropriate headings.

Strategic Plan Principles and Assessment Related Changes

• Continuing improvement in quality will be an imperative for each of the University's ongoing activities. Programs are expected to achieve quality levels that are consistent with those of a first-class university. In professional areas that usually will mean professional accreditation. In other areas, effective program reviews by peers serve as a significant measure of quality.

• The Geography/Regional Planning curriculum in Huxley College will be evaluated by external reviewers during Fall quarter, 1993, with the goal to strengthen relationships between existing Geography/Regional Planning programs and Environmental Studies.

• The School Counseling and Mental Health Program in Psychology has completed an initial on-site accreditation review by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, and received a favorable report. The program is the first one in the country to receive accreditation in the mental health concentration.

• Continuous improvement requires constant attention to outcomes. The quality of the degree granted by the University will be high and will be demonstrated by the characteristics, abilities, and skills of its graduates.

O The Faculty Senate's Academic Coordinating Commission has approved several curricular thrusts of an interdisciplinary nature and worked with the College of

Arts and Sciences to design alternatives for students to fulfill their General University Requirements (GUR's) while strengthening their liberal arts backgrounds.

O Passage of the intermediate-level Junior Writing Examination is now mandatory and the Writing Center has been expanded to provide more writing instruction to students. Additional Writing Fellows have been assigned to The Department of English to increase faculty and student access to supplemental writing and composition assistance and/or instruction.

O A Math Center has been established, similar to the Writing Center, to provide students with enhanced tutorial assistance in mathematics.

O Fairhaven College is currently designing a new Core Curriculum which will be interdisciplinary in nature and problem oriented. The college also completed a research project using narrative student self-assessments.

• An on-going College of Business and Economics assessment project involves both pre- and post-testing of students and provides faculty with solid information regarding the effectiveness of instructional techniques and an external validation of the course content.

• Huxley College is working to revamp its curriculum to place greater emphasis on communication and critical thinking; 1994 course requirements will include courses emphasizing writing and oral communication skills.

O The Faculty Senate's Academic Coordinating Commission established a standing sub-committee on assessment, charged with advising the administration and the Director of Institutional Assessment on all issues of academic assessment.

• The University will improve library holdings and access to library resources.

• The Faculty Senate has implemented a new Library Committee which is charged with the development of a campus-wide program in library literacy/information retrieval skills.

• Western recognizes that the truly educated person must have an understanding of, and experiences with, diversity. The University's approach to diversity will include people, policies and programs, and will embrace issues related to special talent and ability; race, gender, ethnicity; sexual orientation; International Studies; and Ethnic/Cultural Studies.

• Fairhaven, Arts and Sciences, and Woodring Colleges have all made progress on including issues of race, class, and gender in their curricula. Offerings through the American Cultural Studies program have been increased and it is being developed to serve a key role in the Northwestern Minority portion of the GUR. • Woodring College established the Center for Educational Pluralism to provide all education students with a generic experience regarding diversity in the Schools, and a resource for faculty as they prepare course materials, etc.

• Wilson Library produced four new research guides to materials in the library, to help students find information about African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Native-Americans.

• Shannon Point's Minorities in Marine Science Program has enhanced the ethnic diversity of the biology undergraduate student population. It serves as a model program both on campus and nation-wide.

• The University will promote professional development as a key ingredient in recruiting and retaining an active, exciting and vital faculty, staff, and administration.

• The Faculty Senate continues to examine the possibility of a clearer, more unified approach to faculty evaluation across campus. The Senate's Committee on Faculty Development and the Enhancement of Teaching has drafted recommendations on policy for granting of Faculty Development Grants and plans to examine policies governing all forms of financial support for faculty development in both teaching and research.

• Structural reorganization will be used selectively to achieve improved positioning or to develop greater academic and/or administrative synergy. In each case, faculty and staff morale, university history, national developments in the affected fields, disciplinary affinities, resource utilization, and opportunities for external funding will be considered.

• The Student Support Services Office has been established through reorganizations in Student and Academic Affairs. The change will connect academic advising more closely with Academic Affairs, provide a central access point for students, and create more efficient delivery of services to students.

• The Center for Geography and Regional Planning has been transferred to Huxley. Subsequent internal reorganization resulted in a restructuring of the College into two curricular cores: Center for Environmental Sciences, and Center for Geography and Social Environmental Sciences.

O International programs have been reorganized to form a new Center for International Studies.

• The University will adopt enrollment management policies and procedures that reflect its commitment to an appropriate upper/lower division mix, student demand for courses and majors, and academic program goals.

• All areas of the University are working to improve advising and orientation services available to transfer students. Beginning the summer of 1993, the Summerstart program was expanded to include transfers.

O Establishment of an Enrollment Management Group that works with the Colleges, Admissions, and the Registrar to better monitor and predict enrollment trends. The Group also serves to enhance the coordination of access to majors and progress towards degree completion.

Enrollment Management

Enrollment access is, indeed, an essential component of the University's mission. In April, 1993, the Enrollment Management Group submitted five short-term recommendations to the Provost. The formation of each recommendation was strongly influenced by assessment findings. The following recommendations currently are being considered for implementation:

• Majors will be declared only through the college or department, which then notifies the Registrar. Students will be required to declare a major by the time they have completed 110 credits. If a student is not eligible for admission to the preferred major at the time of application, he/she sill be declared as a pre-major and informed of the criteria for admission, or can choose another major.

• Communications with native and transfer students will be improved regarding the criteria for admission to majors, procedures for application, and number of credits required for completion. A task force, created by the Provost, will identify and recommend specific actions to improve the advisement process.

• All transfer applicants will be informed by the Admissions office of the departments and programs which have their own admissions criteria and procedures. The Admissions office will provide departments with lists of all applicants by intended majors. Departments with their own admission requirements will send materials to all transfer applicants, including information regarding criteria and procedures for admission.

• All community college transfer applicants will be considered as a single pool. This action would enable transfer students to make more timely progress toward the degree and provide more access.

• Additional fees will be charged for registration beyond 20% of the number of credits required for completion of the degree. This action will help to encourage students to focus upon their intended major and to free space for other students that is currently occupied by students who take many credits beyond those required for the degree.

• Other degree alternatives such as Social Sciences, Humanities, and General Sciences will be developed. (This item is not recommended for immediate implementation; however, the Enrollment Management Group recommends that the Academic

Coordinating Committee convene the proper forum for consideration of these and other degree alternatives. These options may provide alternatives for students who prefer a broader generic degree to specialization in a single discipline, and also provide an option for students who may be denied access to the major of their choice because of limited space, but who still wish to continue their study in the broad disciplinary areas.)

<u>General</u>

Other changes have occurred at Western that can be directly traced to the outcomes and findings of several varied but important studies. The changes and some of the corresponding outcomes are listed below:

• As a result of a finding in one of the OIAT's Former Student Surveys, two large scale studies were implemented. Specifically, the studies focused on Western students' attitudes towards health and health-related behaviors and their attitudes and behaviors concerning alcohol and drug use. Findings from both studies were instrumental in Western's Wellness Center receiving a \$135,900 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education to implement Project WE CAN. The project is a comprehensive proactive prevention plan intended to reduce the amount of alcohol and drug use and promote wellness through a variety of educational intervention strategies. Currently, Nash Hall has been designated as "substance-free" and emphasizes wellness through nine principles: physical, cultural, spiritual, emotional, life-planning, citizenship, and interpersonal relationships. The OIAT is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

• Recently, Fairhaven College completed an extensive analysis of a sample of student portfolios. Results were reflected against Perry's Model for Cognitive Development. Findings indicated that, irrespective of age, Fairhaven students clearly demonstrated progressive changes in their "ways of knowing". Results confirm the significance and relevance of Fairhaven's curriculum experience and the value of using portfolios as means to evaluate student progress and cognitive and intellectual development; indeed, the results from the study demonstrates that intellectual development adds to the value of one's growth and maturation.

