Winona State University: A University for the 21st Century
State of the University Address
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**Why is Transformational Change Needed?**

Winona State University is proud of its history, its traditions, and its reputation for excellence. Here in Winona, we enjoy a beautiful campus setting and supportive and friendly relationships with the community. In Rochester, we have a long history of commitment to the community, dating back to 1917. Why then is there so much talk of change? Why is the Academy coming under such pressure for reform and improvement? For most of you who have been at WSU for several years, talk of a New University and Learning for the 21st Century has become familiar but many still are not sure what we really mean by this. As more people are drawn into this work, the meaning of these new terms and the reasons for our focus on Learning for the 21st Century and Student Success will become clearer. Many of you were involved in the exploration of education in the 21st century during what I call the Study Phase that spanned two years of reflection, discussion and planning. More of you have joined one or more of the projects that were launched during the last part of the Study Phase and during the first year of implementation of Learning for the 21st Century, a period I call the Expansion Phase. We are rapidly approaching a critical mass of people who are exploring new approaches to teaching and learning and the application of knowledge to complex problems.

Although there is innovative activity going on in every aspect of WSU life, I continue to hear a lot of questions about what we are doing and why we are doing it. One of the advantages of being in my position is that I can see how these individual projects, conversations and activities fit together to tell a larger story. It is harder to do that from any other vantage point within or outside the University. Let me articulate some of the questions I have heard and attempt to answer them.

What is driving all of this effort? Why do we have to change? Our enrollments are high and we attract good students. What else do you want? The traditional pool from which we draw our students is beginning to shrink. In addition to that, contemporary life requires all of us to continue to explore and learn throughout the course of our lives. This challenges us to serve a broader range of students in more ways, adapting our portfolio to match the changing needs and patterns of participation of a much more diverse student body.

We are already well-regarded and highly ranked. Isn’t that enough?
We have been named a best buy for nine years in a row and we are rising in the U.S. News and World Report Rankings but the competition for well-prepared students is growing and we cannot count on our old patterns and ways of doing things to guarantee that we will compete well in the communities where we have always been successful in attracting students. To do this, we must stand out from the crowd. As I have been fond of saying, being a best buy in the 20th century doesn’t mean we can be a best buy in the 21st century. The expectations are changing. More of this later.

What is Learning for the 21st Century (a.k.a., L21)? Who is doing what and what difference is it making, if any? Learning for the 21st Century is the term we have applied to the package of investments that we are making to implement the ideas that were generated during two years of study and reflection initiated by President Krueger in 2003. As we launch round three of projects, we have addressed almost all of the major themes developed by the groups that were formed then. The only area left to be explored in depth from that period is the concept of the philanthropic university. Soon it will be time to reflect, take stock, and plan our next set of experiments, building on what we have learned so far and extending ourselves further into the world of a 21st century university.

Let me give you an idea of some of the things that have happened in the past year. I do not intend for this to be comprehensive but simply a sampler of what has been happening and the changes you might see as a result of L21. These examples are meant to stimulate your interest in learning more. You can also explore for yourself by going to http://www.winona.edu/ and clicking on the Learning for the 21st Century site on our home page. Over the course of this year, we will highlight L21 on several occasions by holding an L21 Symposium to discuss our early findings and to set the stage for our next phase of investment. We also plan to invite additional national leaders in fields of interest to L21 to join us for conversations about our work.

- We are becoming ever more connected to the needs of the region and more entrepreneurial about our approach. The term for this is Social Entrepreneurship. As part of her Strategic Management class, Dr. Kathy Ready worked with United Way agencies in Winona so that her students were able to do an analysis of non-profit organizations. One result is a new course on Social Entrepreneurship this fall, the development of which was sponsored by an L21 grant.
- We are emphasizing the integration of research and education with the enhancement of practice and the scholarship of application. Several
L21 projects funded in round three especially have a strong research focus and a commitment to involving students in research. Topics include studies of the effects of cranberry ingestion and research on composites.

- Travel study is growing and the world is becoming our classroom. We are becoming more international in many ways. This past year, WSU supported 11 travel study programs that involved 17 faculty members and almost 200 students. We are supporting exploratory trips to enable additional faculty to develop new trips and to engage students in work-study opportunities, also supported by L21. This past year, we welcomed a bumper crop of students from around the world, made several exploratory trips ourselves to explore new relationships in the Middle East and in Eastern Europe and hosted several exchange scholars.

- We are encouraging interdisciplinary work within the curriculum as well as in research. We have supported the development of courses in forensics (science and criminal justice), nanotechnology (all of the science departments), drawing for the sciences (art and science), and a celebration of the book (arts and sciences), among other projects.

