WSU in 2009: A Preview of Where We are Headed

If you wish to know what WSU will look like and feel like in the future, take a look around you as you enjoy the events of our orientation week.

• Meet our new students.
• Notice the open space where Howell Hall used to be.
• Visit the new faculty/staff Learning Commons in Maxwell to learn how you can get support for your research and instructional goals.
• Walk past the construction sites of the Integrated Wellness Complex and our new residence hall.
• Say hello to friends and colleagues and welcome our new faculty and staff members.
• Take a moment to learn about some of the recent accomplishments of our students.

The future is already here, slowly expanding and engaging us in new ways of learning, new ways of working together and new ways of improving our world. We have been building the University of the Future for several years now and its outlines are starting to take shape.

What I did not understand when I first came to WSU was what it really means to become a member of a community of learners improving our world—for each of us personally and professionally, for our students, for our partners in the community. As I enter my fifth year of service to Winona State, I want to begin by reflecting on what this university and its people have taught me and how my experience here is changing what I have grown to expect of myself and of others.

The events of this past year have had profound effects on each of us. Our resilience, our trust in each other, our commitment to the higher purpose of education all have shown us that we can make good things happen—no matter what materials we have to work with and no matter what challenges and opportunities we encounter. As we enter a new academic year, we are stronger than ever.

This past year, we have faced budget challenges, extensive water damage in Maxwell and the loss of one of our international students in a tragic accident. All of these events share some features in common. They are reshaping how we are using the talents and expertise of our faculty and staff, how we are organized, how the work of the institution gets done, how we solve problems.

More importantly, however, each of these events has revealed a deep sense of compassion, mutual respect and concern for the greater good within our campus community. In times of
greatest need, we behave with uncommon grace and concern. I have been inspired by what I have seen, and comforted at the same time.

Meanwhile, we are quietly in the midst of making changes in how we support our educational mission and how we integrate our efforts across campus and within our community. You can see some of this for yourselves this week. Change is everywhere.

- Different roles and responsibilities
- Different organizational designs
- Different ways to combine our expertise
- New uses of space
- Leadership throughout the institution
- Different ways to chart our progress and demonstrate the value of our work

We have enjoyed another remarkable year while threading our way through difficult financial challenges. I will start with the story of our budget challenges and then discuss our accomplishments and future direction.

Navigating Through Tough Times

As the state’s economic condition continued to deteriorate, Governor Pawlenty imposed an unallotment of $20 million on MnSCU in December 2008, halfway through our fiscal year. WSU’s share of that budget cut was $921,985. We handled the unallotment through a combination of cuts, including salary and fringe benefit savings from unfilled positions, the elimination of five vacant staff positions and two administrative positions, and a one-time reduction to our Innovation Fund. We are redistributing the workload associated with those positions by redesigning some of our core support functions.

We spent the spring semester planning for the most likely budget scenario as we awaited the dawn of the next biennium. So far, things haven’t turned out quite as bad as expected, but we still have some tough work ahead of us. Our state funding in fiscal year 2010 was cut 11.9%, or $3,650,686, and an unallotment of $50 million to MnSCU is expected in FY11.

We have identified approximately two-thirds of the cuts we need to make, and many of the cuts are deep and will have very real consequences. Fortunately, we have some time to finish the job as well as one-time support from the Federal stimulus package.

- WSU will receive $1,524,964 in FY10 for operations and similar amounts in FY11.
- WSU will receive $846,070 in FY10 for tuition buy-down.
- Tuition will rise by 5% but students will pay only 60% of the increase (+3%) in FY10.
- We expect another 5% increase in tuition for FY11 but the prospect of a further buy-down to help our students remains unclear.
I am very proud of how we are handling this difficult process together as a community.

**Creating the biennial budget:** Despite the fiscal challenges that we face Winona State finds itself in a strong position, as we start the new biennium. We have already identified approximately $1,819,542 in a combination of savings through the elimination of vacant positions (2 administrative and 5 staff), reduction of administrative costs and operating budgets, early retirements (3 faculty members), restructuring, and revenue generation.