• CIRP findings and the partial results of Alumni Surveys led to the development and implementation of University 101, a course designed specifically for beginning and entering students at WWU. The course content introduces students to a number of topics, including the development of study and learning skills, test taking, and a familiarization with the many programs and services available to students. The course involves the close collaboration between the Director of WWU's Academic Advising Center and numerous faculty from various departments. Students participating in the course are being tracked and monitored to determine the course's effect on retention rates and timely progress towards a degree.

• As a result of the rapid growth of information and assessment findings at Western, the Vice Provost for Information and Telecommunications through an initiative from the Provost development an index of reports and data regularly produced by the OIAT, the Office of Institutional Research, and the President's Office. The index will be placed online and subsequently made available to the University community through a computer interactive mode. The index will be updated periodically and will serve to provide users with information and data that can facilitate planning and development at all levels of the institutions.

• As a result of findings from an OIAT study to determine why certain admitted competent and highly-qualified students chose not to enroll at Western, significant organizational, procedural, and policy changes were implemented in Western's Office of Admissions. Results suggest that the changes significantly improved the office's delivery of services, advise to prospective students and their parents, and meeting the unique interests and concerns of special students.

• In two successive years, the OIAT and the Department of English collaborated on studies intended to identify the writing skills of entering students and the placement of students in introductory writing courses. Study results led to the recommendation that students who complete English 100 (a review of standard English and therefore a refresher course) take English 101 (an entry-level composition course) in the following quarter. Schedules were arranged to accommodate the recommendation. Follow-up studies strongly indicated that beginning students are likely to perform better in English 101 than if they waited one quarter or more.

• A series of successive studies conducted by the OIAT on Western students' Math Placement Test scores and their successful completion of required math courses led to a recalibration of the cut-off criteria. Cut-off scores were revised to best match students' skills with an appropriate math course. Follow-up studies indicated that retention was increased and many more students successfully passed the course than when the original criteria was in place.

• Results from several studies focusing on gender and ethnic-minority topics led to several policy changes, an emphasis on cultural and diversity subject matter across the curriculum, and the establishment of the Ethnic Student Center. Focus groups have been formed to promote further study and provide recommendations for the improvement of student services and course offerings.

• During the latter part of the 1991-93 biennium, the OIAT developed a new medium for reporting thematic summaries of assessment findings, one that has proven popular with many varied offices, departments, and committees. The Info-Fact combined the talents of OIAT personnel, Woodring College of Education's publications graphic artist, plus the input of several WWU administrative offices. The result was a one-sheet hand-out of succinct, but valuable summaries of data that has drawn praise from sources as varied as the Athletic Department and the Faculty Senate's Legislative Committee. An Info-Fact

was even included in the University's Fifth Year Interim Report. After receiving almost instant and universal approval, the OIAT plans to publish the Info-Fact series on a regular basis. (See Appendix A.)

• Recently, Substitute House Bill 1580 required that institutions of higher education adopt as a part of their Strategic Plan procedures designed to shorten the time required for students to complete a degree or certification and to improve the graduation rate for all students. Toward this end, WWU is considering various strategies, including moving to require declarations of major by the end of the sophomore year, and working to provide community college students direct admissions not just to the University, but to a major. Additionally, the Office of Academic Advising, the Budget Office, and the OIAT collaborated on a budget proposal to fund a Student Centered On-Line Degree Progress Tracking System. This system is the most dynamic of recent strategies for creating a supportive, proactive environment for students to manage effectively their academic careers. The degree-audit system would provide students, advisors, and administrators an on-line advising tool with the ability to track individual student progress toward the degree. Students would thus be regularly monitored and updated on where they are in one or more degree programs, on what requirements remain. The system would also provide Internet access for community college students, advisors, and administrators to such online information as specific baccalaureate program requirements, transfer equivalents, and admission criteria.

Assessment-Related Questions

Any endeavor whose goals are to improve existing programs and to help guide the creation and development of new ones must first ask the questions that are necessary to facilitate the task at hand. Understanding that as needs change so does inquiry, certain questions have steered assessment research and will probably continue to do so in the forseeable future. A partial list of those questions follows:

- What factors contribute to students taking longer than four years to graduate?
- Does student enrollment influence GPA?...number of quarters needed to graduate?... interfere with enrollment in required courses?
- Are there differences in residential preferences and patterns and student satisfaction?... number of quarters taken to graduate?...and how does this influence GPA?

• Do transfer students from community colleges who enroll at WWU without an AA/AS degree experience enrollment and credit hour accumulation problems as compared to those with AA/AS degree?

• How do we increase native student retention rates and persistence patterns? If we increase native student retention rates, what effect will this have on upper division

enrollment patterns?...on the number of transfer students we can enroll without exceeding enrollment lids?

• Some units are increasing the number of credit hours required of the major. What effect will this have on enrollment management within the major?...increasing interest in requiring unit-level capstone experiences?...faculty credit allocation and demand on time dedication?

• As more and more units set minimum GPA requirements for the major, what enrollment and program opportunities or options are available to the students who do no/cannot meet requirements? To meet requirements students may opt to repeat courses. What effects will this have on enrollment management? Who gets first choice of required, high-demand courses, repeat or first-time students?

• Employers of WWU graduates appear to place variable emphasis on learned skills and competencies. We need to conduct more program and unit-specific surveys to identify specific strengths and weaknesses of our graduates.

• About one quarter of our native students expect to change career choices and major. By the time they graduate how many actually change their major? How can we improve advising and selection of a major? This procedure can lead to more predictable enrollment management of majors.

• If the Department of Mathematics adjusts the Math Placement Test cut-off scores, what effect will this have on classroom size, number of instructors required, and the need for tutorial assistance either through a Mathematics Center or the offering of Mathematics 99 (a remedial course)?

Discussion of Policies

The activities, projects, and reports generated by the OIAT are closely monitored by an eight-person advisory committee. The committee, appointed by the Faculty Senate in consultation with the director of the OIAT, consists of faculty from each of the six colleges. In addition to reviewing all assessment-related activities and reports, the committee assists in identifying mechanisms for implementing findings and monitoring the progress of program and curricular change.

Regarding the question of institutional mechanisms used to monitor the effectiveness of new policy implementation, upon completion of assessment-related survey research, the OIAT produces three types of reports: 1) an expanded executive summary containing significant highlights. These reports are available to the general public; 2) some number of focused short reports each summarizing the findings in some focused topic in an aggregated manner. These reports emphasize certain portions of the data set believed to be of general interest to the university community; and 3) specialized reports specifically prepared for unit level Chairs and Deans. Preparation of detailed reports tailored to the needs and interests of the colleges and units provides an opportunity to go into greater detail. Data analyses procedures are used to isolate and identify specific data arrays that are unique to particular units.