- We are embracing new dimensions of diversity. WSU collaborated with Project FINE and Media works to develop a new multimedia teaching tool to prepare supervisors and others to work with immigrants and other newcomers to the workplace. We have launched several new programs that will support student success and cultural diversity including some that we will introduce to you during this Orientation week including our new Academic Progression Reporting System that will be piloted with student athletes and our cultural diversity students.

- We are exploring new aspects of our relationship with regional business and industry and our role in economic and community development. For example, consider the new Faculty-in-Residence program. With support from L21, we have developed opportunities for faculty to spend time in residence in local industry. One example is a recent agreement with Benchmark to support several paid internships for students and a faculty-in-residence program during part of the summer. Another example is the recent Fastenal project that generated a set of videotapes of conversations with students and Fastenal executives about the growth of the company.

- Our community engagement is expanding. A significant part of round two of L21 projects focused on community engagement. The service learning/civic engagement community of practice group initiated several new courses this year. An example of this was
Tammy Swenson-Lepper’s Communications Studies 389 Persuasive Communications course that, among other things, planned and carried out a fundraising event for hurricane relief, raising over $1000. During the spring semester, the class members recruited WSU faculty, staff and students to participate in our first Spruce Up Winona Day. They designed the t-shirt and the poster, placed volunteers at several sites and supervised a number of volunteer projects. Students in both classes used their experiences as material for a large research project about persuasive communication processes.

One quotation from a student says it all: “What I have learned this semester cannot be tested through a multiple choice exam; it cannot be explained in a twenty page paper; rather what I have learned this semester I can take with me-for the rest of my life.”

• Our sense of common purpose is growing, assisted by L21. Rochester author Fan Shen’s memoir, Gang of One, was adopted in dozens of WSU classes, mostly sections of English 111 (College Reading and Writing), and taught to over 1000 students in the inaugural year of the Common Book Pilot Project, supported by an L21 grant. The purpose of this effort is to bring together a diverse community to share perspectives on a single text, providing a core shared experience that helps to define our community. The author made multiple appearances on campus this past year in both fall and spring semester reading excerpts from his work and teaching classes and talking with students.

• Our partnership with the region is growing. An exemplary collaboration has been set in motion between our Maxwell Children’s Center and District 861. We will open up a new site at Madison School. This partnership is built on research on early childhood education that demonstrates that quality preschool programs of this kind can ease the transition to school and ensure that children are ready to learn. Children who have had experiences in preschool do better in K-12 and go on to post secondary education at a significantly higher rate. In the next phase, this project will open up to a cross-generational model that links positive aging programs, volunteer opportunities and preschool education to ensure that the public schools remain a center of community life.

To cite another example, one of the defining features of a creative place is the presence of the arts. We have helped build the Great River Shakespeare Festival and now the Frozen River Film Festival and are positioning the arts as a core feature of campus life, both in Winona and in Rochester. The arts have taken on a fresh and even more central role in
our exploration of the human experience.

• We are expanding our educational efforts to address the needs of professionals and returning adults who are in need of advanced education and professional development. The Nursing program has developed plans in cooperation with our Center of Excellence in Health Sciences Education and Practice (CIHSEP) and Critical Care Registered Nurses to open an American Nurses Credentialing Center to provide national certification for critical care RNs who serve both rural and urban communities.

Last fall, Winona State received funding for a Center of Excellence focused on health care. Our Center is a collaborative partnership of education, industry and community that is focused on ensuring that Minnesota’s health care industry has a well-prepared, innovative, and diverse workforce, providing the capacity to transform the delivery of health care and positioning Minnesota as a global leader in healthcare education, practice, research and innovation. What is most important about our Center is the opportunity it affords us to learn new ways to work with our partners and to explore new approaches to adaptive knowledge to new uses and implementing much-needed enhancements to our health care systems in a collaborative mode. We are already making substantive progress in the short time that CIHSEP has been up and running and we are starting to see results.

We are developing programs that enact our mission to improve the world. The National Child Protection Training Center has continued to expand its efforts to eliminate child abuse within three generations. It is now offering a certification program for social workers, teachers, nurses, psychologists, and law enforcement officers to help them learn to detect child abuse, promote early intervention and make sure that victims and their families receive the help they need. The curriculum was developed by an interdisciplinary team of WSU faculty. Our partnership with the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) is expanding and we expect to play a significant national role in developing the integrated research, education and enhancement of professional practice that will create the capacity to identify and respond effectively to cases of child abuse. We may well expand our scope to include programming that addresses abuse of the elderly as well, also in collaboration with NDAA.
In addition to our emphasis on a shared sense of purpose, we are building an ever-stronger sense of place. There are many examples of this but I will focus on the Center for Mississippi River Studies.