Assuming our enrollment patterns remain robust, the remaining budget gap is about $1 million, and we hope to close that gap through a combination of early retirements, restructuring and additional revenue generation over the next two years. For example, we anticipate an additional $200,000 in revenue from our Summer Session this year due to the redesign of our approach to summer programming and a new budget model.

Although we do not yet know the full impact of the FY11 unallotment, we estimate that it will have only a modest effect on our plans once we have achieved our FY10 budget goals.

We plan to use a portion of our one-time stimulus funding to (a) underwrite additional early incentive packages; (b) complete some additional classroom and laboratory enhancements to ensure our continued attractiveness to potential students and protect our educational environment and (c) support the restructuring of professional programs such as Nursing. We also plan to restore our Innovation Fund to encourage further experiments designed to enhance student success.

We have been able to manage the 11.9% reduction in our state appropriation ($3,650,686) by following a set of budget guidelines and a process of budget review developed in consultation with our constituency groups and by utilizing a four-point strategy for assessing all potential actions. We have been gratified by the results that we have obtained as a campus community. For additional information, please see the materials and documents that we have posted on the president’s office web page as well as our Budget 101 materials.

We have held open forums attended by all members of the Cabinet and the Council of Deans as well as individual sessions with members of each of our colleges. We held special sessions in Rochester for our faculty and staff and a joint session with the leadership of RCTC to discuss how to manage our budget development in Rochester in ways that would protect our growing collaboration at the University Center-Rochester. We built a budget suggestion box on our homepage for campus users. The All-University Finance and Facilities Committee held campus-wide information sessions and reviewed proposed administrative actions. In combination, these

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1 Budget planning site [http://www.winona.edu/president/10590.htm](http://www.winona.edu/president/10590.htm) and Budget 101 site [http://www.winona.edu/adminaffairs/budget_101.asp](http://www.winona.edu/adminaffairs/budget_101.asp)
steps helped to maintain open and consistent communication and an opportunity for campus participation in the identification and evaluation of budget options.

Our strategy includes:

- **Shared Principles:** Put students first. Protect academic integrity. Generate revenue. Consider layoffs only as a last resort.
- **Clear Goals:** (1) Support academic innovation, distinctiveness and excellence. (2) Enrich the student experience and support student success. (3) Expand our climate commitment and sustainability efforts.
- **Mindset:** We are investing in our future and the budget is an investment portfolio.
- **Discipline:** Revisit all assumptions and look for buried assumptions that are worth exploring. Examine all significant expenditures carefully--Is it an essential investment? If so, is this the best way to accomplish our goals? If not, how can we redesign this function or program to ensure that it works well and can function with the staff levels available? (Note: We have begun to expand the capacity of our campus community to employ Lean strategies and tools to redesign and restructure many of our core functions.)

We will continue to build on this strong consultative model for managing our budget and for dealing with any additional challenges as the year unfolds.

The wonderful thing about Winona State University that emerges during times of difficulty is that we are all in this together. I have heard that phrase over and over again. People going well beyond what anyone might reasonably expect of them just smile and say something like, “That’s what I’m here for. It’s my job.” We all saw that spirit in January, when most of the occupants of Maxwell were forced out of their shiny new quarters by an unexpected flood. They kept smiling— at least most of the time—as they worked crammed elbow to elbow into small spaces. They even began to think about what lessons they had learned during their exile that might allow them to serve our students better. We saw the same spirit when we wrapped up our Sesquicentennial celebrations and joined together as a community to commemorate the lasting contributions of the university’s first 150 years. And, we saw it when we lost one of our international students this summer in a tragic accident. People walked more than an extra mile to ensure that he was never left alone in the hospital and that his family members, when they finally arrived from China, were given as much care and support as we could possibly offer.

