

# AQIP Criterion Six: Supporting Institutional Operations

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## Context for Analysis

### *6C1 Student and Administrative Support Service Processes*

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Western’s most recent Systems Portfolio Appraisal (2003-2004) identified the opportunity for the College to document and align key processes with key requirements and strategic priorities. Western has identified an Action Project that calls for the integration of college-wide systems thinking. This project and its goals are high amongst current priorities because the project provides a foundation and “launching pad” for Western to articulate, standardize, measure, and optimize processes that impact student success. This foundation creates an operational blueprint of how Western’s systems interact and connect to support strategic priorities. It enhances Western’s ability to identify opportunities for improvement and to measure outcomes. The work from this Action Project is integrated into the discussion of how Western supports institutional operations.

Western’s student support service processes are depicted in Figure O-16 identified in Western’s systems configuration as Student Success Work System. Figure 6-1 identifies the related process and student needs.

**Figure 6-1 Student Support Service Processes and Needs**

Related Process	Needs
Student Communications	Timeliness, accuracy, accessibility
Admission and Registration	Timeliness, service excellence, student centeredness
Counseling and Advising	Concern for individual, confidentiality, timeliness, access to counselor or advisor
Student Development (housing, wellness, activities)	Availability, accessibility, variety, affordability
Career Placement	Timeliness, access to resources

Figures O-15 and O-13 depict Western’s administrative support service processes. These are identified in Western’s systems configuration as Strategic Leadership and Planning Support System and Facilities and Technologies Support System. Figure 6-2 identifies the related process and describes the stakeholder needs.

**Figure 6-2 Administrative Support Service Processes and Needs**

Related Process	Needs
Budget Management (accounting, grants, foundation)	Coordination of funds Fiscal responsibility to tax payers
Planning and measurement	Strategic plans Coordination of annual planning Coordination of measurement/scorecards Continuous quality improvement
Technology management	Support of technology used in learning
Safety and security	Provide safe and secure environment
Buildings and grounds management	Maintenance of buildings and grounds
Marketing, recruitment and public relations	Coordination of promotion, events, orientations, graduation

## ***6C2 Reinforcing Processes and Systems***

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The student support services and administrative support services reinforce and support processes and systems described in Criterion 1 and 2. They provide the organizational infrastructure to facilitate the deployment of College activities to achieve Western's priorities. These support services are essential for faculty and staff to perform effectively and efficiently to ensure student success and to help students learn.

The College measures student satisfaction with student support service processes using the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. This inventory, purpose, use, and related results are described in Criterion 3P7 with results presented in Figure 3R1-1.

## **Processes**

### ***6P1 Identifying Student Support Service Needs***

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Student support service and needs are identified through the various listening and learning methods identified in Criterion 3 and include surveys, focus groups, suggestions, grievances, and other student and stakeholder feedback. Students, graduates, and employees are surveyed to determine key student service requirements. In the annual planning process, needs for new or modified student services also emerge through employee input, focus groups, forums, or various other committees. Alumni and employer surveys provide external feedback on services. Results of student or market surveys and stakeholder feedback have led to expanded library, cafeteria, and child-care hours. Key student service support process needs are identified in Figure 6-1.

### ***6P2 Identifying Administrative Support Services Needs***

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Administrative support service needs of faculty, staff, administrators and other stakeholders are identified in the biennial PACE survey; through pulse check surveys; through open forums; the Employee Success Plans; and through the annual program and services, budget, and facilities planning process. The key needs are described in Figure 6-2.

### ***6P3 Managing Student and Administrative Support Service Processes***

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The unit managers for the key student and administrative support service processes use a variety of approaches to manage these processes on a day-to-day basis. Student service units design and deliver student support processes to meet key student needs (Figure 6-1). In addition, project or process teams representing multiple units address specific process improvements and use feedback such as student surveys and the Quality Review Process. For example, each semester counseling, admissions, registration, the business office, and instructional divisions work closely in designing registration timelines and orientation schedules and activities.

Many areas seek informal feedback and conduct periodic surveys to assess student satisfaction with services provided and make adjustments as needed. Administrative support unit managers monitor key performance requirements as part of their day-to-day operations. They meet with respective senior leaders at regularly scheduled 1:1 meetings to ensure that progress toward meeting key performance requirements is tracked and analyzed. Monthly Management Forums also provide opportunities for managers to discuss College-wide issues and to interact formally with the senior leaders.

As mentioned in 6C1, Western is in the process of documenting college support systems, major processes and sub-processes as part of its AQIP Action Project to deploy systems thinking

across the college. This Action Project was designed to 1) identify the primary college system, the support systems, major processes, sub-processes and detail policies and procedures and how they impact strategic priorities; 2) create documentation of systems and processes; 3) provide a foundation for measuring key processes and achievement of strategic goals as identified in the College's Strategic Plan and Balanced Scorecard; 4) facilitate and promote systems thinking at all levels of the College. Figures O13-19 depict Western's progress to-date.