We have an integrated curriculum, a research agenda, a growing portfolio of alliances with other groups that study the river and a University on the River program to be offered on our new boat as well. Our faculty and students will focus on aspects of the river and its surroundings, such as: literature related to the river, the economy of river towns, history of the region, and the biology and ecosystems in and near the river. Our list of partners grows longer steadily: the Mississippi River Citizens Commission, Xcel Energy, the St. Paul Riverfront Commission, the City of Winona, the Minnesota Maritime Museum of Art, Living Lands and Waters, the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, the University of Minnesota, UW-LaCrosse, the Seven Rivers Alliance, the Riverview Learning Community, and there are probably more.

The Director of our Center captured the feel of our approach in a recent e-mail to me. He said, “Winona State University's Center for Mississippi River Studies is dedicated to creating greater understanding of the broad multi-faceted nature of the Mississippi River and the people and places it touches. Our hope is to transform both the meaning of the river and our relationship to it. As scholars and as people who live and work near it, we see the river as a laboratory, a canvas, an archive, a stage, a text, a great complicated thing worthy of contemplation, explication, interpretation and protection.” We now have our own craft, the River Explorer, that will serve as a floating classroom and research station for the study of the river.

Winona has a very special sense of history and enjoys several very distinctive and fragile environments with rare prairie communities that make up the ecology of the River. There is a record here of how people have used the land, and the marks of their presence and the lingering effects of that history offer a special opportunity to provide a living history and a cultural heritage that can attract visitors as well as students. As we
work together to restore Garvin Heights and reclaim the waterfront and as we add cultural events like the Great River Shakespeare festival and the Frozen River Film Festival, we can offer a very special experience and an opportunity to reflect on people, community and a working landscape.

- We are expanding our capacity to develop leaders for the 21st century by adding programs at the doctoral level. Our faculty have made significant progress in designing doctoral programs in both education and nursing practice, in each instance using a multi-institutional model that will draw on the distinctive strengths of other MnSCU universities as well as our own expertise.

- We are introducing a scholarly and evidence-based approach to developing ourselves as a University for the 21st century. Soon we can all view the evidence of what our L21 projects have accomplished. The principles of L21 as well as the goals of the President’s Work Plan are also being incorporated into other programs that support individual and team initiatives to enhance student learning, enrich our curriculum, integrate our core services and expand our capacity to partner with the broader community. This includes the recent innovation funds supporting projects designed by ASF members, the use of Professional Improvement Funds (PIF) and the design of additional rounds of L21 grants. All of this will be recorded and made available on our Learning for the 21st Century website in the section labeled Open Notebook.

All L21 initiatives are being assessed according to a common template that addresses several key concepts that derive from our basic premise that we will be a learner-centered university. Each theme has an assessment strategy and a place on a shared template that makes up our Open Notebook.

During this week of orientation, welcome and reflection, we will be exploring a number of themes that underlie L21 but the two most essential ideas are the concept of engagement and the concept of inclusive excellence.

To help us think about these ideas and to work out how they apply to us, the faculty has invited two national experts to join us. Barbara Holland, Executive Director of the National Service Learning Clearing House, will talk with us about community engagement and the future of higher education, the scholarship of engagement, and institutionalizing community engagement at WSU. Jeffrey Milem, Professor of Higher Education at the University of Arizona, will talk about the research that underlies our understanding of why diversity matters.
What does engagement mean and what will be different if we are an engaged university? Engagement has three meanings. First, it refers to how actively students participate as learners and how much they embrace their responsibility for designing and managing their own learning. Second, engagement refers to the way that scholarship is done—who participates, who helps frame the questions, who helps interpret the results and who cares about the knowledge generated and puts it to use. Third, engagement refers to the relationships of a campus to the broader world. An engaged university opens itself to the influence of the interests, expectations and needs of the communities it serves. In this sense, community is a complex term that can be defined by geographic region (for us, SE Minnesota and the Seven Rivers Region encompassing SE Minnesota, western Wisconsin and Northern Iowa), shared interests (e.g., the business community, educators, our sister institutions in MnSCU) or common characteristics or sense of identity (e.g. first generation college students, persons with disabilities, American Indians).

An important point to keep in mind is that universities are no longer simply located in communities. A concept is emerging within the larger theme of the engaged university that talked about the dimensions of university-community partnership that support a Stewardship of Place. This concept applies to every aspect of University life -- its curriculum, the scholarly interests of its faculty and students, its physical structure and relationship to the neighborhoods that surround the edges of the campus, and its core role in society. The result is a demand for an overhaul of the classic pillars of university life -- research, teaching and service -- to create a new triad of innovation, learning and shared leadership. In this emerging model, a university embraces new responsibility for being a strong partner and an entrepreneur in its own right, to support innovation and to invest directly in both community and economic development. Winona State should embrace this model. We are well positioned to be an entrepreneurial and engaged University and we are already shifting our role in the community to reflect this key priority.

Winona State University, as part of MnSCU, is dedicated to translational research (i.e., research that will yield useful knowledge that is applicable to practical problems and challenges of practice) and the scholarship of application (i.e., the ability to put knowledge to good use.)