**Our actions tell our story**

**Academic Excellence:** The quality of the academic programs and the WSU community is reflected at many levels of our institution, from the recognition of individual faculty and student achievement to acknowledgement of the institution as a whole. For example, one of our faculty members was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame – quite a distinction for a
public university faculty member. At the other end of the scale, the institution was inducted—
with distinction—into the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Honor Roll. Our
student achievements are just as impressive. We have a student who was awarded soldier of the
year, along with a group of students that was granted the honor of participating in an exclusive
academic program in our nation’s capital during the Obama Inauguration.

We have increased partnerships and collaborations – with businesses, agencies, and several
MnSCU institutions - in order to enrich our academic programs and bring them closer to the
realities of practice. Our collaborative work strongly reflects our signature themes of (a)
sustainable development, the environment and climate commitment [see section on WSU Goes
Green], (b) integrated approaches to health care and wellness and fitness [see section on
Construction] and (c) advocacy for children and families [see section on Advancement].

As a special example that captures all three of our signature themes, in May we celebrated the
graduation of the inaugural class of Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) students. We are
continuing the preliminary planning and piloting of a regional science resource center, a math
achievement center, and a very differently-designed teacher education curriculum targeted to
transfer students coming from our partner–Rochester Community and Technical College. These
are all being designed not only for underserved and underprepared students, but as resources for
the continuing professional development of students and teachers.

We continue to invest in innovation in the curriculum, from small projects such as integrating
engagement opportunities into classes to more comprehensive programs like the Common Book
and American Democracy programs. Innovation investments have led to new certificates in
Sustainability and Educational Lean and have revitalized and updated courses, practica, and
professional development opportunities in critical areas: STEM, Special Education, Social Work,
Global Studies, our Language School and the Health Sciences.

We have invested in restructuring and increasing the capacity of our academic support areas –
most specifically peer tutoring, teaching and learning with technology, and assessment and
institutional research. By introducing Educational Lean into many of our processes and academic
areas, we are beginning to see the results of our investments in “innovative change” such as
integrated models of support and curricular reform.

We are proceeding with several phases and levels of accountability reporting and preparation for
accreditation visits. The institution is slated for an HLC accreditation review team visit in
2011-12. Additionally, we are preparing for accreditation reports and visits in Education,
Engineering and Nursing. Finally, the Business School’s accreditation board announced we are
ready for our preliminary visit – a year ahead of schedule.
Signature Themes. Over the past several years, two signature themes have emerged as interests and programs have begun to converge upon each other from many directions. The two themes are the Environment and Sustainability (also called our Climate Commitment) and New Models of Health Care. This year, these two signature areas of emphasis have begun to combine in interesting ways in both the construction of the Integrated Wellness Complex and in HealthForce Minnesota, our Center of Excellence in Health Science Education and Practice.

Environment and Sustainability

WSU Goes Green: With the encouragement of our faculty leadership, Winona State became one of the early signatories to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. During FY09, WSU continued advancing its “WSU Goes Green” strategy, designed to achieve climate neutrality and promote the university as a regional institution for environmental stewardship. For example, we took steps to strengthen our alliance with Sustain Winona, an organization of seven community-based partner institutions focused on a wide range of sustainability goals. In June, an independent audit group sponsored by Purdue University certified Sustain Winona’s Environmental Management System to be in compliance with international standards to support environmental protection. WSU also progressed with its energy performance contracting initiative, which leverages future energy savings to pay for present day energy-saving upgrades to the campus’s physical plant. In a major step, WSU contracted ICS Consulting, Inc., to develop a request for proposals that will allow the university to hire a private energy service company to complete its performance contract process.

In April, WSU broke ground on an $18 million Integrated Wellness Complex that will be the first LEED Silver certified structure in Winona County. In addition to advancing these major initiatives, the university launched the “WSU Goes Green” website, established 72 new recycling stations across campus, and initiated car sharing (Zipcars arrive on campus Sept. 1) and bike sharing programs aimed at encouraging students and employees to explore modes of alternative transportation. This coming year, the university will foster a focus on sustainable foods, encouraging students and employees alike to consider not only what they eat but also where it came from and the environmental cost. Finally, signifying WSU’s long-term commitment to reducing its carbon footprint, the university began the process of hiring a full-time sustainability coordinator.