Finally, the OIAT compiled a number of projects since the beginning of the 1989-1991 biennium. A list of the completed projects can be found in Appendix B. The list, however, does not reflect a number of small-scale project undertaken and completed by OIAT staff. For example, staff compiled unit-level analysis using the Student Tracking System for several departments, prepared a comprehensive sampling frame for one of Western's programs, conducted an extensive analysis of Western's persistence and retention rates for ethnic-minorities, and provided a series of data memoranda to the University's Enrollment Management Group.

Section A

1993-1995 Assessment Plan Summary

Western Washington University

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 1993-95 ASSESSMENT PLAN SUMMARY

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Implementation-Results

Objectives and Uses

Maintenance of the Student Tracking System (STS)

Research Program (CIRP) Cooperative Institutional Administration of the Questionnaire

On-going

surveyed) and report writing respondents completed 9/93. yearly (1993 and 1994 incoming freshmen will be Survey administration is Report on 1992 CIRP on-going.

Completed 8/93. **CIRP** Twenty-year Report Survey of Ethnic-Minority

completed. Data analysis Survey administration underway

WWU but Who Chose Not

to Enroll

Students Admitted to

To acquire and maintain factual demographic information on supports nearly all aspects of assessment activities at WWU. cohorts of WWU's undergraduate population. The STS

students and to facilitate student responses and developments policy, as well as policy changes in academic advisement and academic competencies, values, demographic characteristics, which emerge from future studies by compiling information tutorial centers, and to enhance understanding of entering factors which influence higher education goals and related To assist enrollment management and admissions office concerning academic and vocational goals, perceived topics.

at WWU (1971 to 1991) was analyzed and presented, as well and perceptions. Data from six administrations of the CIRP To develop a statistical base of trends in freshmen attitudes as compared to national findings.

admitted. A follow-up to a successful earlier general study students from choosing not to enroll at WWU after being that facilitated the implementation by WWU's Admission To study in detail factors that may effect ethnic-minority Office of numerous discrete changes in policy.

Baseline Student Data (cont.) Curriculum Assessment Service Study Service Study Student Centered On-Line Degree Progress Tracking System	Implementation-Results Second phase of study completed 8/93. Budget request completed and submitted 10/93.	Objectives and Uses To examine the nature of WWU's undergraduate curriculum. Derived from the transcripts of all baccalaureate recipients in the Spring of 1991, CAS provides an analytic framework for exploring the scope and structure of the course work chosen by undergraduates. WWU is one of the pilot schools for the national study by the Institute for Research on Higher Education, To facilitate access and progress toward degree completion, WWU proposes, among other things, a degree audit system which would provide students, advisors, and administrators an on-line advising tool with the ability to track individual student
Intermediate Assessment of Quantitative and Writing Skills & Other Appropriate Intermediate Assessment Junior Writing Exam	On-going.	progress. Students would thus be regularly monitored and updated on where they are in one or more degree programs, and what requirements remain. To assess writing abilities at the half-way mark in a student's academic career, and to analyze student writing trends and conduct research on student writing abilities. Results help the Expository Writing Committee reach planning decisions for writing at WWU.

Implementation-Results Objectives and Uses riting Skills & ntermediate	To audit quantitative skills items found across the undergraduate curriculum. The item criteria for college-level mathematics and quantitative skills will be guided by the list produced by the Fall, 1991, statewide higher education faculty retreat.	To measure the effectiveness of the Access Program, a proactive program implemented by the Academic Advising Center to encourage increased academic achievement and retention among minority students and students admitted at higher risk of academic failure. The initial study reported favorably, and suggested strategies for further positive development of the program.	To establish the effectiveness of existing student support services for ethnic-minorities, to guide the selection of culturally significant curricular offerings, and to enhance recruitment of capable ethnic-minority populations to WWU.	To provide the Fairhaven Law & Diversity Program with student information generated by the STS. The data will be useful in tracking the current L&D class, as well as provide a basis for later comparison and analyses.
Implementation-Results	Survey design underway.	Initial report completed 8/93. Follow-up study anticipated for Spring, 1994.	Initial data collection and analyses completed. Report writing in progress.	On-going. First database established 9/91.
Intermediate Assessment of Quantitative and Writing Skills & Other Appropriate Intermediate Assessment (cont.)	Quantitative Unit-Level Curriculum Assessment	Access Program Assessment	Ethnic-Minority Student Opinion Survey	Fairhaven Law & Diversity Database

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 1993-95 ASSESSMENT PLAN SUMMARY

End-of-Program Assessment

completed, and data analyzed. Reports are produced yearly, Initial survey administration Profile of 1992 graduating Report writing in process. Study design underway. and work on-going. class completed. On-going. Program Assessment in All Graduating Class Profiles Development of End-of-Graduation Rates Study **CIRP** College Student Survey Administration Time to Degree and Departments

To establish a database of characteristics of its graduating classes. Reports provide the University community with a continuing analysis of demographic and academic trends vital to decision making and program planning.

To track and quantify the changes in attitudes and perceptions of students after a proscribed period of time--at WWU, four years after entering as first-time freshmen. Results will help administrators, faculty and staff better understand the nature of change wrought by the academic and social structure of WWU, and should assist all offices, departments and units in a myriad of administrative decisions.

To develop comprehensive end-of-program assessment programs to use in improving curriculum and instruction.

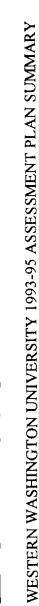
To study in depth the volatile issues of time to degree and graduation rates in a number of contexts, using among others, concepts from the National Center for Education Statistics and Alexander Astin of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program.

To evaluate and monitor the success of WWU business and economic majors against external, standardized criteria. Results will be used to evaluate program effectiveness and, if warranted, lead to changes in course structure, content, and emphasis.

On-going.

End-of-Program Assessment

in Business & Economics



Alumni and Student Satisfaction Surveys

Alumni Survey of the Class 1993 Alumni Survey of the Class of 1992 & 1994 of 1993

Western: Some Feedback Academic Advising at from Alumni

data collected. Report writing 1993 survey administered and Alumni surveys and reports are on-going. underway.

Report completed 7/93.

Program Review

On-going Regular Review of Academic Programs

Miscellaneous Assessment Activities Student Health Attitudes and Behaviors Survey

Survey administered and data analyzed. Report writing in progress.

quality, etc. Survey data are merged with the Student Tracking System (STS) to allow the most flexible and thorough analysis. (GUR's), student life services, facilities, advising, institutional To provide data relevant to all departmental self-evaluations, and to evaluations of General University Requirements

future alumni surveys have been and will be tailored as much as To provide the Academic Advisement Office with specific and timely feedback on issues of academic advising. Recent and possible to inform critical offices, departments and units.

