



**Table of Contents**

1. [Abstract](#).....3  
2. [Introduction](#).....3  
3. [Background](#).....4  
4. [Design Team Findings](#).....6  
5. [Analysis Team Findings](#).....8  
6. [Focus Group Team Findings](#).....10  
5. [Recommendations](#).....12

**Appendix**

A: [Design Team Report](#).....14  
B: [Analysis Team Report](#).....17  
C: [Focus Group Notes](#).....21  
D: [Focus Group Report](#).....30

## **Abstract**

In order to strategically plan for continuous improvement, Dr. Scott Olson asked students, faculty, staff and community members to submit their ideas for changes that should be implemented at Winona State University. This project is the culmination of the work of the Educational Leadership class in Change Leadership (EL 614) in analyzing the suggestions solicited on notecards. The project analysis includes findings from the design, analysis, and focus teams, which were comprised of EL 614 students, as well as the Information Technology team's analysis of the suggestions. The information within this report serves as the first step, but for the "Hopes and Dreams" initiative to move forward, deeper analysis and data collection including additional focus groups will need to occur.

## **Introduction**

President Olson, in order to facilitate the forward motion of the forceful river of knowledge to which he referred in an opening year address, hosted two open forums in November entitled "Hopes and Dreams" to solicit ideas for university improvements. In February, President Olson received several hundred "hopes and dreams" responses from students, faculty, staff and community members. The responses on the notecards were as diverse as the group responding. The notecards allowed for open-ended responses. Therefore, the responses ran the gamut from small changes to large, and from the very specific to the very general in virtually every area of the university. The Educational Leadership class in Change Leadership (EL 614) was charged with the task of sorting, analyzing, and reporting the themes within the varied responses. Chad Kjorlien, TLT,

created a “Wordle” from the responses. The members of EL 614 facilitated the analysis included within this report. A focus group was organized to add greater depth to the ideas contained within the notecards. This analysis serves as the beginning of the dialogues that need to occur at WSU for the hopes to become happenings and the dreams to become a reality.

## **Background**

From its earliest days, Winona State University has been an institution firmly rooted in its mission to provide advanced education to its students. Founded in 1858 as the first tax-supported normal school west of the Mississippi, Winona State Normal School prepared teachers for jobs in public or common schools throughout the state. By 1917 classes were offered for students in Rochester as well as continuing classes in Winona. Advancements continued with the institution being renamed Winona State Teachers College in 1921, which meant the college could now grant bachelor’s degrees.

As Winona State Teachers College continued to fulfill the needs of its ever-increasing student body, the institution was renamed Winona State College in 1957 and expanded its mission by granting associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. In 1975, the college became Winona State University. As a university, the institution now offered the students a myriad of majors and minors in five different colleges. The university also offered over thirty graduate programs, including a doctoral program in Nursing Practice.

In 2005, President Judith Ramaley began her tenure as President of Winona State University by preparing “Winona State University: A Blueprint for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century University.” Several implementation groups spent two years studying and developing plans in eight different areas. Those eight areas included Academic Initiatives,

Experimental Learning Institute, Wellness and Fitness, Technology and Portals, Campus Activities Coordination, Integrative Academic Services, WSU-Rochester Center Multicultural Learning Initiative, and Linking Community to Learning. Beginning in the fall of 2005, the campus was ready to use the plans created by the groups to begin the expansion phase, which consisted of three components: the Academic Initiative Package, Expansion of our Core: Supporting the University of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and Redesign and Integration of Core Services. As this expansion phase was set to get underway, several checks and balances (e.g. Open Lab Notebook) were established to ensure efficacy data was collected and disseminated to create effective implementation and sustainability.<sup>1</sup>

In subsequent years, the staff and faculty of Winona State University focused on embracing the changes set forth in President Ramaley's blueprint. In a 2010 letter to Chancellor James McCormick, President Ramaley reported several improvements that had been made. Most noteworthy were the Digital Life and Learning (DLL) Program and WSU Goes Green. The latter afforded WSU the ability to be the first MnSCU institution named to the Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges.<sup>2</sup> President Ramaley also noted several accolades awarded to WSU including being named one of the country's top 100 colleges. Today, WSU is ranked 58<sup>th</sup> among the Midwest universities.

As President Scott Olson began his tenure as the fifteenth president of Winona State University, he delivered a speech entitled "The Great River." In this speech, he referred to the WSU community as a powerful river "that carves out a path of knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> Ramaley, Judith Ph.D. "Winona State University: A Blueprint for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century University." MnSCU Planning Retreat. Winona State University. 8 Nov. 2005

<sup>2</sup> Ramaley, Judith Ph.D. "Letter to Chancellor James McCormick." 8 July 2010.

in the wilderness of ignorance.”<sup>3</sup> President Olson also referred to some of the improvements of President Ramaley’s tenure that needed to be maintained, including the areas of technology and sustainability. However, to maintain excellence in these areas, the university, like a river, needed to keep moving and flowing forward.

**Design Team Findings**

The design team consisted of five EL 614 students who had each previously completed a course in systems thinking. Their initial process was to categorize the cards collected from the “Hopes and Dreams” forums. Nine categories were developed, and responses within each category were separated into either “Faculty/Staff” or “Student” (see Figure 1).