What do you mean when you talk about the Region as a Creative Center and what is a CommUniversity? The concept of a CommUniversity is a special form of community engagement that fosters community development and a special sense of place. There is increasing evidence
that two critical assets – smart people and new discoveries -- are necessary for regions to create an innovative economy, livable communities, collaborative governance of society’s major instruments of growth, and social inclusion. Stewardship of Place calls on universities to play new roles in providing the people and ideas needed to compete in a world that is both global and intensely regional.

Regional growth and competitiveness are as much about the creative process and innovation as about creating jobs. Richard Florida (2002) in his book The Rise of the Creative Class lays out the characteristics that attract creative people and entrepreneurs to a community. Florida has concluded that people are drawn by the Quality of Place, that unique set of characteristics that define a place and make it attractive.

WSU is in a good position to invest in making SE Minnesota an excellent place to live, building on its many distinctive advantages such as the quality of the labor pool, excellent educational resources, quality of health care, abundant social services, and modest poverty and crime rates. Furthermore, SE Minnesota communities enjoy a higher degree of social cohesiveness than many other regions resulting in a high level of social capital. That is what we mean when we talk about a CommUniversity, a blending of the characteristics and assets of a university and the surrounding neighborhoods. This concept will affect how we work with our neighbors, the kind of student housing we build, the way we design our new academic facilities and remodel the older ones. By simply being here we have an impact on the community. Our goal is to make that impact a consistently positive one, modeling good citizenship, using the core principles of sustainable use of resources and campus operations and partnering with the Cities of Winona and Goodview and the County of Winona to make this place a Creative Center.

On its campuses in Winona, Winona State enjoys a wonderful setting that supports a campus community experience that is attractive and engaging. It is time to examine what happens along the edges of our campus boundaries in the neighborhoods that extend in all directions from our Main Campus. We have worked with the City of Winona to link our own campus planning with the strategic plan for the City in order to develop a shared approach to revitalization of the neighborhoods around both Main and West campus.

I am hearing a lot about cultural diversity and inclusive excellence. What does this mean and why are we talking about it so much? We are growing more diverse across many socioeconomic dimensions. Even if we were
not, we would be called to attend more fully and consistently to the matter of differences of all kinds as local industry expands its global operations, as all of us are expected to become competent global citizens and as new challenges arise that threaten the global order and world peace. The concept of inclusive excellence is a powerful way to ensure that our growing diversity unites us in common purpose rather than splintering us into smaller and smaller communities of interest.

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, diversity refers to “individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning[1].”

This concept of diversity is a powerful notion that comes from recent research on how people learn and how they make transitions along life’s path. As Sharon Merriam (2005) has argued, “All types of transitions hold the potential for learning and development.” This basic idea leads to the framework of inclusive excellence that sees the presence of meaningful differences and the movement across boundaries of one kind or another---geographical, personal, intellectual, social---as an essential pathway to learning and the development of a moral imagination. According to AAC&U, inclusive excellence is “the active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity---in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) in which individuals might connect---in ways that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathetic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.”

The people coming to college today are different from the generations that preceded them. If we want to accomplish our mission and serve our region and if we want to have sufficient funding to do so, we cannot confine ourselves to just part of the population nor can we continue to assume that we really know who our students are, how they think and how they learn. Sally Johnstone has helped us see that this morning so I won’t need to belabor the point. In the face of such changes, the ideas behind Inclusive Excellence and the demands of a 21st century education call us to think deeply and hard about how we approach our mission, how we interact with students and what we expect from ourselves and from others. In particular, Inclusive Excellence has four core elements (Williams et al 2005, p. vi).
1. A focus on student intellectual and social development and an emphasis on utilizing the assets of a university to offer a distinctive and powerful educational experience. This means looking at the relationship of academics and student affairs in fresh ways and opening up new forms of collaboration between our faculty and the scholar/practitioners (Schoen 1997) who staff student affairs to offer an outstanding student experience both in our classrooms and in other aspects of student life and development (Learning Reconsidered 2, 2006.)

2. A purposeful development and utilization of organizational resources to enhance student learning. This means establishing an organizational environment and culture that challenges each student to achieve academically at the highest possible levels and each member of the campus community to contribute to making that possible. We are, in this approach, all educators and we are all learners.

3. Attention to the cultural differences learners bring to the educational experience and a habit of seeing these differences as key educational assets.

4. A welcoming community that engages all of its diversity—defined generously to include many aspects of a person’s life and experience as well as the shared environment created by the blending of those experiences—in the service of both student learning and institutional learning and excellence.

**Turning WSU into a University for the 21st Century**

The continued development of Winona State University will be guided by a five-part strategy.