New Models of Health Care

HealthForce Minnesota: We are starting the fifth year of development of our Center of Excellence. Under current leadership, we have taken a leap forward and now have even more projects and partnerships across the state. Our model is based on collaboration “without walls” that takes place with industry and education partners who provide leadership for the Center and through competitively awarded projects that address the goals of the Center. We are rapidly proving the value of the Center of Excellence model.
Last year we established a Minneapolis office in association with the City of Minneapolis to address the pressing health care workforce needs in the metropolitan area, and this year we have expanded our collaborations with several of Minnesota’s major health care providers. These provider systems play a major role in driving the Minnesota economy. MnSCU now has access to most of the main healthcare provider systems in the state though HealthForce.

We also have begun working much more closely with the Healthcare Education-Industry Partnership to coordinate and enhance the value of these investments and to take advantage of the differences between the two approaches to working with the health care industry. We are on track to propose the consolidation of these two entities in early 2010. This year we used our investment funds to support the continuation and further development of the most promising projects that began in previous years with HealthForce Minnesota support. With the emphasis on health care in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, our affiliation with partners like Workforce Development, Inc. has intensified, and we have successfully obtained funding to provide programming for displaced and underemployed workers in the Rochester area.

**Winona State: The Future Becoming Visible**

The outlines of WSU for the 21st century are becoming visible. The signs are evident in our Advancement agenda, in the way that our interactions with the region make a difference in the lives of the people who live and work here, in our continued attractiveness to potential students, in the success of our current students, in our steady progress toward becoming a more diverse and inclusive community of learners, in the accomplishments of our student athletes, in the construction projects on campus, in our innovative use of technology to create a more supportive learning environment and in our growing commitment to the Rochester community.

**Advancement:** The public phase of our Light the Way campaign was launched in August 2008. To date, we have raised $7,787,399.22, or 78% of our $10 million goal. So far, we have received the following support: Integrated Wellness Complex ($3.2M), scholarships ($4.1M) and our National Child Protection Training Center (NCPTC) ($528K). In addition, our efforts to obtain federal support for the NCPTC continue to bear fruit. To create the capacity to eliminate child abuse in three generations, we are expanding our NCPTC network to include additional affiliates, currently in Arkansas and New Jersey, and we are working on a governance structure that will support a multi-generational effort.

This year we passed a very important milestone as our WSU Foundation distributed more than $1 million in scholarships. The WSU Foundation Board has completed a major transition in leadership and added six new members from across the country this summer. The FY09 annual fund pledges increased 12% over FY08 and the average pledge through the alumni telethon increased 2.9%. We wrapped up a successful Sesquicentennial celebration in 2008, which
included a national award for our historical timeline mural that was created by our Marketing and Communications office.

We continue to build strong ties with our alumni. We saw a 27% increase in the number of alumni who participated in alumni events this year, when compared to 2008. A new collaboration between Alumni Relations and Career Services provides support for alumni who need additional advice and assistance as a result of the economic downturn and provides additional placement opportunities for current students. Visits to our alumni website tripled this year and a much higher percentage of our alumni signed on with the WSU alumni network.

Our Marketing and Communications offices have taken the lead in building a new web site for the university and are steadfastly reshaping and aligning our outreach messages to present and highlight the WSU story.

Regional workforce and economic development

We have begun a strategic effort to contribute to the economic vitality of our region through workforce development with the hiring of our first full-time administrator in Outreach & Continuing Education (OCED). In response to the needs of regional employers, OCED designed and developed a 19-credit certificate in Organizational Leadership for adult learners that provides an academic and career pathway to a 4-year completion degree in Professional Studies. It is the first undergraduate certificate of its kind in our system, and focuses on meeting the needs of working adults while addressing a major labor market shortage in leadership capacity. OCED received a $99,000 grant from Workforce Development, Inc. to pilot this certificate for 20 dislocated workers in southeast Minnesota. OCED is also collaborating with the Benedictine Health System to provide a year-long Leadership Academy for frontline, emerging leaders in Rochester, and for leaders within a regional healthcare consortium.