The largest category with 346 responses was “Academics/Programs/Faculty.” The design team broke this category down further into five subcategories: Technology, Expansion, Communication, Classroom, and Cost (see Figure 2). Overall, the highest two reported subcategories were communication and expansion. These two categories each received 126 responses. Within these two subcategories, “current program expansion” was cited most frequently by faculty, staff, and students.

**Figure 1**

	<b>Faculty/Staff</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Academics/Programs/Faculty</b>	211	135	<b>346</b>
<b>Facilities/Grounds</b>	83	60	<b>143</b>
<b>Extracurricular/Student Life</b>	16	22	<b>38</b>
<b>Rochester</b>	38	1	<b>39</b>

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<sup>3</sup> Olson, Scott R. Ph.D. “The Great River.” Delivered on Aug. 20, 2012.

<b>Athletics</b>	6	24	<b>30</b>
<b>Staffing/Administration/ Human Resources</b>	48	27	<b>75</b>
<b>Branding/Identity</b>	28	33	<b>61</b>
<b>Leadership/Governance</b>	33	12	<b>45</b>
<b>Communities</b>	62	51	<b>113</b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>525</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>890</b>

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**Figure 2.**

		Faculty/Staff	Students	<b>TOTAL</b>
Technology	Improving	12	4	<b>16</b>
	Implementing	14	7	<b>21</b>
	Training	12	5	<b>17</b>
Expansion	Current Programs	49	33	<b>82</b>
	New Programs	33	11	<b>44</b>
Communication	Staff/Faculty	40	35	<b>75</b>
	Students	29	22	<b>51</b>
Classroom	Labs	29	6	<b>35</b>
	Online Classroom	9	11	<b>20</b>
	Community Outreach	27	17	<b>44</b>
Cost	Tuition	6	13	<b>19</b>
	Grants/Scholarships	18	11	<b>29</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>278</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>453</b>

**Analysis Team Findings**

The analysis team took a second look at the “Hopes and Dreams” cards and ordered the categories by number of responses (from most responses to least):

1. Academics/Programs/Faculty
2. Facilities/Grounds
3. Community
4. Administration/Human Resources
5. Branding/Identity
6. Leadership/Governance
7. Rochester
8. Extracurricular/Student Life
9. Athletics

The analysis team also collaborated with a representative from the Information Technology (IT) department to digitize the information found in the cards. The IT representative approached the data in two ways. First he tallied the number of times each word was used and illustrated the findings with a Wordle graphic (see Figure 3). In this



advertising (i.e. how students know what services are available).

**Figure 4.**

EL 614 Analysis Team	Information Technology Team
Academics/Programs/Faculty	Grow, Reorganize, Sharpen, Transform Our Organization
Facilities/Grounds	Provide More Authentic Learning Experiences
Community	Improve Our Student Services
Administration/Human Resources	Improve Our Physical Campus
Branding/Identity	Improve Our Residential Life and Campus Culture-Climate
Leadership/Governance	Maintain Our Affordability
Rochester	Strengthen Our Leadership, Promotion, and Institutional Recognition
Extracurricular/Student Life	Other
Athletics	

**Focus Group Team Findings**

Working from the broad topics and themes outlined in the cards, the focus group team brought together a group of eight participants to dig deeper into a few of the categories. Among the focus groups participants are current and former faculty members, students, an athletic intern, and a facilities staff member. The questions they were asked were:

- 1) Are you familiar with current expansion plans at WSU?
- 2) What is missing in the university’s ability to expand its current departments and services?
- 3) If you were to prioritize, what change would you like to see come first based on what you have heard or what you have come up with on your own?
- 4) Do you see yourself as an active participant in a change initiative?

From the focus group transcripts, messages arose about facilities, climate, and communication. Regarding facilities, it was noted that the smaller campus is conducive to meeting new people and collaborating. Participants cited proximity to professors and classes as an advantage (“I can get to class in five minutes.”). The campus community

was likened to a family, and was seen as comfortable. (“You walk down Main Street and you see people you know.”)

While student participants seemed to feel like there were opportunities and locations in which to socialize, the faculty participants asserted that they did not have any “congenial and usable space” or “a place to go to be faculty together”...“where they can go to collaborate and make plans.”

The message regarding communication was that the methods used are not meeting the needs of the stakeholders. For example, the *Winonan* journal is published, but participants admitted to not reading it. Student participants stated that while they receive daily updates about campus happenings, they “scroll through but don’t really read it.” Another example is the strategic plan, which is created by the cabinet but not necessarily clearly communicated to others (“There isn’t a lot of communication down the chain to the lower levels”).

Throughout the focus group session, a common thread about change was that people would be willing to participate as active members if the vision was clearly communicated and arose from their input. (“It needs to be put out there that WSU is looking for change.” “It needs to be said that we will support you if you share your thoughts, but we need to hear them.” “Even if Dr. Olson put out ideas of possibilities for change so that people could put their input in for what they think about the changes.” “If I was in support of it, I’d feel like I want to be a part of it. But without anything defined, it’s hard to know what to do.” “It’s not just giving input, but have someone that is receiving it.”)

One participant wisely stated: “When you consider expansion, don’t ever throw away what is already working. Improve what might be missing. It seems that with WSU tradition, student-centeredness is the number one priority.”