**DISTINCTIVE:** WSU will stand out from the crowd because of the quality and value of its academic programs that reflect both a sense of place and a sense of purpose. Among these programs will be a focus on the Upper Mississippi River and its history and the environment, children and families at risk, science, technology, engineering and mathematics education (STEM) and composite engineering, sustainability and environmental mediation.

**CONNECTED:** WSU will be connected with the surrounding community so closely that Southeast Minnesota will be another part of our learning environment. Our programs will educate for the 21st century and build the community at the same time with an emphasis on student housing and neighborhood revitalization, economic and community development, innovation and entrepreneurship and the arts.
NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED: WSU will be a working model of a 21st century university that invests in the improvement of the quality of life of our region in a collaborative mode that utilizes engaged scholarship and learning (i.e. learning and discovery that addresses community problems while advancing educational goals). WSU will be a university that learns differently, works together differently and makes a difference.

ATTRACTIVE TO STUDENTS: WSU will offer an outstanding student experience and attract students who want to learn what they can do and who want to make the world a better place.

ENTREPRENEURIAL: We will expand our presence throughout Southeast Minnesota and especially in Rochester. WSU will tap the rich resources of that community as a laboratory for innovative educational programs, economic and community development strategies, and a new model of cross-institutional collaboration to serve regional needs. WSU will become a more significant participant in regional development and will assist in fostering innovative businesses.

You have heard from Vice President Johnstone about large trends that are shaping higher education today and about what she, as a newcomer and a keen observer of higher education across the globe, thinks is distinctive about WSU. Let me pick up where Dr. Johnstone ended, reflecting on what we know as we stand at the dawn of the 21st century. Although my focus today has been mostly about WSU from inside out, reflecting on the year just past and the year to come, I want to pause to look at WSU from outside in.

The educational experience at all stages of an education has become increasingly difficult to characterize. Many changes, ranging from socioeconomic to geopolitical to demographic and cultural, have been so profound that all of the fundamentals are changing: what should be learned, how it should be learned, and when it should be learned, as well as, who the learners will be. The compact between the teacher and the learner is changing as the responsibility for coherence ceases to rest in the hands of individual institutions or departments or instructors. No longer can individual instructors safely assume that their students will have had common experiences before they enroll in a particular class. Nor is it often the case that education is the central purpose of the lives of our contemporary students, even if they are of traditional age and enrolled full time.

You have already heard this morning about the changes that will shape our
future: (a) the rapidly changing state of knowledge and how knowledge is used; (b) the increasing fluidity of disciplines, by which we mean the convergence and integration of fields and methodologies—a phenomenon rarely reflected in the design or content of the undergraduate or masters level curriculum; (c) new technologies that create new opportunities for us to model, simulate, and conduct joint experimentation with research and learning in cyberspace-supported collaborative environments; (d) new undergraduate populations with different motivations, educational objectives and histories of participation and success in advanced education; (e) a rapidly changing professoriate as the faculty who were hired during the Baby Boom prepare to retire; (f) a proliferation of pathways and educational options available to students with a resulting educational environment that is complex and often difficult to navigate; (g) an inability to depend in the future on an endlessly growing supply of high skills, well-educated life-long learners, both domestic and international, to fill the new jobs being created in our knowledge-based and global economy; (h) new expectations for college graduates and new demands in the workplace; (i) new pressures to provide access to quality education as a component of community and economic development (e.g. Rochester); and, (j) new public demands for productivity, affordability and accountability.

To respond to all of these demands, our society as a whole must become a learning society. Our institutions must be learning communities. All of us must see ourselves as learners and educators, whatever our roles and however we interact with each other and our students. As David Mathews (2006) points out[2], we need to change our patterns of interaction and exchange with each other and our region and rethink our approach to educating our students because the number of wicked problems is growing—“the kinds of problems where the diagnosis or definition is unclear, the location or cause is uncertain, and any effective action to deal with it requires narrowing the gap between what is and what ought to be---in the face of disagreement about the latter.”

Creating a Distinctive Institution

The mission of Winona State University is to educate and enlighten our citizenry at a distinctive institution: a community of learners dedicated to improving our world.

A small number of powerful ideas underlie our approach to Learning in the 21st Century and to the shaping of an institutional environment that can support an educationally rich context for learning. I will list these ideas and
then explore each one in turn. If we truly live our mission and incorporate it into our educational philosophy, our institutional practices and our deeper sense of purpose and meaning, we will stand out from the crowd and create conditions that will support the kind of learning that is expected and demanded in the 21st century.

The Greater Expectations Panel assembled by the Association of American Colleges and Universities spent two years exploring what it means to be well educated. The resulting report is built firmly upon a liberal education, a philosophy of learning that draws inspiration from challenging encounters with important issues and with difficult differences that make us question our ideas and assumptions about life. We must ask our students to join us in exploring the complexities of the human condition. Together, we can advance knowledge and put what we learn to good use in service to others.