#### ***6P4 Using Information to Improve Services***

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Western designs, continually expands, and/or redesigns key support processes based upon organizational need and the changing needs of employees in delivering programs and services. These needs are identified through the:

- Quality Review Processes
- Annual continuous improvement plans
- Annual program and services, budget, and facilities planning process
- Feedback obtained from the PACE Climate Survey
- Feedback obtained from the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory
- Employee Success Plans

Western's key student and administrative support areas have used information and results to enhance a variety of services. One significant example is Western's efforts to provide a one-stop shop for student intake services. Feedback from both external and internal stakeholders was used to identify the opportunity to improve and streamline the student intake process. Not only is a new facility in the construction phase, the organization has identified the need to re-engineer intake services. Western has begun to flowchart the processes and has hired a facilitator to conduct a lean analysis. Improvement areas will be identified and project teams will be created.

#### ***6P5 Regularly Collected Measures of Student and Administrative Support Services***

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Western regularly collects the following information that is helpful in measuring the effectiveness of and satisfaction with student and administrative support services:

- Student satisfaction with college services (3R1-1)
- Financial aid default rates (6R1-1)
- Funding procured through Foundation efforts (6R1-2)
- Funding procured through grants (6R2-2)
- Budget reallocation process effectiveness (6R2-3)
- Fund balance management (6R2-5)
- Moody's Rating (6R2-4)
- College's willingness to invest in technology (expenditures) (6R1-3)
- College's willingness to invest in facilities and capital equipment (expenditures) (6R1-4)
- Wellness Center membership (6R2-6)
- Employee perception of effectiveness with institutional structure (PACE)
- Employee perception of the extent to which guidance is provided by clearly defined administrative processes (PACE)
- Employee perception of the extent to which non-teaching (supporting) personnel meet the needs of the students (PACE)
- Employee perception of the extent to which the organization uses proven processes and practices to effectively and efficiently get work done (PACE)

## **Results**

#### ***6R1 Results for Student Support Service Processes***

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Results for student satisfaction with student support services are covered in 3R1-1. In addition, several other measures (6P5) are used to gauge effectiveness of these processes.

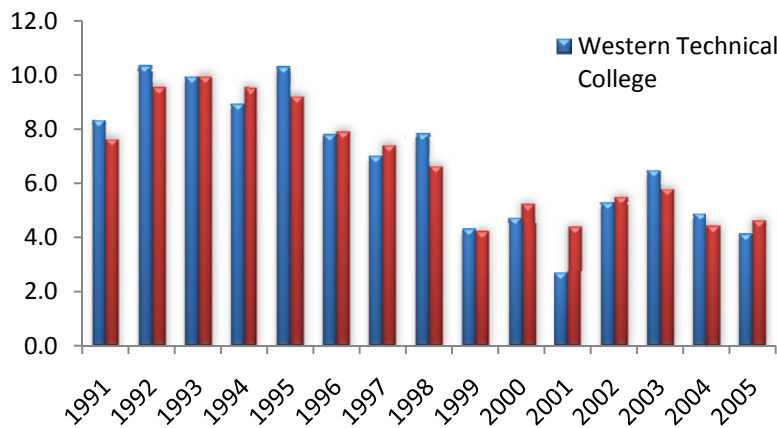
Over sixty percent of Western's students are eligible for financial aid. The cohort default rate identified in Figure 6R1-1 is based on the number of borrowers who entered repayment and those who entered repayment and defaulted. As shown, Western's default rate has decreased since 2003.

**Figure 6R1-1 Financial Aid Default Rate**

Summary of Federal and State Financial Aid Programs					
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total Recipients	2,484	2,577	2,899	3,432	2,704
Total Financial Aid	\$11,126,683	\$12,823,031	\$13,977,276	\$14,487,058	\$12,727,221
% of Eligible Applicants	67%	66%	74%	86%	69%
Average Aid Per Person	\$4,479	\$4,976	\$4,821	\$4,221	\$4,707
Cohort Default Rate*	2.7% N=22/802	5.3% N=45/802	6.5% N=64/973	4.9% N=50/1017	4.1%

Source: Student Services

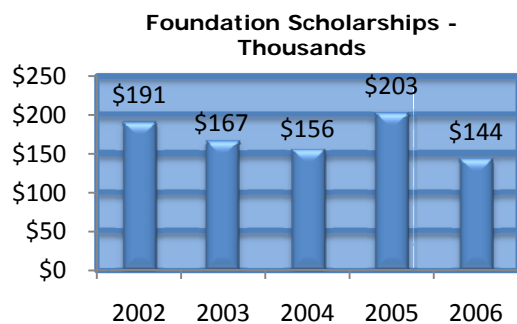
**Figure 6R1-1a Financial Aid Default Rate Comparison**