### **Recommendations**

Based on the themes from the cards and the messages from the focus group, any changes for Winona State University need to continue to be student-centered and responsive, but need to honor current successful practices as well. This analysis provided the broad overview of themes that are currently on the minds of stakeholders. However, for the “Hopes and Dreams” initiative to move forward, deeper analysis and data collection are needed.

Since the topics and themes have been determined, logical “next steps” might include conducting focus groups from each college and at all levels of the WSU community (e.g. faculty, students, staff, alumni, business partners, etc.). These focus groups could lead to task forces that are dedicated to creating and implementing specific action plans that result from these conversations.

It is clear that communication is one action item that could be immediately addressed by the creation of a task force. The task force could survey students about how best to receive news and information pertinent to various organizations on campus. From the survey data, they would need to set goals (short-term and long-term), and create steps needed to reach those goals.

To be most effective, these focus groups and task forces need to consist of a variety of stakeholders so that all of their views are included. For example, in this study’s focus group, upperclassmen were underrepresented. The freshman who was present had a

limited view of what was happening and could not be expected to represent the views of all students (“Freshmen don’t know what to ask for because it’s all new to them.”) It would also be wise to conduct multiple focus groups so that the views of the overall community are accurately assessed.

By addressing the communication issue that arose out of this analysis, convening additional focus groups, and forming related task forces, WSU can be assured that meaningful, student-centered change will happen. To refer back to the analogy used by President Olson during his speech, “The Great River,” the river of knowledge existing within WSU contains the action that can bring those ideas to fruition.

## Appendix A

This is the summary report of the design team working on the Hopes and Dreams project. Team members include Matthew Leisen, Ashley Platten, Arlett Barrera Martinez and Tauseef Hemayet. The team members were picked for the research design group because of our background in systems thinking. All four of us had taken EL 612 Introduction to Systems Thinking prior to this spring semester.

We decided to work on the raw data primary at first. The raw data were cards photocopied through the president's office. Our initial process was to categorize the data into different sections. The following are the categories we specified:

	Faculty/Staff	Students	TOTAL
1 Academics/programs/Faculty	211	135	346
2 Facilities/Grounds	83	60	143
3 Extra Cirricular/Student Life	16	22	38
4 Rochester	38	1	39
5 Atheletics	6	24	30
6 Staffing/Administration/HR	48	27	75
7 Branding/Identity	28	33	61
8 Leadership/Governance	33	12	45
9 Communities	62	51	113
	525	365	890

As we tallied each of the cards, we categorized them in their individual categories. The total tallies we concluded from the first batch of counting was that academics was the significant category where students, faculty and staff spoke about.

We decided to go more in depth into the category and find more concrete example of any specific ideas. The first tally took about 5 hours to categorize where 7 people needed to complete the task. For the second tally, it took 6 hours to finish the task with 1 person. After the completion, we found the following results:

		Faculty/Staff	Students	TOTAL	Goals
IT	improving	12	4	16	Longterm Goal
	implementing	14	7	21	Longterm Goal
	training	12	5	17	Shortterm Goal
Expansion	curent programs	49	33	82	Longterm Goal
	new programs	33	11	44	Longterm Goal
Communion	staff/faculty	40	35	75	Shortterm Goal
	students	29	22	51	Shortterm Goal
Classroom	Labs	29	6	35	Longterm Goal
	Online Classroom	9	11	20	Shortterm Goal
	community outrech	27	17	44	Longterm Goal
Cost	Tuition	6	13	19	Longterm Goal
	Grants/scholarships	18	11	29	Longterm Goal
		278	175	453	

Expansion was the criteria that was mentioned multiple times in the cards. We came to the conclusion of categorizing the criteria with the following table:

Expansion	Department Expansion
	New Academic Curriculum
Communication	Interdisciplinary Engagement
Classrooms	Labs
	Resources
	Online classes
Costs	Research Expansion
	Grants
	Scholarships

After the overall completion of the tally, the breakdown for the project was initiated. We came up multiple tasks in order to complete the overall project.

Matthew Hoenk approached our team to help out in developing a project plan for the overall project. We initiated by having groups of people organized into small groups. We also came up with the project structure, due dates for the project. Discussion on the team leader roles and small group roles.

Initially, we created 4 small groups:

- **Research and Design**
  - Significance of research
- **Survey Research**
  - General public questions
- **Focus Group**
  - Open ended questions
- **Analysis Team**
  - Analyze information received from Survey and Focus group
- **Report and Presentation**
  - Write report for research
  - Create a presentation

As we spoke with the rest of the class, the survey research and focus group teams merged together to combine their results.

We also came up with deadlines in order to complete the overall project.

	<b>Research Team</b>	<b>Survey Team</b>	<b>Focus Group Team</b>	<b>Analysis Team</b>	<b>Report and Presentation Team</b>
<b>March 6th</b>	Present Question	Begin Project	Begin Project	Begin Project	Begin writing case study
<b>March 13th</b>	Start Advising				
<b>March 20th</b>					
<b>March 27th</b>					
<b>April 3rd</b>		Present Results	Present Results	Receive Data	Receive Data
<b>April 10th</b>				Present data	Receive data from Analysis Team
<b>April 17th</b>					
<b>April 24th</b>					Present Case Study

## **Appendix B**

Analysis Team:

### Common Themes from Different Strategies

From nearly 2500 individual suggestions from the Hopes and Dreams cards major themes began to emerge. There are several entities working on examining and analyzing the cards including the Educational Leadership 614 class and a team from Information Technologies. Both of these entities thought that categorizing the cards would be the best way to sort through them, however, the broad nature project proved this to be difficult.