To provide assistance to specific units scheduled to conduct program review activities consistent with HEC Board guidelines. To identify and estimate WWU student attitudes and behaviors development of a Wellness Program, as well as enhance healthrelated seminars, workshops, and activities such as may occur Outreach and Patient Education Office of the Health Center. Results will focus attention on the health and mental health concerning their orientations to physical and mental health. through the Substance Abuse Prevention Center, and the needs of WWU students, and will be used to assist the

WESTERN W.	ASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 19	WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY 1993-95 ASSESSMENT PLAN SUMMARY
Miscellaneous Assessment Activities (cont.)	Implementation-Results	Objectives and Uses
WWU Lifestyles Survey	Survey administered and data analyzed. Report writing in progress.	To study in detail the effect of alcohol and drug use on WWU students. The Lifestyles Project was developed as part of the University's on-going effort (a) to investigate students' experience both <i>in and out</i> of the classroom; (b) to enhance those experiences which lead to personal and academic success; and (c) to reduce risk factors jeopardizing student success.
Academic Integrity Study	Survey administration underway.	To participate in a national study (sponsored by Rutgers) on undergraduate academic integrity (attitudes towards cheating, etc.). Results will, among other things, provide a viable network through which schools can share information on student integrity policies and issues (including descriptions of successful programs) and to which schools can submit questions, problems and needs.
Assessment of Cultural and Geographical Literacy	Initial study completed Spring, 1992. Revising and retesting begun Fall, 1993.	To follow-up development of a test that may measure the extent to which undergraduate students at WWU are culturally and geographically "literate". Results should inform various faculty and administrators, and assist certain curriculum development.
Research/Undergraduate Teaching Survey	Survey administration underway.	To examine the relative importance of undergraduate teaching and research as perceived by faculty, chairs, academic deans, and administrators to determine if they agree on the balance they believe exists at their institutions. WWU is one of numerous institutions nationwide participating in this study being conducted by the Center for Instructional Development at Syracuse University.

Section B

1993-1995 Assessment Activities Individual Project Summaries Western Washington University

Baseline Student Activities

Maintenance of the Student Tracking System (STS)

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: WWU's Registrar's Office compiles all academic-based information concerning student admissions and progress. This database is supplemented by others collected and/or generated by the OIAT.
- Results: Demographic information supplied by the database enables the OIAT to track the academic progress of students in all academic units, and enhance analyses of student responses to questionnaires, interviews, standardized assessment instruments, and opinion surveys.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: The STS supports nearly all aspects of assessment activities at WWU. The STS continues to be expanded and fine-tuned. The OIAT makes frequent use of the STS in support of data requests, report writing, and other assessmentrelated activities.

Projected availability of results: Not applicable.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

All program and academic units require detailed information concerning the characteristics and progress of selected cohorts of the student population. The information becomes part of the planning process and subsequently influences goal-directed activities, decision making, allocation of resources, and program planning.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Revised to accomodate state-level requests.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$10,305

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,670

CIRP Administration

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey is administered to entering freshmen to assist enrollment management and admissions office policy, as well as policy changes in academic advisement and tutorial centers, and to enhance understanding of freshmen and to facilitate student responses and developments which emerge from future studies by compiling information concerning academic and vocational goals, perceived academic competencies, values, demographic characteristics, factors which influence higher education goals and related topics.
- Results: Data from the 1992 CIRP administration was received, entered into the Student Tracking System (STS), collated and analyzed; a report was written.

Works in Progress:

- Brief description: Administration of the 1993 CIRP Survey had been completed and questionnaires sent for analysis.
- Projected availability of results: Results of the 1991 and 1992 CIRP survey are available; results of the 1993 CIRP survey will be available in late spring of early summer of 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Results generated from the CIRP are distributed widely throughout the campus. Workshops, meetings, and retreats have been and will continue to be scheduled so that the data can enhance and facilitate decision making and program planning.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None. Administration of CIRP will continue on an annual basis.

Budget adjustments made or projected: Increased costs of instruments.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$9,160

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$6,500

Twenty-year CIRP Report

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Questionnaire was administered to entering WWU freshmen during their orientation session prior to the Fall Quarter since 1971 in five- to two-year increments. The opportunity to compare and contrast a twenty-year period of detailed response patterns of entering freshmen in regards to their attitudes and abilities offered a unique opportunity to enhance the potential of numerous offices and committees to respond appropriately to WWU's goal to improve the quality of its undergraduate educational experience.
- Results: A collated statistical package for the six CIRP surveys administered at WWU from 1971 to 1991 were obtained from CIRP administrative offices for analysis. Report was completed August, 1993. Two sections were written: the first discussed trends of the overall population, the second discussed trends for gender.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: None.

Projected availability of results: Currently available.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

In order to stay current with the rapidly changing demographics of the entering freshmen class at WWU, the CIRP questionnaire will be administered yearly in the projected future. Results generated from this report will be distributed widely throughout the campus, and will most assuredly facilitate decision making and program planning.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None at this time.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$8,710

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$5,568

Survey of Ethnic-Minority Students Admitted to WWU but Who Chose Not to Enroll

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: A list of WWU ethnic-minority applicants who were admitted but did not enroll was obtained from admissions office. An ACT developed questionnaire, the Survey of Current Activities and Plans, was mailed to the sample. A follow-up reminder were sent. After questionnaires were returned, they were sent on to ACT for analysis.
- Results: This study is a follow-up to a successful earlier general study of students who chose not to enroll after being admitted that facilitated the implementation by WWU's Admissions Office of numerous discrete changes in policy.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: When analyzed data returns from ACT, report writing will commence.

Projected availability of results: Spring, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Results will become part of the accelerated planning and policy analysis, and of decision making activities at WWU. Besides the Admissions Office, the report should assist related offices (Career Planning and Placement, Academic Advising, and others) in development of assessment plans, including surveys and reports, that would help facilitate their efficiency.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: To continue to produce reports of an edifying and facilitating nature.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$4,150

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$2,960

Curriculum Assessment Service Study

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: The Curruculum Assessment Service (CAS) is a jointly developed project of the Association of American Colleges and the Institute for Research on Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania. WWU was one of the pilot participants. CAS is a PC-based program allowing hands-on access to curriculum data heretofor not easily or readily available.
- Results: The latest CAS software package arrived in early fall, 1993. The package is being overviewed, with the focus placed on the most effective manner in which to make the data available to administrators, deans, faculty, and members of the Academic Coordinating Commission.

Works in Progress:

- Brief description: Plans have WWU supplying data derived from the transcripts of all baccalaureate recipients to CAS, who format it into a Lotus-driven data base and return it to WWU for use and feedback.
- Projected availability of results: By winter, 1994, a policy should be in place guiding the use and availability of the data.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

The CAS program provides an analytic framework for exploring the scope and structure of the coursework chosen by undergraduates and makes it available on a relatively user-friendly PC format. Establishing a curriculum database readily accessible to all University personnel should facilitate the analysis of an array of trends vital to decision making and program planning.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: Increase for service.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$16,800

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$2,028

Student Centered On-Line Degree Program Tracking System

Activities Completed:

Brief description of activities: A grant proposal was written jointly by the Academic Advising Office, the OIAT, the Budget Office, and others, and submitted in mid-October, 1993.

Results: Waiting period while grant proposal is considered.

Works in Progress:

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- Brief description: The On-Line Degree Tracking System would provide students and academic advisors ready access to an electronic transcript analysis. Student would be able to see exactly where he or she is at in any given degree track at any point in time during his or her academic career.
- Projected availability of results: WWU estimates that such a system would take three years to develop and implement.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Substitute House Bill 1580 mandates that by May 15, 1994, each state institution of higher education, as part of its strategic plan, will adopt strategies designed to shorten the time required for students to complete a degree or certificate and to improve the graduation rate for all students, and that such strategies be implemented by the 1995-96 fall term.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None until project fully funded.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$6,850

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$474

Intermediate Assessment of Quantitative and Writing Skills and Related Intermediate Level Assessment Activities

Junior Writing Exam

Activities Completed:

- Brief Description of Activities: All WWU students must take the Junior Writing Exam (JWE) before being allowed to take upper-division Writing Intensive courses.
- Results: Students are made aware of the JWE requirement through WWU's college course catalog, academic advising, and postings in the student newspaper. Students sign up for the JWE through the OIAT, who also carry out the administration of the test.