Source: Student Services

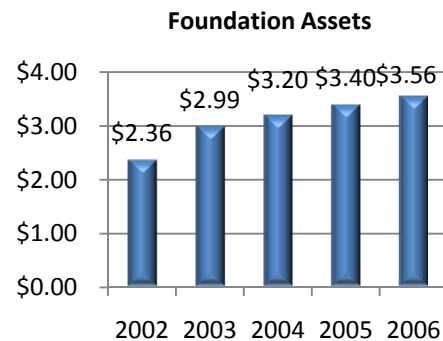
The Western Foundation provides a significant source of funding for student scholarships (Figure 6R1-2 and 6R1-2a).

**Figure 6R1-2 Foundation Student Scholarships**



Source: Foundation Office

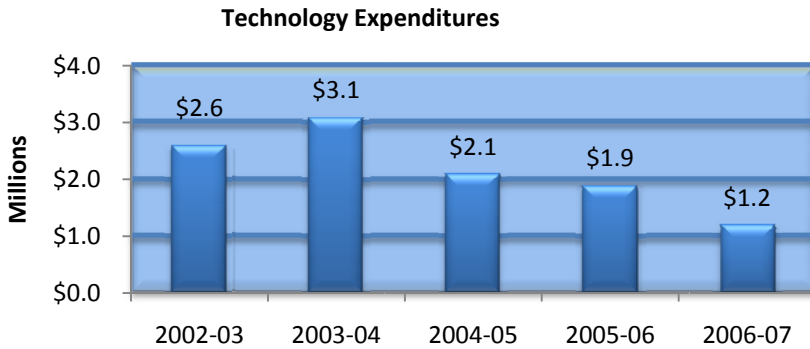
**Figure 6R1-2a Foundation Assets**



Source: Foundation Office

Technology investments address Western’s strategic challenge of providing a high-quality technical education with limited resources. These investments include computer and telecommunications needs (computer, server, and printer replacement), software projects (PeopleSoft), network improvements, ITV, etc. The facilities master plan tracks capital expenditures to address facilities needs such as remodeling, new construction, utility, and major equipment. Figures 6R1-3 and 6R1-4 display trends in expenditures in these areas.

**Figure 6R1-3 Technology Expenditures**



Source: Finance and Operations

**Figure 6R1-4 - Facilities and Capital Equipment Master Plan Expenditures**

Master Plan Facilities and Capital Equipment Expenditures					
	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07
Facilities (New/Remodel)*	\$900K	\$2.3M	\$3.8M	\$4.9M	\$4.0M
# Projects	6	4	6	11	4
Equipment	\$975K	\$950K	\$1.2M	\$1.8M	\$900K

Source: Finance and Operations

**6R2 Results for Administrative Support Service Processes**

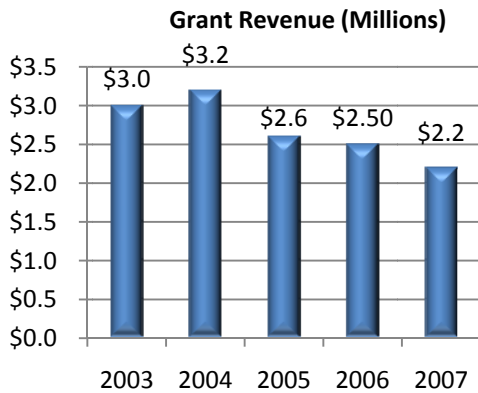
Figure 6R2-1 illustrates employee perceptions of the effectiveness of institutional structure, work processes, and the extent to which supporting personnel meet the needs of students.

**Figure 6R2-1 PACE Climate Survey Results Norm Base Comparisons**

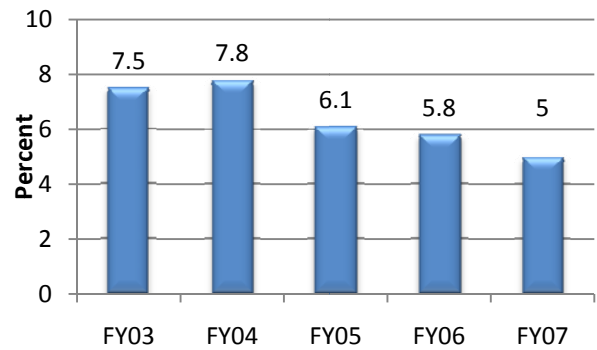
	2005 Mean Western	2007 Mean Western	Norm Base
Perception of effectiveness with institutional structure	3.59	3.10	3.26
Perception of the extent to which work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.0	3.08	3.29
Perception of the extent to which non-teaching professional personnel meet the needs of students	3.69	3.61	3.74
Perception of the extent to which supporting personnel meet the needs of students	n/a	3.64	3.72
Perception of the extent to which the organization uses proven processes and practices to effectively and efficiently get work done	3.08	2.85	n/a (customized question)