The EL 614 team came up with these 9 categories in order of importance:

- 1. Academics/Programs/ Faculty**
- 2. Facilities/ Grounds**
- 3. Community**
- 4. Administration/Human Resources**
- 5. Branding/ Identity**
- 6. Leadership/ Governance**
- 7. Rochester**
- 8. Extra Curricular/ Student Life**
- 9. Athletics**

Chad Kjorlien and his team from IT came up with similar categories as follows:

- 1. Grow, Reorganize, Sharpen, Transform Our Organization**
- 2. Provide More Authentic Learning Experiences**
- 3. Improve Our Student Services**
- 4. Improve Our Physical Campus**
- 5. Improve Our Residential Life and Campus Culture-Climate**
- 6. Maintain Our Affordability**
- 7. Strengthen Our Leadership, Promotion, and Institutional Recognition**
- 8. Cannot Be Categorized**

As we analyze the two lists, one thing is certain – the members of the Winona State University community are hoping and dreaming of improvement in all areas. It seems that every component that could be stronger, faster, smarter and more available has been mentioned.

The highest priority is a wish for excellence in academic programs. This is seen in category #1 from 614 and #1 and #2 from the IT team. By improving the aesthetic qualities of buildings and grounds and improving and increasing student activities there can be an overall better experience for all including community members. This is seen in

#2 and #8 in 614 and in #3, #4 and #5 from the IT group. We can increase our social capital by keeping rigor and relevancy in our programs and maintaining affordability for students. Lastly, as with all organizations, there is a definite want for efficient, fair and effective Leadership in all departments.

Category number 8 from the IT team is intriguing. At first glance it may seem to be a “catch all” title for a category. However, when looking at the cards individually, you see not a box of small unimportant wants – but rather, a collection of small *important* things, hopes and dreams. These people felt moved to write down their dream and even if it doesn’t fall into a category, the message has been heard.

{ Add In: How did the focus group change or solidify the findings from the cards in terms of what are the important themes? (See: last sentence from above paragraph ^ - is being heard a form of Communication?) }

Joshua Woldt

- After comparing the two lists, there seems to be great potential for the general student population at Winona State.
- The category that ranked high for the focus group in general was improving the facilities of Winona State. Also, on the list that IT came up with, there was more focus on improving the learning experiences of the students.
- Winona State can achieve both of these dreams of expansion through facilities and academics. The similarity with both of these topics is that one cannot do without the other. For example, in order to improve tutoring services or extended test taking time services – that more students should apply for – there needs to be more rooms and study areas available so that more students don’t feel “crammed” and have a more relaxed environment to take tests and study. A bigger building would help market a student service like this much better and encourage students to use the service more to improve their grades. Also, this will allow more available times for students to take tests when they need to take it – regardless of the time of day.
- The student services at Winona State are ultimately one of the best kept secrets. The unique thing here is that it doesn’t matter if you’re a student or a student – athlete. Everyone could improve by utilizing more space of a student services center. But in order for everyone to benefit – more space is crucial to help grow this service and let the “secret” of success out.

The Wordle put together by Chad and the TLT team, while aesthetically pleasing, doesn't exactly live up to the initial intent behind the Hopes and Dreams initiative. Yes, there are some great things within the Wordle. It pulls the viewer immediately to words like students, WSU, Winona, and education. This gave President Olson a great opportunity to address our institution's mission to put students first and serve our great community.

The #1 category of importance that the EL614 came up with was academics/programs/faculty. Those three words are well displayed on the Wordle, however they are very broad areas. The #1 category of importance submitted to us by the TLT team was grow, reorganize, sharpen, transform our organization. The word grow in the Wordle is small and at the bottom. The words reorganize, sharpen, and transform aren't even in the Wordle! President Olson and the TLT did address the fact that the Wordle isn't the end-all in the analysis of the Hopes and Dreams cards.

“While these aren't ideas in and of themselves, they give you a sense of what's on our collective mind here at WSU.

More sophisticated analysis of your hopes and dreams will be forthcoming in a matter of weeks. Then the task before is to use our shared governance processes and community conversations to choose the best actionable ideas for our future. Thank you all for participating in the process, and stay tuned for more.”

The positives of the Wordle are in the initial viewing. Immediately eyes are drawn to big words that give off a feeling that Winona State is focused on the students, the city of Winona, and its education. Unfortunately, that is about where the positives end.

The negatives of the Wordle lie in the setup of the Wordle itself. It takes the words that are used the most and makes them the biggest. It is not surprising to see words like Winona, WSU, students, education, and campus listed. Those words may not, however be used in the same context that the Wordle is displaying them. Specific words like teachers, nursing, and business...cornerstone fields of this university are so small, they are almost illegible at first sight. Other interesting words that show insight into what

students and faculty are actually interested in or feel are in need of a change like tuition, diverse, opportunity, and resources are also in the smallest print in the Wordle. An odd find in the Wordle is the abbreviation “etc.” It is actually bigger than some of the words previously listed.