Works in Progress:

- Brief description: Beginning Fall Quarter, 1991, the JWE changed from a diagnostic tool to a requirement. As a result, the Writing Center received additional funding to address the needs of students encountering writing difficulties.
 OIAT findings partially contributed to this decision.
- Projected availability of results: Administration of the JWE, studies of its effectiveness, and related writing issues are on-going.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

The JWE is consistent with the attempt to maximize the educational experience of students by assisting them in identifying their writing skills at approximately the half-way point of their academic career. It also allows better instruction by letting the instructors of writing-intensive courses assume certain prerequisites. WWU students are required to complete writing-intensive courses at the upper-division level.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$3,175

Expenditure of Appropriiated Assessment Funds to Date: \$860

Quantitative Unit-Level Curriculum Assessment

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: To audit quantitative skills across the undergraduate curriculum. Currently the majority of Western's departments require some form of coursework dealing with modes of quantitative and critical thinking. The OIAT is working closely with Western's Assessment Committee to identify the magnitude and nature of the curriculum experience.
- Results: Committee meetings have established initial concept of study. Materials are being gathered and collated to produce a comprehensive methodology.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Survey design underway.

Projected availability of results: Fall, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

None at present.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Pending study outcomes.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$2,525

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: None.

Access Program Assessment

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: Using the Student Tracking System, data on students eligible to participate in the Access Program was gathered. Analyses was performed on both participants and non-participants, plus a survey of eligible participants who had stopped out was conducted.
- Results: Findings indicated that Access participants had better WWU GPA's and better retention rates than students eligible for the Access Program who did not participate.

Works in Progress:

- Brief description: Although findings were favorable, recent improvements in the Access Program have led the director of the program to conclude that another, more indepth study should be conducted. Plans are being formulated.
- Projected availability of results: Current report was completed in August, 1993. The follow-up survey will be conducted in the spring, 1994, with results available in late summer or early fall.
- Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU has identified diversity enrollment as well as the improvement of the quality of its undergraduate educational experience as one of its top priorities. The Access Program is a proactive program implemented by the Academic Advising Center to encourage increased academic achievement and retention among minority students and students admitted at higher risk of failure. Thus, the Access Program is valued for the multiplicity of its design and the integrity of its mission.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: Additional cost for survey.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$5,550

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,125

Ethnic-Minority Student Opinion Survey

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: A proportional sample of ethnic-minority undergraduate students was drawn from the Student Tracking System. A questionnaires was developed and administered. Data was analyzed.
- Results: The report will be used to determine and analyze current ethnic-minority student perceptions of WWU's institutional programs and services. Results will be used to guide policy and planning in all facets of the academic and student service areas.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Report writing is underway.

Projected availability of results: Spring, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

One of WWU's principal goals is to actively recruit and retain ethnic-minority students. Along with developing an intensive recruiting campaign, the University is committed to strengthening existing student support services and curricular offerings to meet ethnicminority student needs.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$2,820

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,898

Fairhaven Law & Diversity Database

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: Using the Student Tracking System, data on the second class of Fairhaven Law & Diversity students was generated. Information is being analyzed, then will be forwarded to the Dean of Fairhaven College.
- Results: Will provide the Fairhaven Law & Diversity Program with student information generated by the Student Tracking System. The data will be useful in tracking the current Law & Diversity class, as well as provide a basis for later comparison and analyses of Law & Diversity students.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: This is an on-going, annual project.

Projected availability of results: Data on first-year class available through Fairhaven College.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU is committed to creating an academic and community climate conducive to the needs of culturally and ethnically unique populations. The Fairhaven Law & Diversity Program is a substantial commitment of this intention.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Addition of program evaluation.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$6,380

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,230

End-of-Program Assessment Activities

Graduating Class Profiles for 1992, 1993 and 1994

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: Using the Student Tracking System, data on gradutes from the Fall Quarter, 1991, through the Summer Quarter, 1992, (parameters establishing 1992 graduating class) generated and provided to the OIAT, which in turn analyzed the data using statistical routines provided by SPSS-X software.
- Results: The full report on WWU's 1992 graduating class joins the 1990 and 1991 graduating class profiles as part of the end-of-program data base available to WWU administrators, deans, student services offices, certain unit and program area heads, and the Assessment Committee of the HEC Board.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: This is an on-going, annual project.

Projected availability of results: Graduating class profiles 1990 through 1992 are currently published and available.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU has identified the improvement of the quality of its undergraduate educational experience as one of its top priorities. Establishing a database of characteristics of its graduating classes provides the university community with a continuing analysis of demographic and academic trends vital to decision making and program planning.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: 1992 analysis shifted to include all students who graduated during the calendar year. Previous analysis was limited to June graduates.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$3,820

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,660

CIRP College Student Survey Administration

Activities Completed:

Brief description of activities: The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)
College Student Survey is the follow-up questionnaire to the CIRP entering
freshmen questionnaire. Its purpose is to track and quantify the changes in
attitudes, perceptions, and skill levels of students after a proscribed period of
time. Survey forms were ordered from the Higher Education Research
Institute. A list of students who had taken the CIRP freshmen survey in 1989
was compiled from OIAT records, and admit status was ascertained. From the
original cohort, nearly 500 current students were identified.

Results: Over 200 responses were received. The data was sent on to CIRP for analysis.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Data have been received. Report writing is underway.

Projected availability of results: Winter, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Results from CIRP freshmen surveys have been detailed, summarized, and of considerable use to many offices, departments and units at WWU. It is anticipated that an extension of the kind of knowledge generated by the CIRP freshmen survey will continue with this new project. Not only will interested parties have a profile of WWU students as they enter the university, quantifiable data will be available that speaks to how WWU has changed the attitudes and perceptions of those students.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Potentially will be administered, like the CIRP freshmen survey, on an annual basis. Next administration is anticipated for Spring, 1995 to coincide with entering 1991 freshmen reaching senior status.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$7,280

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,813

Time to Degree and Graduation Rates Study

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: Using the Student Tracking System, data on graduation rates has been and continues to be generated through the OIAT and made available to interested parties in the form of tables and graphs. This current project will take the data already being generated and analyze it using various guidelines--for instance, those of the National Center for Education Statistics, and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program--in order that a broad understanding of issues underscoring retention and graduation can be understood.
- Results: On-going findings already inform an array of campus and off-campus offices, from the President's Office to the Shalom Center, and many other administrators, deans, student services offices, department chairs, and HEC Board. The new study should add insight to an already interested audience.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: The various guidelines to retention and graduation are being studied.