During the course of the last year, OCED has been engaged in several key partnerships.

- Through MnSCU Innovation Funding, OCED was awarded $30,000 to design and develop a blended curriculum for an Energy Resource Advisor (ERA) certificate in partnership with Eagle Bluff Environmental Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Winona County Environmental Services, and Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs). Once this curriculum is piloted, it is intended to be shared with five other institutions within the MnSCU system for a statewide roll-out.
- Through the 7 Rivers Alliance, we are collaborating with other key partners on economic development initiatives in our tri-state region, including the development of a bio-composites cluster and the first bio-composites conference in our region.
- Just north of Rochester, we are nurturing a relationship with the Pine Island Economic Development Authority (EDA) and the Elk River BioBusiness Park,
working in collaboration with several partners to meet the emerging needs of an enterprise that has the potential of creating 15,000 to 24,000 new jobs.

**Enrollments:** Interest in WSU remains strong. We have received a record number of applications to WSU for fall 2009 (a total of 6,482 freshman applications and 1,244 transfer applications as of June 16) and a very strong yield of admitted students registering for classes in our early registration program. We are expecting to meet or exceed our overall projected enrollment of 8,250 for FY10. We continue to see improvements in both the level of preparation and the retention of our students. We anticipate that our residence halls will once again open at full occupancy; in fact, we are anticipating that our halls will open at above 100% capacity (in fall 2008 we opened at 108%, the largest resident count to date).

To prepare for the demographic challenges ahead as well as to support enhanced collaboration with our colleagues in the two-year sector, we have made a number of improvements for transfer students, including additional articulation agreements with two-year institutions, the implementation of early advising and registration as well as an enhanced orientation program. These improvements are starting to make a difference, and we will continue to improve our outreach and support for transfer students.

**Construction Projects:** Throughout FY 2009, Winona State launched construction projects involving both renovation of existing buildings and construction of new facilities. We also completed the long-awaited demolition of Howell Hall, which will be replaced with green space.

In April, WSU broke ground on an $18 million Integrated Wellness Complex that expands the university’s commitment to comprehensive health and wellness education. In May, we began construction on our second capital project, a $29 million, 408-bed residence hall that will provide up-to-date living spaces and amenities for students while also eliminating a large deferred maintenance backlog in existing residence halls. In June, MnSCU approved a $4 million project for the construction of two pedestrian tunnels under the existing Canadian Pacific Railway, which bisects the WSU campus. Work is also proceeding on a $1.9 million project to upgrade heating and air conditioning (HVAC) in Phelps Hall. Along with the HVAC project, work is progressing on a new Radio/TV studio in Phelps Hall.

Additionally, this past spring the university completed its much anticipated faculty commons project, which houses multiple faculty support functions in a central location in Maxwell Hall.

Numerous lesser, but still important, projects also progressed, such as plumbing upgrades at Maria Hall, a new entryway to our student commons at Kryzsko Hall, replacement of the synthetic turf at Maxwell Field and an environmentally friendly permeable concrete parking lot. Each of these efforts moves the campus in Winona toward a more supportive environment for a 21\textsuperscript{st} century education and reflects our overarching theme of supporting healthy people in healthy working relationships in a healthy environment.
Diversity: We have continued to intensify our efforts to diversify our campus community and expand our international programming. Our minority population increased again this year, growing from 4.2% during fall 2003 to 5.3% in fall 2008. The increase resulted from a number of coordinated efforts that are outlined in the FY09 university work plan\(^2\), including the development of relationships with high schools and two-year colleges as well as offering presentations, programs and workshops to prospective and current students. Given the lack of diversity in southeast Minnesota, we are proud of this modest increase, and we continue to focus on attracting students of color to WSU and supporting their academic success. The Access and Opportunity Grant has been instrumental in our campaign to attract and retain underrepresented students; this summer 43 high school students were on campus for our Boys to Men Leadership Academy, which was funded through this grant program. We have also enhanced our efforts to work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and succeed in college. We are very serious about increasing our diversity – international and domestic – and providing pathways to success for all of our students, traditional age as well as returning adults.