At WSU, we are doing our best to model the essential traits of an educated person: open-mindedness, informed judgment and empathy. We seek to exercise moral imagination (Nussbaum 2004) and to view with sympathy and understanding the experience of people who live at a distance from us, or who look different from ourselves or who have different values and cultural experiences. It allows us to take seriously the lives of other people and to be concerned about their well-being. In a world connected now in new and intimate ways, the qualities of empathy and moral imagination are more important than ever and our efforts to expand the international dimensions of the campus community and the scope of our international programs reflects our commitment to preparing our students and ourselves for the Conceptual Age.

I wish to propose several assumptions that can offer guidance to us as we open a new academic year.

1. A contemporary curriculum must incorporate both formal study and a reflection upon life experiences. As Andre Leskes wrote in her foreword to one of the Greater Expectations Academy in Transition series by Mary Taylor Huber and Pat Hutchings (2004), Integrative Learning. Mapping the Terrain, “While education has long been seen as a vehicle for learning how to integrate life experiences, formal study, diverse perspectives, and knowledge gained over time, the challenges of the contemporary world have brought a new urgency to the issues of connection and integration.(p. iv) This essential integration is now envisioned as an especially effective path to producing learners for the 21st century who are “intentional
about the process of acquiring learning, empowered by the mastery of intellectual and practical skills, informed by knowledge from various disciplines and responsible for their actions and those of society (Leskes in Huber and Hutchings 2004, p. iv).”

2. The curriculum must provide conditions for the fostering of creativity. In the past several years, as observers of society have marked the onset of the conceptual age and the emergence of the creative class, it has become clear that creativity is not the exclusive purview of a few gifted individuals. Like the “science is for all” movement, we are seeing the gradual emergence of “creativity for all.” The stage was set for this by Kay Redfield Jamison in her book Exuberance. The Passion for Life. According to Jamieson, “Exuberance is an abounding, ebullient, effervescent emotion...It spreads upward and outward, like pollen toled by dancing bees, and in this carrying ideas are moved and actions taken. (Jamison 2004, p. 4).” Although Jamison observed that true ebullience “is teeming in some and not to be caught sight of in others (Jamison 2004, p. 5),” it is likely that what we see here is untutored creativity. It is perfectly reasonable to expect that, under the right conditions, all of us can experience something akin to this emotion which takes hold when thought and action come together seamlessly, when true connections get made. What conditions foster creativity and flow? According to Tepper (2006, p. 4), “Creativity thrives on those campuses where there is abundant cross-cultural exchange and a great deal of ‘border’ activity between disciplines, where collaborative work is commonplace, risk taking is rewarded, failure is expected, and the creative arts are pervasive and integrated into campus life.”

3. The educational experience must build across time in both intellectual complexity and significance of the outcomes. An essential feature of a practical liberal education is that it is neither confined to the general education component of a curriculum or confined to the undergraduate experience. Integrative learning (Huber and Hutchings 2004) must be developed by serious attention to underlying connections and alignments of the different intellectual, social and organizational structures of an institution. If this were not difficult enough, a 21st century curriculum also must have its roots in K-12 and its further realization in graduate study and the work of scholar practitioners. It is, in other words, a continuum across the lifespan. What holds the whole continuum together is a rich conception of scholarship that includes students as well as faculty members, staff and community members.

4. Learning must be built on an integrated concept of scholarship. We have begun to appreciate that the intellectual, social and cultural demands
of a truly global environment will place new expectations upon higher education. We must educate for a new age where the traditional categories of academic life—research, teaching and service—must be integrated, both in the life of our faculty and in the experiences of our students. To accomplish this, we must move beyond the boundaries that we have held so dear and explore new concepts of what it means to be educated in the 21st century and what it means to be a scholar and teacher. A 21st century curriculum must be an engaged curriculum. The experience of engagement will become the pathway to a fresh interpretation of the role of higher education in the 21st century. This conception rests on a rethinking of the core of the academy—namely, the nature of scholarship itself and our expectations for the undergraduate experience. The goal of engaged scholarship is not to define and serve the public good directly on behalf of society, but to create conditions for the public good to be interpreted and pursued in a collaborative mode with the community. In contemporary life, the exercise of citizenship requires constant learning and the thoughtful and ethical application of knowledge. By including our students in engaged scholarship, we introduce them to basic concepts and, at the same time, offer them a chance to explore the application and consequences of ideas in the company of mature scholars and practitioners. In an engaged model, a group of people with complementary knowledge and skill work in a collaborative mode to create adaptive responses to often contested and poorly defined problems (the “swampy lowlands” of David Schoen 1997, p. 3.)