Projected availability of results: Fall, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Graduation and retention rates are topics of considerable recent debate. Among other questions that arise are what kind of data constitute a fair representation of these rates. A number of guidelines have been posited, but in disparate forums. The OIAT conceives this study as a pulling together of various graduation rate models into a single report.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$4,475

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$743

End-of-Program Assessment in Business and Economics

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: The business and economics forms of the Educational Testing Services Major Field Achievement Tests were administered to two cohorts of students. Students who declared business or economics as their major and were enrolled in the entry-level course were administered the field test in the Fall Quarter, 1991. The same version of the field test was administered to the entry-level student cohort during the Spring Quarter, 1993. The second student cohort consisted of business and economics majors who were enrolled in senior-level capstone theory courses in the respective fields. A third cohort of majors took the same courses during the Spring Quarter, 1992.
- Results: Data will provide for baseline and comparative analysis and will enable the faculty to determine the "value-added" to students' knowledge, experience, and preparation for employment in the two areas. both departments plan to continue using the ETS field tests for the next few years.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Results are being handled by the College of Business & Economics.

Projected availability of results:

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

To evaluate and monitor the success of WWU business and economics majors against external, standardized criteria. Results will be used to evaluate program effectiveness and, if warranted, lead to changes in course structure, content, and emphasis.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$2,650

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$340

Alumni and Former Student Satisfaction and Skills Assessment Surveys

1993 Alumni Survey of the Class of 1992

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: All individuals graduating with a bachelor's degree between the Summer Quarter of 1991, and the Spring Quarter of 1992 were sampled. Surveys were mailed and data from the questionnaires entered into database format.
- Results: Preliminary results have already been used to address Academic Advising issues. The report generated from those findings is highlighted in this report. Survey data are merged with the Student Tracking System to allow the most flexible and thorough analysis.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: The project coordinator is currently preparing the final report.

Projected availability of results: Winter, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

These data are relevant to all departmental self-evaluations, and to evaluations of General University Requirements (GURs), student life services, facilities, advising, instructional quality, etc. A large portion of this survey will be identical to questions on parallel alumni surveys. This will allow the compilation of a combined dataset with ever-increasing numbers of cases offering evaluations of departments and of selected aspects of the entire university. The large sample will allow meaningful feedback to small units.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: Over past years survey costs have increased.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$38,250

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$5,088

Academic Advising Report

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: A growing set of surveys of WWU students and alumni has found satisfaction with advising to be lower than satisfaction with other aspects of WWU. To address this issue, both findings from previous surveys and findings from a special set of questions focusing on advising included in the 1992 alumni survey were combined. It was decided to utilize responses only from those students who had used advising services, since the issue of encouraging the use of such services was an entirely different study.
- Results: Findings suggested that the specificity of a student's inquiry had much to do with how much or little a student is satisfied with advising. The more specific the line of questioning--for instance, GUR requirements--the more satisfied with the advising received. The less specific the line of questioning--for instance, issues of career or major choice--the less satisfied with advising received.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Project completed July, 1993.

Projected availability of results: Report is currently available.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU is committed to constant improvement of all departments, majors and units. As reports indicate potential areas where improvement can be facilitated by further study, the OIAT responds to requests for that assistance in as timely a fashion as is possible. Targeting specific areas of improvement from general reports is part and parcel of the work of assessment.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$5,225

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,280

Miscellaneous Assessment Activities

Student Health Attitudes

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: To identify and estimate WWU student attitudes and behaviors concerning their orientations to physical and mental health, a comprehensive questionnaire was developed and administered, and results entered into a database.
- Results: Results will focus attention on the health and mental health needs of WWU students, and will be used to assist the development of a Wellness Program, as well as enhance health-related seminars, workshops, and activities such as may occur through the Substance Abuse Prevention Center, and the Outreach and Patient Education Office of the Health Center.Preliminary results have already spun off a separate survey questionnaire developed to assess student attitudes towards drug and alcohol use. The survey is sponsored by WWU's Wellness Center.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Report writing is in progress.

Projected availability of results: Winter, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU holds the position that health and wellness attitudes and corresponding behavior can and do affect academic persistence and progress in and out of the classroom. WWU intends to create an atmosphere which meets the full complement of needs to enhance the student experience.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Expanded analysis and report writing.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$1,810

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,290

WWU Lifestyles Project

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: To identify and estimate WWU student attitudes and behaviors concerning their alcohol and drug use, a comprehensive questionnaire was developed and administered, and results entered into a database.
- Results: Results will study in detail the effect of alcohol and drug use on WWU students. The Lifestyles Project was developed as part of the University's ongoing effort (a) to investigate students' experience both in and out of the classroom; (b) to enhance those experiences which lead to personal and academic success; and (c) to reduce risk factors jeopardiszing student success.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Report writing is in progress.

Projected availability of results: Winter, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

WWU holds the position that health and wellness attitudes and corresponding behavior can and do affect academic persistence and progress in and out of the classroom. WWU intends to create an atmosphere which meets the full complement of needs to enhance the student experience.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Expanded data analysis and report writing.

Budget adjustments made or projected: \$6,720

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$8.360

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$4,921

Academic Integrity Study

Activities Completed:

Brief description of activities: WWU is participating in a national study on undergraduate academic integrity sponsored by Rutgers University. Groundwork included survey design and editing.

Results: Among other things, results should provide a viable network through which schools can share information on student integrity policies and issues (including descriptions of successful programs) and to which school can submit questions, problems and needs.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: The questionnaire is being prepared for mailing.

Projected availability of results: Spring, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Results will be of value to the Office of Student Services, the faculty, the Academic Coordinating Commission, and related academic and student support services offices

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$10,280

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$1,760

Assessment of Cultural and Geographic Literacy

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: In 1991, some 600 undergraduate students were administered a 50-item multiple choice test containing items dealing with fairly simple cultural and geographic items. Results were analyzed by the OIAT. A new test was developed and administered in 1993.
- Results: Results and analyses may be discussed in certain undergraduate and graduate classes to determine what scores on such a test might mean at both the individual and aggregate level. The information may help instructors in different courses that are concerned with various dimensions of human diversity, especially in the area of curricula design.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: Survey forms are being scored and analyzed.

Projected availability of results: Winter, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Some of the results have already been reported at one conference and may be repeated to others. Various faculty and administrators will make use of the information as they deem appropriate. Results and analyses may be discussed in certain undergraduate and graduate classes.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: Expansion of research activities.

Budget adjustments made or projected: Extended budget allocation.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$3,550

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: None.

Research/ Undergraduate Teaching Survey

Activities Completed:

- Brief description of activities: WWU is participating in a national study on the relative importance of undergraduate teaching and research as perceived by faculty, chairs, academic deans, and administrators to determine if they agree on the balance they believe exists at their institutions.
- Results: Should provide a basis for both a local debate and national comparison on the subject.

Works in Progress:

Brief description: The questionnaire is being prepared for mailing.

Projected availability of results: Spring, 1994.

Related Institutional Processes and Decisions:

Pending results could assist in clarifying the balance between scholarship and teaching at WWU.

Changes to Assessment Plans:

Brief description of changes: None.

Budget adjustments made or projected: None.

1993-1994 Budget Allocation: \$11,375

Expenditure of Appropriated Assessment Funds to Date: \$473

Appendix A

Info-Fact

An example of a summary publication medium developed by the Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing Western Washington University



WWU, a comprehensive liberal arts university in northwest Washington state, is a highly regarded academic institution set between the North Cascades National Park and the San Juan Islands. WWU is the third largest institution of higher education in the state, with 10,150 students. This is one of a series of profiles of the past, present, and future students of Western.