Support for students: We continue to invest in support for student learning and success by enriching the student experience. At WSU, we are committed to providing a healthy environment for our students and promoting a culture of responsibility. In January 2009, the entire WSU campus became a tobacco-free environment. Surveys of students taken in spring 2009 indicate a very high level of awareness of the policy change and a high level of knowledge relating to how to find information on smoking cessation.

In an effort to support our students in the classroom, we increased student success in historically difficult classes through Supplemental Instruction (SI). The number of students attending SI in 2008-09 increased by 20.4% over the previous year and on average, participants earned grades that were .67 points higher than students who did not attend Supplemental Instruction.

We also enriched the student advising experience, an important component in the success of students. Over the past several years we have consistently increased student satisfaction with advising of undeclared students. In spring 2009, 93% of undeclared students responded yes to the question, “Are you satisfied with the advising you received?” This compares with 90% in 2008 and 78% in 2007.

In an effort to enhance innovations in student services, we expanded the use of technologies in addition to improved service in the newly established Warrior Hub. Of the 2,782 students polled in Assessment Day 2009, 79% had visited the Warrior Hub and of those, all but 1% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the experience.

We are committed to making the University a working model of scholarship and creative solution-finding in action as well as a laboratory for the practice of contemporary democracy. In

\(^2\) FY09 University Work Plan [http://www.winona.edu/president/4135.htm](http://www.winona.edu/president/4135.htm)
keeping with our mission, we are developing a student leadership program. During the 2008-09 year, our new Associate Director of Student Activities & Leadership worked directly with student volunteers to create and develop a leadership program that includes a student advisory board and a student leadership and development plan that will be implemented in fall 2009. We currently enjoy a positive and mutually respectful relationship with our student leaders, and we appreciate their willingness to help us rethink our programs and operations in the context of significant budget reductions.

**Digital Life and Learning:** This year we made a number of changes to our laptop program, most significantly, converting it to a Digital Life and Learning (DLL) Program. This program is now about learning rather than about laptops, and it has been woven into the fabric of our university, from facilities planning to faculty development. Students and faculty have been given a voice in shaping the direction of the DLL Program through the development of a new and more effective governance process.

**Information Technology:** Under the leadership of our new CIO, we have completely restructured our information technology unit to support our growing “smart environment” and the expanding use of educational technology throughout our curriculum, as well as to ensure effective administrative support. We have upgraded eight additional classrooms on the Winona campus to equip them with a full-service teaching station that supports multimedia presentations. We have made a number of enhancements to our voice and video network across the campus, added a West Campus IT support center, launched a CIO Podcast series and prepared the way for launching a completely new web presence. You can expect even more exciting developments over the next year.

**Intercollegiate Sports:** WSU once again had many firsts for our athletic programs. We continue to show progress both in the classroom and on the fields of competition, while also making significant Title IX improvements with facility upgrades.

This year marked our initial year in the new 14-member Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC). Here are some of the excellent results and highlights:

- Our softball team won the conference tournament for the second year in a row and earned the right to host both the Regional and Super Regional competition. Playing at home was a decisive advantage as they won both and advanced to the NCAA World Series for the first time in school history. The team ended up finishing fifth in the country with four all-Americans.
- Women’s Basketball earned a second place finish in the NSIC and advanced to the NCAA regional tournament for the first time in school history. They lost to the eventual national champions but set a record for the most wins in a season.
- Our Gymnastics team finished fourth at Nationals, only tenths of a point out of second place. It was the second consecutive top 5 national finish for the gymnasts.
• We also had numerous national qualifiers in women’s indoor and outdoor track, and women’s soccer won its fifth consecutive NSIC championship and hosted NCAA postseason play.
• WSU had 12 of its 14 teams advance to conference or regional post-season competition.