The Wordle takes the words in the Hopes and Dreams cards for what they are in their simplest form, just words. It provides little insight into the actual Hopes and Dreams cards themselves and what the hopes and dreams of the students and faculty of the university might be.

## Appendix C

### Focus Group Notes

Introduction: *(Names have been changed to protect the identity of participants.)*

**Facilitator 1**

**Facilitator 2**

**Facilitator 3**

**Student Male**-student

**Retiree Female**- retired faculty member, retired member of foundation board

**Faculty Female**- faculty

**Freshman Female**-student, Bball

**Sophomore Female**-sophomore, Bball

**Alumni, Staff Male**- substitute teacher, student, work for facilities

**Graduate Student Female**- student, GA Vball

R-Expansion-major theme that came through, more ideas for specific expansion more narrow scope of ideas.

#### **Q: Are you familiar with current expansion plans at WSU?**

- I've been working in facilities for the past 5 years (**Alumni, Staff Male**)
  - Building expansions, new construction, taking down old buildings, renovations, athletics, etc.
  - Problem is that there isn't a lot of good communication. Whoever is designing blue prints, all the way down to the base people who are out there working the grounds
    - It isn't the construction company who is out there but the people that are there cleaning out the brush before and cleaning what the construction crew left afterwards and then maintaining it
  - Q (**Retiree Female**)-do the architectures/engineers ask for focus groups with people that work the grounds
    - The Immediate bosses, head grounds keepers and maintenance workers don't feel like they have a voice or that their opinions don't matter
    - They have to cut power lines, sprinklers. When the IWC went up-tried to make it lead-certified, conserving water meant no sprinkler system around the grounds so natural things were put up...ponds
  - Q (**Retiree Female**)-is that a recommendation? Communication between planners and people doing stuff day-to-day?

- Yes, even if they felt like it mattered it would change their entire perspective because they feel like they are left out of the decision making process
- Q (**Faculty Female**)-
  - Wabasha project with Board of Education
    - Faculty met to discuss replacing the Cotter schools
    - Gildemister needs refurbishing
    - Faculty- its THEIR idea, not OUR idea
    - Interesting how many people resisted the idea because it wasn't their idea.
      - They are getting used to it but it requires a HUGE transition
    - I see expansion in Community relations. Where the administration is reaching out to the inner city core especially with student discipline on homecoming weekend
    - In regards to the Rochester expansion and nursing
      - In my program, (Ed Leadership/Management), we need graduate programs
      - Adult populations need to be served
      - The target needs to be Rochester, we would be competing with other organizations but education in general has never been a priority and this is a real hot item that we should jump on
    - Administrative bloat (last 10 years), has been a huge proliferation of layers added to the whole enterprise...from a faculty standpoint
- Q (**Retiree Female**)
  - What things could be done if there were other kinds of workers rather than administrators
    - Its how they make decisions
    - Faculty can be deciders a lot more than they are
    - Krueger said when given the opportunity, faculty won't rise to the occasion
      - Ying and Yang situation, not sure how to resolve that dilemma
      - This is changing. They are looking for input from everybody now and you can call that expansion.
- Q- futuristic expansion from the undergrads? (**Facilitator 1**)
  - What can we make expansion-wise?
    - **Freshman Female** - first year here, not aware of all of this stuff
      - I live in Richards dorm, feel like it has a lot of amenities with a kitchen everywhere

- Content with stuff as is
- Q (**Facilitator 2**)- does RA let you know about things going on?
  - **Freshman Female** - RA asks questions about if “we” know what we want to do, but she isn’t forward about the information, we have to ask specific questions
    - Freshmen don’t know what to ask for because its all new to them
    - Expanding with adding more buildings- I like the size of everything. I like that everything is compact into a block because I come from a small town. It feels so homey, everyone knows everyone. I like the small environment that Winona has
  - **Sophomore Female** - student at Madison and transferred
    - I was walking 30 minutes to one class
    - Its nice to have a campus where campus is because Madison is so spread out
    - I can get to class in 5 minutes
    - If I want to talk to a prof I can run over there quick and if I have class I don’t have to worry about being late or missing it
    - It’s nice because when you go to campus in the morning, I can stay on campus between classes and practice
- **Student Male-**
  - Campus size-you know more people, work out facility and stuff like that brings people together
  - Everyone is in a good mood, you meet new people and you go from there

**Q: What is missing in the university’s ability to expand its current departments and services?**

- **Faculty Female**
  - Money
  - Is a big issue, its tight and we are going through difficult economic times
  - Faculty would write grants if we knew we could get some support going
- **Retiree Female:** Support? Meaning planning funds, administrative support, information search, backgrounding for something
  - When faculty has full-time load it isn’t possible to do the important, nitty-gritty work
    - Requires money to free up some knowledgeable person’s time to spend researching