We must practice what we teach and align our resources with our intentions. We have spent the past year doing this and will continue to pay attention to alignment of our resources and our goals in the year to come. Earlier this morning, you were introduced to a batch of people with new assignments as a result of the completion of phase one of our administrative reorganization. The reorganization of the administration of Winona State University is designed to provide the capacity we need to achieve our mission by bringing together offices, services and functions that are complementary and that would benefit from closer alignment and by more tightly focusing the scope of each vice presidential area to ensure that every senior officer has a reasonable number of responsibilities and a portfolio of closely-related functions and programs. The reorganization plan is also intended to contribute to our capacity to accomplish our institutional goals and to prepare for our emergence as an institution that stands out from the crowd in a number of admirable ways. These aspirations guide our approach to innovation and program
development[3]. The context for the changes in the central administration is set by our strategic goals as articulated in the FY 06 Presidential Work plan[4] and by the initial implementation of our Learning for the 21st Century plans. We intend to provide more support for the accomplishment of our goals, each of which requires a distinctive and effective infrastructure created from an integrative blending of our current capacities.

a. Goal One: Provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs that respond to economic, environmental and social challenges and serve as a durable foundation for the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, habits and capabilities of a well-educated person.

b. Goal Two: Provide opportunities and experiences that instill global competence and learning opportunities that will make a difference in improving our world.

c. Goal Three: Development the infrastructure that supports a culture of change and innovation and that demonstrates new ways of working together to provide an environment that supports and sustains scholarly excellence and outstanding student experiences.

d. Goal Four: Create a learning environment that promotes active learning, interdisciplinary collaboration and new ways to work together.

**WSU in Rochester: A Collaborate Model for Urban Education**

Rochester offers a model in progress that illustrates all of the elements that I have introduced today, especially the interplay of engagement and inclusive excellence in a multi-institutional and multi-cultural setting. As planned in the study phase of L21, we will continue to add resources to our Rochester Center as well as to the Office of Outreach and Continuing Education (OCED). The OCED portfolio will expand to include more intensive collaboration with communities in SE Minnesota as well as an increase in our emphasis on evening, weekend and summer programming in order to diversify the number of students we serve and the educational programming we offer them. Our programming and engagement in the Rochester area will contribute to the achievement of all of our University Goals but will be especially important in addressing Goal One.

Rochester and the surrounding communities in Southeast Minnesota are already recognized as centers of entrepreneurship and creativity. In order to continue to expand its knowledge-based industry in the future, Rochester will need a diverse and talented workforce. The health of the economy of the region will require a growing number of people educated in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. Much remains to be done to ensure that the increasingly diverse population of
our region succeeds in preparing to enter an increasingly sophisticated workforce. The opportunities that will open up as a result of the growing R&D capacity created by a new level of investment in the biomedical sciences and bioinformatics and by advanced educational opportunities in the health sciences, will benefit the entire region, including the Winona area.

At the same time, the changing nature of the region and its people will place demands on all of our communities and the organizations---K-12 education, criminal justice, government, social services, support for small and mid-sized businesses---that make our communities good places to live, study and work. Rochester will need additional support not only from the University of Minnesota but also from other post secondary institutions, including Winona State University and Rochester Community and Technical College. We must work in close cooperation with each other and with the citizens of Rochester to ensure that pathways to productive careers are clear and easy to negotiate and that the capacity to support economic and community development is readily accessible and effective.

As opportunities expand in the Rochester area, new possibilities will open up for Winona State University to serve a growing population of students in new and effective ways, both those who study in Rochester and those who study primarily in Winona. We plan to use the growing and complex experience of the Rochester community as an engaging classroom and laboratory for the preparation of graduates who will live and work in the changing environment of the 21st century.

This year, WSU made progress in opening a new level of cooperation with the University of Minnesota in Rochester by signing a mutual memorandum of understanding that identified several areas for joint UM/WSU collaboration.

We are also exploring collaborations here in Winona. We are building closer ties to St. Mary’s University and SE Tech and are exploring new partnerships with several other two-year institutions as well. In developing these relationships, our goal is to create pathways to advanced education and support for a highly skilled workforce and to link our programs to the areas of greatest promise economically as well as ensure that the region has the skills it needs for a sustainable environment. By sustainability we mean “social and cultural environments in which we can satisfy our needs and aspirations without diminishing the chances of future generations (Fritz Capra, The Web of Life).”
Conclusion

You will see many changes at WSU over the next several years. We have completed the first year of our Learning for the 21st Century implementation and the results are beginning to emerge. Our progress has been slower than we had planned due to the capping of our tuition increase last summer but we have been able to implement our plans on a sufficiently large scale to be able to test our ideas. As we enter the fall semester of 2006, our first set of findings and our interpretation of what we have learned will soon be posted on the WSU website in the form of an electronic institutional portfolio that we have called our Open Notebook.

To set up a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, we are issuing a series of requests for proposals to address our curriculum, our relationship with the community and the productivity and quality of our internal environment.

As we do so, we are guiding our work with a few simple Change Principles.