In the area of Title IX, we have made important improvements. We have partnered with the city for a new shared softball field and with the local school districts for a new competitive outdoor track. Both projects improve the areas for practice and competition in two of our most successful women’s sports.

Our student-athletes also continued with excellent community service. Teams participated in leaf raking projects, elementary school mentoring and held another successful “Hoops for a Cure” event. The event, which supports finding a cure for cancer, raised more than $800 for Winona Health. Our football team also worked with several flood ravaged communities, helping them to pick up and move forward.

In the classroom, our 400 student-athletes continue to advance, achieving an all-time high in academics by attaining a cumulative 3.2 grade point average (up from 3.14 last year). The individual GPA average of 3.12 is also up from last year. More than 30% of our student-athletes received all-conference or all-regional academic honors, and for the third year in a row, at least one student-athlete received an NCAA postgraduate scholarship, a very high honor indeed.

**WSU in Rochester: An emerging model of education in an urban environment**

As we continue to develop our programs in Rochester and we explore the possibilities inherent in our co-location at University Center Rochester with Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC), we are keeping several core concepts in mind.

• Think of Rochester as a **learning laboratory** in which to develop an innovative, open and collaborative inter-institutional model.
• Create a **shared and co-designed infrastructure** that allows students and community members to move easily along well-designed educational pathways and to obtain support for solving community problems.
• Put the learner in charge by developing **navigational/planning tools** that help the learner identify his or her goals, select appropriate pathways for accomplishing those goals, and plan ways to secure the resources (time and money) to pursue those goals.
• Build targeted **economic and community development partnerships** focused on a relatively specific set of key industries and services in the region.
• Draw **design principles and goals** from a blending of the interests and needs of learners, employers, and educators.
• Incorporate a different approach to the concept of what it means to be a professional by integrating scholarship, education and the continuous improvement of practice as design elements in advanced education.
• Our graduates will not only be competent but they will also understand how to transform the institutions in which they work to enhance the environments for professional practice and to improve outcomes for the people they serve.

Continued academic collaboration between WSU—Rochester and RCTC is evidenced by the design of a new upper-division Rochester-based Early Childhood Special Education transfer program (with RCTC’s Child Development Associate of Applied Science); this transfer program is currently under review by MnSCU.

The Minority Teacher Recruitment Program collaborative between WSU—Rochester’s Education Department and representatives from 15 community stakeholders have identified four priority activities (mentoring of high school students, future teacher academy, college summer program, and minority adult/high school student/parent outreach) and have developed goal outcomes, with implementation planned for the 2009-10 Academic Year.

Improved student services in Rochester include walk-in transcript service and the installation of a direct phone link to the Instructional Technology Center on the Winona Campus to better serve students when WSU-Rochester staff members are not available. Preliminary plans have been completed by WSU and RCTC to develop a campus Welcome Center to provide reception, initial program information, initial advising, and select student services. The Center’s physical design phase will begin shortly.

Initial planning for “Path to Purple,” a collaboration between WSU and RCTC, has been completed. The Path to Purple will provide an option for students who did not gain admission to WSU to enroll at RCTC for a minimum of 24 credits with guaranteed admission to WSU if minimum academic entrance requirements are met at RCTC. From the time of initial denial from WSU, regional students will receive coordinated information from both schools prior to and during enrollment at RCTC.

What it takes to be a community of learners improving our world

This summer I visited Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia, to finish up my Fulbright work there and to talk with the staff about what community engagement means, how a university can build its own capacity to work with the community, and the different kinds of partnerships that a university can form that can help to generate and apply knowledge to society’s most pressing problems. As I thought about our shared experiences of the past year and began to prepare for the new academic year ahead, I realized that everything that I said in Australia came from a foundation of deep experience that is based on what I have learned here at Winona State.
It is one of the paradoxes of success that the very things that got us to where we are today are rarely, if ever, what we need to respond to the challenges ahead of us. If we are to manage our way through the complex, ever-changing and sometimes contentious problems we now face, we must learn new ways of doing things and draw upon new levels of ourselves—our knowledge, our empathy, our capacity to trust, our belief in the importance of our mission, our confidence in ourselves and in our colleagues. I have tried to show you that we are, in fact, developing the very attitudes and skills that will serve us well in days to come.