- There needs to be a shared vision about what's to be expanded, cut, combined; shared vision
- My perception, a lot of shared vision but it doesn't get articulated because people don't look at each other and say it out loud
- Focus groups help in a great deal because it moves people's attention to certain issues and allows them to say it out loud and get the attention
- **Alumni, Staff Male -**
  - The "we mentality/ownership"
  - students are only here for 4-5 years and then they are out of here
  - I've been here for 6 and am starting to feel much more ownership because I work here too (grounds crew, I get mad when I see people walking on the grass I just laid down)
  - If we can create more opportunity for students to communicate with staff, faculty and each other we can make it the "we" mentality
  - Get that communication going and we can get that
- **Faculty Female**
  - Faculty have no place to go to be faculty together
  - "no name bar"- once a month
    - wouldn't it be nice to have a place to get together and talk?
  - Ownership- I think it would make a big difference
  - Tradition
    - We need traditions
    - Dr. Krueger, faculty maze-march faculty around campus with their caps and gown on
      - Everyone laughed at first about it and then everyone got into it and enjoyed it but then it was dropped for no reason
      - It meant we are together here, we believed in it
      - Making traditions, students have theirs, faculty should have some and other staff members

**Q: If you were to prioritize, what change would you like to see come first?**

**Based on what you have heard or what you have come up with on your own.**

**Retiree Female :**

- Heard students comment frequently about the ease of meeting people. Partly made possible by the facilities which are well-cared for, built, used

- When you consider expansion, don't ever throw away what is already working, improve what might be missing
- It seems that with WSU tradition-student centeredness is the number one priority
- Keep importance on safe, good, constructive, usable, positive space for the students and all their needs
  - And then faculty and staff need the same things
  - Staff/faculty don't have the means of getting together, so they can collaborate and make plans
  - Put students first, right there with them should be faculty and staff and means for congenial and usable space
- **Faculty Female**
  - When I go to student union, I'm the only faculty member there for lunch
  - Notion of Rochester, we should make due and better what we have now
    - I'd like to see some discussion about that: are we going to expand and have a campus over there? Or have one here?
    - How do we decide?
- **Alumni, Staff Male**
  - The fact that Rochester has so many public schools, there is such an opportunity if our education system expanded to Rochester. In Winona there is one high school and there is so much more diversity and more people to work with in Rochester. Rochester has a greater community without a university
    - A lot of available resources
- **Faculty Female -**
  - Alumni talk about identity,
  - Athletics- how do you feel about expansion to Rochester? All the athletic fields are in Winona.
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - I can't see athletes doing much in Rochester
  - Athletes put so much time and devotion into day, they don't have time for anything else with lifting and practice because their day is jam packed until about 9 at night
  - A trip to Rochester is extremely hard to do
  - All the sports would stay in Winona. I can't see students doing a lot in Rochester if they are doing sports on campus
    - For example, its really hard for an athlete to be a nursing student
    - I had a former player who was missing 2 practices a week because she was traveling to Rochester and La Crosse to fulfill her requirements for the nursing program
    - I don't think there is any way to expand to Rochester while doing sports

**Q: Do you see yourself as an active participant in a change initiative?**

- **Retiree Female -**
  - Everyone sees themselves in a role but can't answer until you know the direction
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - If I was in support of it I'd feel like I'd want to be a part of it but without anything defined its hard to do
    - Hard to support change if you don't know what the change is going to be
    - Once its more narrowed down, it would be easier to answer that question
- **Faculty Female -**
  - If we knew that people wanted to hear our viewpoints, people might be willing to step forward
- **Facilitator 3-**
  - Where would you go, soapbox to talk about change? How would change ideas be heard?
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - If I wanted to do something to change?
    - Have something on the website? I would wonder if anyone even going to read this?
    - Needs to be put out there that WSU is looking for change
    - Needs to be said that we will support you if you share your thoughts but we need to hear them
- **Facilitator 1**
  - How do we communicate better?
  - Will it be receptive?
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - Communication
  - Even if, Dr. Olson would put out ideas of possibilities of change so that people can put their input in for what they think about the changes
- **Facilitator 1-**
  - 5 year plan? Cabinet creates it
    - There isn't a lot of conversation down the chain to the lower levels
- **Retiree Female -**
  - Remarkable, grass roots and heaven sent, top down-bottom up, amalgamation for people wanting to work together
  - Even if they didn't know how, they started on something that they could agree on
    - Not a shared vision
    - But an activity
      - Portfolios

- WSU became a leader in the portfolio movement in higher education
  - Find something from the heart and then something you can agree on
    - Students at WSU have so much togetherness when compared to other campuses
    - Students can be leaders in so many ways just by doing what they are doing- just to create a reputation
      - Very valuable
- **Faculty Female -**
  - Just a suggestion
  - Have suggestion boxes all over campus, imagine what we would read in them
- **Retiree Female -**
  - Not just given input but have someone that it is receiving it
- **Faculty Female -**
  - If you know there is a problem, who would you go to talk to about it? Do you even know?
  - It would take the phone main line, 15 rings to get someone to answer
  - Those types of communications should be open freely
- **Facilitator 3-**
  - If you want to know about what's happening on campus, who do you ask?
- **Freshman Female:**
  - I get a lot of emails
  - "Whats Happening"
  - scroll through but don't really read it
  - you ask around, hear things, bulletin boards, generic spread things
  - if I really wanted to know? Jamie, I'd just ask her
- **Faculty Female -**
  - Does anyone read the Winonan?
    - Hasn't expanded very much
- **Freshman Female**
  - I don't read the Winonan
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - Social media with this generation is huge
    - Twitter, Facebook
  - 95% if not more of students are on Facebook on this campus
  - finding a way to reach them on those social medias
  - put the Winonan online, put a link to Facebook and Twitter
- **Facilitator 1**
  - Social media- alumni
  - Where's the wazoo?
    - Gets a lot of response...get the prize for Wazoo
    - Currents- for people to read online