1. Design policies and infrastructure that support our shared mission and goals so that we can truly live our espoused mission.
2. Allow our shared vision to drive change rather than a set of management directives. Do this by developing clear principles and tests for deciding what options to pursue and by holding ourselves to a clear culture of evidence.
3. Invest in people and in promising ideas. Maintain an innovation component to the annual budget to use to support continued experimentation and the exploration of ways to enhance teaching and learning.
4. Involve as many people as possible, including the doubters and nay-sayers in the design, implementation and evaluation of our projects.
5. Encourage experimentation and common sense. Draw on the tacit knowledge that this institution enjoys and make good use of what people know.
6. Approach change as scholarly work and adopt the same standards that any discipline would apply to its own scholarly contributions. Expect a clear warrant for any proposed project or change agenda.
7. Make sure that any institutional planning is really a learning process and provide an environment that encourages risk-taking and an entrepreneurial attitude.
8. Encourage people to work together in informal networks and trust people to be intelligent, to care about WSU and our students and to do their best.

Although the Academic Initiative Package is the highly visible part of our
Learning for the 21st Century package, we also will be paying close attention to the rest of L21, namely the expansion and integration of our core to support our ability to become a University for the 21st Century and the redesign of core services.

We are in danger of pricing higher education out of the reach of those segments of our population who are least able and willing to bear the responsibility and attending debt burden that society persists in passing from the taxpayer to our students and their families. Without new ways of financing higher education, we will continue to see institutions slashing their budgets and raising their tuition whenever there is an economic downturn, while failing to make the changes in their campus operations, cost structure and academic programs that would make them more financially viable. It is time to practice the three R’s: Revenue enhancement, Restructuring and cost Reduction. At the same time, we must continuously improve the quality that students and communities can expect in return for their investment in postsecondary education. While we are doing that, we must stand out from the crowd if we are to attract and serve students who have many other choices. This means that we must learn differently and continuously, work together differently and measure our accomplishments differently.

These changing realities are already impacting the resources available to us and the policy and political environment in which we operate. Powerful socioeconomic forces have been set loose that will shape the educational landscape in ways that we are only just beginning to understand. It is time to turn our attention to what we have learned this past year as we have begun implementing our plans to become a true community of learners dedicated to improving our world.

Expansion of our Core: Supporting The University of the 21st Century.

This component will be less visible to the campus as a whole, but just as important. We will create the capacity to support an engaging and integrative approach to learning. It will include the infrastructure for career development, enhancements to our IT platform that will support portfolios, instructional design, and coordination of campus activities that will enhance the learning experience. Another expansion of the core is in Advancement, where we will create greater capacity to seek external support for our students and for program development and delivery to
allow us to build on the quality programs we have in the absence of adequate funding from the state. This represents the Revenue enhancement portion of the Three R’s.

**Redesign and Integration of Core Services.**

Innovation and experimentation always place heavy demands on the basic functions of an institution and require the development of additional capacity to handle the business of the institution in productive ways. Our goal is to free up valuable time to engage in creative thinking and time to build new working relationships. At the same time, our enrollment has grown much faster in recent years than our resource base and we must redesign our core to support our larger student body. This year we will be examining how we do the basic work of the campuses in those areas that most directly affect the work of our faculty, staff and students, with the intention of redesigning these basic functions---our core---to ensure that they can sustain the additional demands of the Expansion Phase.

A foundational project in this category is Integrative Academic Services (IAS). The goal of IAS is to ensure that students do not need to learn how the institution works in order to make it work for them. Our own organizational structure, distribution of roles and responsibilities, and ways of doing business should be transparent to students. They should not have to know how we conduct our work in order to transact business with us or to get their questions answered. In turn, this will free many of our staff to use their time very differently, in much more meaningful and supportive ways to help students be successful.

The other aspects of examining our core are buried more deeply in the fabric of our daily work. We started with the processes we use to recruit and hire new faculty and staff and our approach to working with two-year institutions and our transfer students. We have begun a Leadership Academy to help us identify good topics for further development and to practice the skills of collaborative leadership that are essential as we continue to reshape the support structure that we will need to serve our
students and communities well in the future.

Welcome to a new year of exploration and commitment to excellence in everything that we do. This is always a special time of year when people gather together, catch up on each others’ lives and experiences and commit themselves to working together to open WSU to new experiences, new people and new opportunities. I hope that you will enjoy this week of greetings and reflection, of dreams and hopes and that you will dedicate yourselves anew to the privilege of being a member of a community of learners at an exemplary institution that seeks to dedicate itself to improving the world.

**Bibliography**


Tepper, Steven (2006) Taking the Measure of the Creative Campus. peer Review 8(2): 4-12.


[4] The Workplan is posted on the President’s Home Page. It represents the joint planning of the Cabinet and Council of Administrators.