We have been learning new habits, the same habits that our graduates will require. We are, as we had hoped, practicing what we wish to teach. Increasingly we are demonstrating the qualities of an institution that will prepare its graduates to thrive in the 21st century:

- A reliance on clear principles rather than routine procedures
- Decisions supported by evidence rather than anecdotes or uninformed opinions
- Solution finding rather than fault finding
- Continuous rather than episodic change
- Continuous learning and invention
- Boundary crossing rather than self-contained units
- Honest communication
- A willingness to trust and rely upon others

We still have a lot to learn. As these areas of integration begin to connect with each other, our organization chart will transform, our working relationships will evolve, our sense of shared responsibility and purpose will grow stronger and we ourselves will change. The past year and the year ahead both demand that we open ourselves to new expectations, new insights, that we reach down deeper to share more of who we truly are. These early signs of change and promise will gradually take shape in the form of the 21st century University we have been talking about for the past five years. The way forward is becoming clearer.

1. **Personal:** We will give more of ourselves, and through reflecting on what we are learning, we will gain a greater understanding of the social and political context that shapes our choices and defines our environment.
2. **Institutional:** The WSU that is emerging will have different policies, new interpretations of roles and responsibilities, new infrastructure, and new forms of individual and institutional assessment. This is being foreshadowed as we prepare for our next Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation in 2011.
3. **Community:** We will develop new capacities and new working relationships as well as richer and deeper collaborations with our partners.
4. **Political:** We will act in accordance with a clear set of values and concerns, a compelling sense of social justice and respect for the dignity of others, and an abiding integrity in everything that we do.
5. **Knowledge**: We are living in an age of rapid change in which the nature of knowledge itself is evolving—how it is generated, who participates in asking questions and caring about the answers, who uses what we learn and in what ways.

6. **Professional Practice**: All of us are becoming scholar practitioners or scholar teachers. Those two roles are increasingly blending together in individual practice as well as in the curriculum through the integration of research and practice. We are becoming a true community of learners AND teachers—whatever our job responsibilities, whatever our experience or expertise. We will need and use more of who we are and what we know in order to create a learning environment in which each of us can discover our gifts and talents and our personal calling. My hope is that we all will apply ourselves to meaningful work that inspires and renews the spirit and opens the way for others to do the same.

Welcome to a new academic year and to our community of learners improving our world.

**Winona State University’s Areas of emphasis for FY10.**

1. Continue to support student success and increase student retention.
2. Continue to develop capacity for assessing student learning throughout the curriculum.
   - Continue redesign of the curriculum to conform to the 120 credit hour requirement and to reflect changes in the nature of professional practice.
   - Continue to prepare for the HLC Self-Study by completing the redesign and integration of our support structure for planning and institutional assessment.
3. Continue to invest in enhancements in campus safety under the leadership of our new Campus Safety Officer. Continue to invest in enhanced emergency responsiveness.
4. Utilize the newly redesigned faculty/staff Learning Commons in Maxwell. Design and provide integrated support for research and the enhancement of teaching and learning.
5. Launch our redesigned web presence and utilize the new capacity to provide regular updates for the campus community on construction, the issues being addressed by all-university advisory committees and other areas of shared interest.
6. Utilize our new budget and planning tools and improved constituency consultation models to implement the FY10-11 biennial budget.
7. Continue the public phase of our capital campaign, Light the Way.
8. Continue to pursue our climate commitment goals and expand our “WSU Goes Green” efforts.
9. Complete all construction projects.
10. Continue to develop the distinctiveness of WSU-R and the Winona campus and build new ways to take advantage of their strengths and differences.

Judith A. Ramaley