- Recent grads/retirees, where they are going
- **Student Male -**
  - Never lived on campus
  - Played softball
  - When I was on campus going to school, I never really knew what was going on
  - I'd hear from teammates what was going on
  - Busy with sports, didn't have time to check emails or bulletin boards
  - I was never really involved in that stuff, now talking about it, I would have been interested in had it been more talked about
- **Retiree Female -**
  - Improving access to social media
  - People build virtual communities versus face-to-face communities
  - Build "interest" communities
    - Which takes staff-work and investment in money
- **Alumni, Staff Male -**
  - Social media places for alumni, etc.
  - Soon as you say faculty or alumni...students don't want to be a part of it
  - Have a Facebook for Winona state students without the connection of faculty and alumni, so they can post what they want
- **Freshman Female**
  - Transferring and living off camps
  - No dorm experience
  - Skim through WSU update
    - Daily I know whats going on but didn't realize I don't take the time to see boards and the Winonan
      - Social media-current things happening at winona or plans to expand or a suggestion box online
      - I see the posters on boards but how do you pick which one to read?
      - Adapting to online and facebook page is a good thing
- **Graduate Student Female -**
  - Is there a student senate Facebook page?
  - Good idea to get them on there
- **Facilitator 3-**
  - Creating a change? Do you feel like the staff you see is approachable?
- **Sophomore Female**
  - I feel like I could approach them, I just don't know who I would talk to
  - In class all we talk about is what's in class, nothing else
- **Freshman Female**
  - Athletic-Advisors in Wabasha, really approachable people and understand what's going on campus
    - I'd go talk to Justin about other "regular student stuff"
- **Facilitator 3**

- Would you feel more inclined to pursue a change if there was a reward?
- **Sophomore Female**
  - Bribery
  - That's all that is
- **Freshman Female**
  - If I cared enough about a topic then I'd want to get my voice out there because I'd feel good about myself in talking.
- **Faculty Female -**
  - What's the sense of community like for students?
- **Student Male**
  - I like how the campus is compact and people know people
  - I'm from the twin cities
  - When I came here, I didn't like this because its not what I have at home
  - Now it's like a big family to me, you meet so many people
  - You walk down main street and you see people you know

**Appendix D**

**Hopes and Dreams Field Study Assessment Team Reports**

**Assessment Teams: Focus Group Team**

**Jennifer Hoffman**

**Reegan Lloyd**

**Jamie Majerowicz**

**Diana Pickrum**

**Rick Muellenberg**

**Olga Dedkova**

**Eric Reimer**

## **Change Leadership (EL 614M)**

**Spring, 2013**

Creating and implementing change for Winona State University is one of the biggest focus steps that are being taken this year. By creating new opportunities, a better learning environment, better facilities, WSU will continue to become one of the best learning institutions and an overall stronger community. By coming together with the “hopes and dreams” project, we are looking to create a better, living, education, and a better future.

Focus groups can be a very effective tool to solicit valuable feedback which can in turn steer and mold the decisions of many different types of organizations, including WSU. With this group discussion of “Hopes and Dreams” we are looking to implement change across Winona State University. By conducting a campus wide conversation regarding important topics, such as, sustainability, college affordability, forging stronger community partnerships with businesses and organizations, etc. By sharing the opinions and giving feedback it can certainly positively impact not only how WSU looks at the information but to also objectively look at feedback from WSU students, alumni and personnel.

For our research, the team assembled included; Olga Dedkova, Jennifer Hoffman, Reegan Lloyd, Jamie Majerowicz, Diana Pickrum, Rick Muellenberg and Eric Reimer. Our team backed by over 600 surveys, provided enough questions, dialogue and feedback needed, in order to contribute to and hopefully implement change on Winona State Campus. It was meant to identify and simulate a focus group based on the emerging major theme the President’s hopes and dreams cards provided to the research team.

Throughout this process we looked at different levels of data, opinions, interactions, surveys as well as individual perspectives in order find some common ground within this research. By collecting this information we wanted to try to see the overall goals and visions of the students, faculty and alumni while building a strong relationship in the community.

In order to truly understand our vision, it was necessary to first look at successes of other organizations and groups so we can gain a better understanding of how to conduct our focus group. By looking at nonprofit organizations; we were able to use them for our group in planning, marketing, or evaluation, either to improve some specific product or service or, more globally, during the development of strategic plans or mission statements. While conducting surveys of these organizations and setting goals for our vision it contributed to helping us understand our own application process so that our goals could be achieved. These applications included;

- Collecting opinions, beliefs and attitudes about issues of interest to your organization.
- Checking out your assumptions
- Encouraging discussion about the topic
- Providing an opportunity for facilitator and participants to learn more about a topic or issue

While working with research and development teams, timelines are of essence in order to keep everyone on track. While working in these groups the typical timeline for preparing and conducting a focus group is six to eight weeks (or longer). The beginning process started with committee members (who were delegated by the class) discussing

and creating a strategic plan for conducting a focus group. In doing so, these are some of the considerations for the group to follow.