GENERAL POPULATION

- Over 93% of students expressed satisfaction with their overall Western experience, 85% with the quality of instruction they were receiving, and 85% with their academic experience.
- During the 1991-92 academic year, over \$1.3 million in scholarships were awarded to WWU students, a 25% increase over 1990-91.
- WWU employs 445 full-time equivalent faculty, 88% of whom have full or terminal degrees. The student-faculty ratio is 18:1.
- The one-year fall-to-fall retention rate for entering freshmen at WWU has averaged over 77% since 1985. A study finds that a major factor in the strong freshmen retention rate is the beauty of the campus and surrounding area.
- The two-year fall-to-fall retention for entering freshmen has averaged over 64.5% since 1985, and has risen steadily from 1985 through 1990.
- Of students who entered WWU as freshmen, the percentage of those graduating within five years has risen from 35.8% of the 1985 class, to 41.3% of the 1987 class - competitive with national averages.

Western has received nearly 30,000 applications over the past five years for roughly 7,000 open admission spots.

Reasons why 1992 WWU freshmen chose WWU 56.0%

- Size
- 52.1% Academic reputation
- 27.5% Low Tuition
- 24.5% Grads get good jobs

The estimated parental income of the 1992 freshmen class

4.4%

24.5%

- Less than 14,999
- 15,000 to 29,999 10.4%
- 30,000 to 49,999 25.8% ٠ 34.9%
 - 50,000 to 74,999

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- 75,000 or more
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In 1992-93, over 380 students participated in 16 varsity sports for Western. Eight sports are offered each for men and women, and 41% of the participating athletes are women, highest among all Washington universities. Athletes in 8 sports achieved All-American honors in 1992. The average GPA for Western's athletes was 3.12.

GRADUATES & ALUMNI

- Of the over 37,000 alumni that still live in Washington State, 52% live in the metropolitan Snohomish, King, and Pierce County area, and 25% live in Whatcom and Skagit Counties.
- Over three-quarters (79.6%) of WWU alumní were "very satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with the quality of instruction within their majors.
- Similarly, over 80% of employers of satisfied" were "very job their performance overall.
- When asked how well graduates were prepared for the job they were hired to do in relation to expectations, employers rated WWU grads as much or a little better in math skills (68.6%), educational background broad (66.7%), and specific job skills required (66.4%).
- For 1989, 1990, and 1991 graduates who entered WWU as freshmen, graduation rates reflected the national average of four-and-one-half years.

InfoFact 01-93 +

1992 FRESHMEN

- WWU was the first college of choice for 77.4% of entering 1992 freshmen.
- When asked the highest degree they planned to earn (anywhere), 76.5% said a master's or better.
- During fall quarter 1992, 91.0% of entering freshmen lived in dorms, compared to 32.6% of the total student population.
- A BA degree or better had been earned by 62.2% of the fathers and 52.2% of the mothers of 1992 freshmen.
- Ethnic-minority students comprised 13.8% of WWU's 1992 freshmen class, the most ethnically diverse ever.
- The average high school GPA for 1992 freshmen was 3.46, with a middle 50% GPA range of 3.28 to 3.77, making them the most academically prepared freshmen class to date.
- The 1992 freshmen class included ten National Merit finalists, 8 Washington State scholars, 26 students with a high school GPA of 4.0, and 123 students with a high school GPA of 3.9 or better.
- This incoming class met or exceeded the recommended years of high school study as follows: English (4 years), 98.2%; mathematics (3), 97.6%; and physical or biological sciences (2), 97.4%.
- The 1992 freshmen benefitted from a automated review and new, awarding system implemented by the Student Financial Resources Office. Awards or estimated awards were sent to 58.7% of the class, compared to 13.0% the year before.
- For those same years, graduates earned an average of 203 credits. Most degree programs require 180 credits.
- Again for those years, graduation rates for transfers with AA degrees also reflected the national average.
- A 1991 Career Service Center report on 1989-90 graduates found that 89% of WWU grads were working in Washington State; and that the average wage for those with BA degrees was \$23,000 for those in non-education jobs, and \$20,000 for those in education.

For further information contact Joseph E. Trimble, Ph.D., or Gary McKinney, M.A., Office of Institutional Assessment & Testing, WWU, Bellingham, WA 98225-9010, telephone (206) 650-3080. Information for this info-fact sheet was gathered from the following sources: Admissions Office, Alumni Office, Career Services Center, Office of Institutional Assessment & Testing, Public Information Office, Student Financial Resources, and the Registrar's Office.

Appendix B

Annotated Bibliography of the Technical Report Series Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing Western Washington University

Western Washington University Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing Technical Report Series

Simpson, C. (May, 1988). <u>The Western Washington University Student Survey Series</u> (Volume One: Western Washington University Students). Bellingham, WA: Office of Survey Research, Western Washington University. *General backgrounds on students; information on WWU's non-graduates; shapes of educational careers.*

Simpson, C., Buck, K. (May, 1988). <u>The Western Washington University Student Survey</u> <u>Series (Volume Two: Student Experiences and Perceptions)</u>. Bellingham, WA: Office of Survey Research, Western Washington University. *Non-academic and academic experiences; changes in former students' satisfaction with WWU; satisfaction with courses in major.*

Simpson, C. (May, 1988). <u>The Western Washington University Student Survey Series</u> (Volume Three: Western Washington University Students Five Years Later). Bellingham, WA: Office of Survey Research, Western Washington University. *After five years away from WWU, former students' educational attainment, employment, quality of life, and more.*

Council of Presidents and State Board for Community College Education (May, 1989). <u>The</u> <u>Validity and Usefulness of Three National Standardized Tests for Measuring the</u> <u>Communication, Computation, and Critical Thinking Skills of Washington State College</u> <u>Sophomores: General Report</u>. Bellingham, WA: Office of Publications, Western Washington University. A seminal report that found the standardized tests studied as failing to meet a reasonable standard of validity and usefulness. The report influenced strongly the direction of assessment in Washington State.

Council of Presidents and State Board for Community College Education (September, 1989). <u>The Validity and Usefulness of Three National Standardized Tests for Measuring the</u> <u>Communication, Computation, and Critical Thinking Skills of Washington State College</u> <u>Sophomores: Technical Report</u>. Bellingham, WA: Office of Publications, Western Washington University. *The complete technical analysis to the report described above*.

McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E., Andrieu-Parker, J.M. (September, 1990). <u>A Profile of</u> <u>Selected Characteristics of the Spring 1990 Western Washington University Graduating Class</u> (Report 1990-01). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Annual report profiling WWU graduates: GPA, major, college of graduation, etc.*

Thorndike-Christ, T.K., Trimble, J.E., Andrieu-Parker, J.M. (February, 1991). <u>The</u> <u>Relationship between Academic Performance, Students' Admission Status, and Selected</u> <u>Student Characteristics</u> (Report 1991-01). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Analyses of the relationship between a student's*

admission status, GPA, and other student characteristics.

McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E., Andrieu-Parker, J.M. (February, 1991). <u>Systemwide</u> <u>Indicators for Western Washington University</u> (Report 1991-02). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Headcount*, high school GPA, and pre-college test scores of WWU freshmen classes analyzed by gender, admit status, and ethnicity. Part of WWU's report to the Assessment Task Force and HEC Board.