1. Define a purpose “What do we want to know”
2. Identify various constituent groups and gather their contact information
3. Select a facilitator that can lead the session by creating a warm relaxed trusting environment, without influencing the participant answers.
4. Develop questions that are open ended, generate thoughtful insight and possibly lead to follow up questions.
5. Develop script that creates a context for the questions, helps facilitator stay on track and ensures other focus groups are similarly conducted.
6. Arrange and reserve space that encourages conversation, is comfortable, is neutral and will not bias the participants answers
7. Communication to participants should be in formally writing an invitation and then followed up with personal phone calls prior to the event date.
8. Closer to the date choose the room arrangements including seating, equipment and refreshments.
9. During the session participants should have paper and pens to first write the answer to the questions before participating in dialog.

By creating rules and guidelines for the focus group (consisting of six to twelve participants) each member was able to come up with a variety of questions, answers, and other issues that will need to be addressed at group sessions. During these observations session all questions and answers were; accurately recorded not only by verbal

statements, but by the different uses of body language, and gestures of each participant. (While researching these questions and dialogues, body language and communication are a couple of biggest attributes that we were seeking out to help provide our answers.)

These were our questions;

- Are you familiar with current expansion plans at WSU?
- What is missing in the university's ability to expand its current departments and services?
- If you were to prioritize, what change would you like to see come first? Based on what you have heard or what you have come up with on your own.
- Do you see yourself as an active participant in a change initiative?

According to an article on the web "Body Language is technically known as kinesics which is a significant aspect of modern communications and relationships" (businessjournal.com). During the focus group there were many common observations with the participant's body language/receptiveness (or non-receptiveness).

After further research from an article on mindtools.com it had a list of common characteristics that participants may be not in agreement with the subjected material or show non-interest are:

- Hand/arm gestures are small and close to his or her body
- Facial expression are minimal
- Body is physically turned away from the presenter
- Arms are crossed in front of the body
- Eye maintain litter contact, or are facing downward

When the participants did not seem interested in a question they usually would not make eye contact with the speaker. Another key signal that participants were not interested was slouching in their seats and arms crossed over their body.

Another article from mindtools.com touched base on non-verbal communication and how to understand it. Typical things to look for in people who are in agreement/understanding material are:

- Eye Contact (Solid with a 'smiling face)
- Gestures with hands/arms (purposeful and deliberate)
- Speech (Slow and Clear)
- Tone of Voice (Moderate to low)
- Posture (Standing tall, shoulders back)

Key observations towards the participants who seemed receptive and engaged in questions were: eye contact, nodding in agreement, sat upright in their seats with arms not-crossed, responded to other peers, wrote down own notes when thoughts came to their mind.

Switching gears and turning towards the communication aspect part, it was apparent that communication at all levels can be improved. This was consistent with the students, both graduate and undergraduate, teaching staff, both retired and current. An area for the undergraduate students concerning communication was where to find it or who to talk to for information. There seemed to be a disconnect in this area. The *Winonan* was brought up and a few undergraduate students had no idea what that was. Very few reported reading the WSU daily update e-mails as well. It was brought

up that many students get their information from other social media sources today such as Twitter and Facebook. Other observations and facts were hard to ignore such as:

- Social media with this generation is huge (Twitter, Facebook)
- 95% if not more of students are on Facebook on WSU campus
- finding a way to reach them with social medias would appear to have an immediate link to information and the campus community

Also in regards communication, the students were not sure who to talk to in order to suggest changes. They did not know if their ideas would be given consideration or if there would be any follow through. They also questioned whether as an individual their suggestions for change mattered or not.

As discussed as a key theme in communication, our focus group found that the Winonan is no longer a way for students to receive information and updates about what is going on at the university. In regards to the Winonan, the weekly student paper, it seems to be outdated. Dr. Guy brought up the point that the newspaper has not been expanded and asked if anyone even read it. Our focus group participants had little response to it, noting the undergraduate student participants said they never even heard of it, let alone read it. Nor did know where to even get a copy of the paper. Participants offered other ways of finding out how to get information and updates about the university. They said they would ask advisors, friends, coaches, and other peers if they thought there was crucial information they needed.

With less and less readers the Winonan needs to seek other ways of reaching its audience. Knowing that their main target audience is the student population they need to update ways of reaching them. With the constant growth of social media, they should look into expanding to other sources such as Facebook and Twitter. The focus group

discussed the possibility of a Facebook page for the Winonan. Undergraduate students said they would be more likely to read about what is going on at WSU from a page like this. It would appear there is a great opportunity to consider putting the Winonan online with a direct link to Facebook and Twitter.

By coming together with the “hopes and dreams” project, we are looking to create a better, living, education, and a better future. We already have a great campus that is running head to head with all elite Colleges worldwide. The backbone of WSU was at one time built on hopes and dreams and thus it is hopeful that President Olson’s project, becomes a reality and creates change for a bigger, better and brighter future for WSU for years to come.