McKinney, G.R., Thorndike, R.M., Trimble, J.E. (February, 1991). <u>Summary Report of</u> <u>Admissions and Graduation Requirements of Selected Units and Programs at Western</u> <u>Washington University</u> (Report 1991-03). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. As of the publication date, admission and graduation requirements at the academic unit; included reportage on foundations courses, audition, and GPA standards for admission, and capstone courses, internships, and senior project/theses for graduation.

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Thorndike, R.M., Simpson, C., Trimble, J.E. (March, 1991). <u>Survey of Employers' Satisfaction with Western Washington Graduates</u> (Report 1991-04). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *The impressions of personnel managers and direct supervisors of the WWU* graduates employed by their businesses.

Thorndike-Christ, T.K., Thorndike, R.M., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E. (April, 1991). <u>The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey of</u> <u>Western Washington University Freshmen: A Comparison of the 1985 and 1989 Incoming</u> <u>Classes</u> (Report 1991-05). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Findings from the 1985 and 1989 CIRP surveys--attitudes, perceptions, etc., of first-time, in-coming Freshmen.*

Thorndike-Christ, T.K., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (May, 1991). <u>The Math</u> <u>Placement Tests: Relationships to Mathematics Course Performance, Mathematics Course</u> <u>Selection, and Other Predictors of Academic Achievement</u> (Report 1991-06). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Commissioned by WWU's Mathematics Department, this report analyzed the effectiveness of the intermediate and advanced MPT in relation to WWU's population of students; the study resulted in adjustment of MPT cut-off scores at WWU, and is an example of the advantageous use of assessment as an "in-house" tool for change.*

Thorndike-Christ, T.K., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (June, 1991). <u>An Addendum to</u> <u>The Math Placement Tests: Relationships to Mathematics Course Performance, Mathematics</u> <u>Course Selection, and Other Predictors of Academic Achievement</u> (Report 1991-06a). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Extended the analysis of the above report to include the basic algebra MPT*.

Thorndike-Christ, T.K., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (June, 1991). <u>A Comparative</u> <u>Analysis of the Academic Performance of Native and Transfer Students</u> (Report 1991-07). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *The second of two reports looking for variance in the academic performance of native (entered* WWU as a freshmen) and two-year transfer students. Found no effective difference.

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (August, 1991). <u>Analysis of Student</u> <u>Essay Writing Skills in Entry-Level English Composition Courses at Western Washington</u> <u>University</u> (Report 1991-08). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Commissioned by WWU's Composition Program in the Department of English, this report analyzed the results of graded writing samples taken from students in English* 100 and 101 classes; like the MPT report, the study resulted in direct, positive internal policy changes.

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (January, 1992). <u>A Profile of Selected Characteristics of the Spring 1991 Western Washington University Graduating Class</u> (Report 1992-01). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Annual report profiling WWU graduates: GPA, major, college of graduation, etc.*

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (April, 1992). <u>Selected</u> <u>Characteristics for a Decade of June Graduating Classes at Western Washington University:</u> <u>1981 to 1991</u> (Report 1992-02). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Profiled WWU Spring graduating classes 1981 to 1991; included analysis by admit status, ethnicity, age, and gender while looking at GPA, major, college of graduation, quarters and credits taken, etc.*

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (April, 1992). <u>An Analysis of the Effects of a Readjustment of the Math Placement Test Cutoff Scores</u> (Report 1992-03). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *A follow-up one year later to the MPT analysis; concluded that the new cut-off scores utilized were effective at placing students in mathematics courses appropriate to their skill level.*

Simpson, C., McKinney G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (June, 1992). <u>Western</u> <u>Washington University Alumni Attitudes and Perceptions of Their Undergraduate Experiences--1987 and 1989</u> (Report 1992-04). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *A report that combined data from two similar surveys that in addition to an overall analysis, allowed reportage tailored to all but the smallest of academic units at WWU.*

Gould, G.S., McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (July, 1992). <u>Western</u> <u>Experience Survey</u> (Report 1992-05). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. A student experience survey with a particular interest in gender issues; found that overall WWU provided a positive environment for all students, and particularly for females.

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (August, 1992). <u>The Cooperative</u> <u>Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey of Western Washington University Freshmen</u> for the 1991 Incoming Class (Report 1992-06). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Findings from the 1991 CIRP survey; the survey measures the attitudes and perceptions of first-time, in-coming Freshmen*. Wharton, D.A., McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (September, 1992). <u>Chose Not to Enroll: Survey Results of Nonenrolled Students Admitted to Western</u> <u>Washington University</u> (Report 1992-07). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. Commissioned by the Admissions Office, the report analyzed findings from a survey of students admitted to WWU who ultimately chose not to enroll at WWU.

Hayes, P.E., McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M., Trimble, J.E. (January, 1993). <u>The Everett Human Services Program: Alumni Attitudes and Perceptions</u> (Report 1993-01). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Commissioned by the Everett Human Services Program, this report analyzed the findings from a survey of program graduates. Overall, findings indicated that alumni were well satisfied with their education; moreover, most were working within the local area.*

Simpson, C., Gregson, J., Clark, L., McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E. (June, 1993). <u>Academic Advising at Western: Some Feedback from Alumni</u> (Report 1993-02). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Commissioned by the Academic Advising Center, this report analyzes findings from the 1992 survey of 1991 WWU alumni that addressed issues specifically related to academic advising.*

Senecal, B.A., McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E. (August, 1993). <u>The Relationship between</u> <u>Participation in the Access Program and the Academic Achievement and Retention of Minority</u> <u>and Non-Minority First-Year Undergraduates</u> (Report 1993-03). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *A report assessing the success of the Access Program, a proactive program implemented by the Academic Advising Center to encourage increased academic achievement and retention among minority students and students admitted at higher risk of academic failure.*

McKinney, G.R., Andrieu-Parker, J.M. Trimble, J.E., (August, 1993). <u>The Evolving</u> <u>Character of WWU Freshmen: Analyses of CIRP Surveys from 1971 through 1991</u> (Report 1993-04). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. Using data compiled from six CIRP surveys administered between 1971 and 1991, this report tracks the changing attitudes and perceptions of in-coming Freshmen at WWU.

McKinney, G.R., Trimble, J.E., Andrieu-Parker, J.M. (September, 1993). <u>The Cooperative</u> <u>Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey of Western Washington University Freshmen</u> for the 1992 Incoming Class (Report 1993-05). Bellingham, WA: Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing, Western Washington University. *Findings from the 1992 CIRP survey; the survey measures the attitudes and perceptions of first-time, in-coming Freshmen.*

To receive copies of any or all of the above reports, please contact Gary McKinney in the Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing at Western Washington University, 516 High Street, Old Main 120, Bellingham, WA, 98225, or telephone at (206) 650-3080.

Appendix C

1993-1995 Assessment Budget Summary

Western Washington University

WWU 93-95 Assessment Budget Summary (Budget Calculations for 1993-1994)

Activity	Budget	Expended to Date	Balance
I. Baseline	\$55,975	\$13,994	\$41,981
II. Intermediate	\$20,450	\$5,113	\$15,337
III. End-of-Program	\$18,225	\$4,556	\$13,669
IV. Program Review	\$12,500	\$3,125	\$9,375
V. Alumni Surveys	\$43,475	\$6,368	\$37,107
VI. Employer Perceptions	n/a	n/a	n/a
VII. Other	\$35,375	\$8,444	\$26,931
Total:	\$186,000	\$41,600	\$144,400