The amount of grant revenue brought into the College to support the growth and development of programs and services has declined over the past four years (Figure 6R2-2). The percentage of grants compared to total operating revenue has also declined in the past four years (6R2-2a).

**Figure 6R2-2 Grant Revenue**



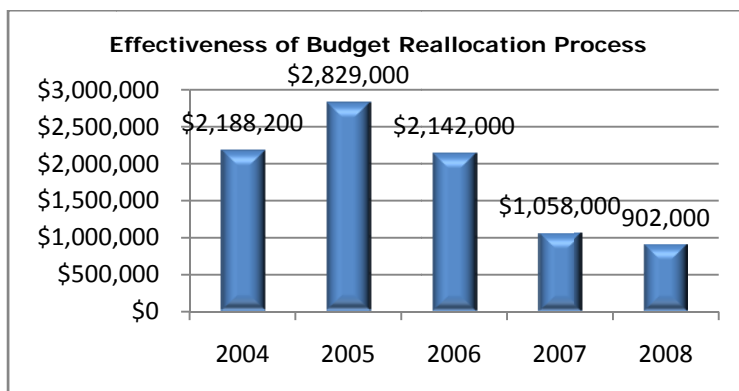
**Figure 6R2-2a Grant Revenue as a Percent of Total Operating Revenue**



Source: Green Sheet, Finance and Operations

There has been a continuing decline in the portion of state aid funding that has caused an increased reliance on local property taxes. This decline, combined with the need to keep property taxes at a reasonable level presents a challenge to keep up with programmatic changes. As a result of these funding restrictions, Western has reallocated over \$9 million during the past five years to support College-wide initiatives and the strategic plan (Figure 6R2-3). Over that same time period, the College has added \$6 million in new programs and services.

**Figure 6R2-3 Effectiveness of Budget Reallocation Process**



Source: VP, Finance and Operations

Western's bond rating, which affects borrowing rates, has remained relatively consistent since 1990 (Figures 6R2-4 and 6R2-4a). Factors that impact the bond rating include:

- Unreserved fund balance (Figure 6R2-5) – the higher the better
- Mill rate (total and operational Figures 6R2-5a, 6R2-5b) – the lower the better
- Valuations per FTE (Figure 6R2-5c) – the higher the better

**Figure 6R2-4 Moody's Long-term Bond Rating**

Moody's Long-term Bond Rating	
Period	Rating
1990 – July 2004	A1
July 2004 – February 2006	A2
February 2006 – Current	A1
<b>Rating range from Aaa,Aa,A, Baa,Ba,B,Caa,Ca,C (highest to lowest)</b>	

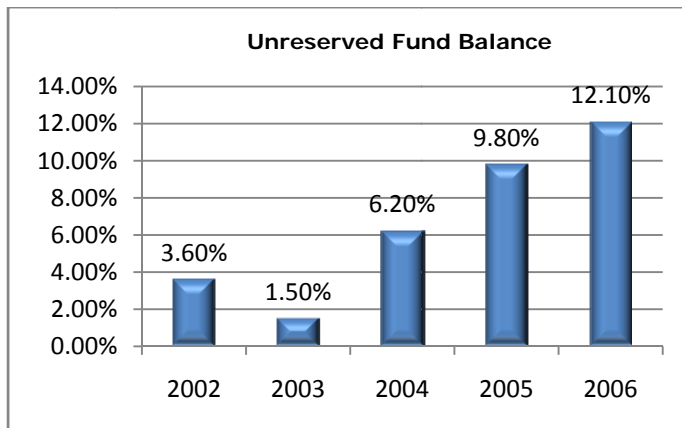
Source: Finance and Operations

**Figure 6R2-4a 2006-2007 WTCS Bond Rating Comparison**

WTCS College	Rating
Blackhawk	Aa3
Chippewa Valley	Aa2
Fox Valley	Aa1
Gateway	Aa1
Indianhead	Aa1
Lakeshore	Aa2
Madison	Aaa
Mid-State	Aa2
Milwaukee	Aa2
Moraine Park	Aa1
Nicolet	Aa2
Northcentral	Aa2
Northeast	Aa1
Southwest	A1
Waukesha	Aaa
Western	A1

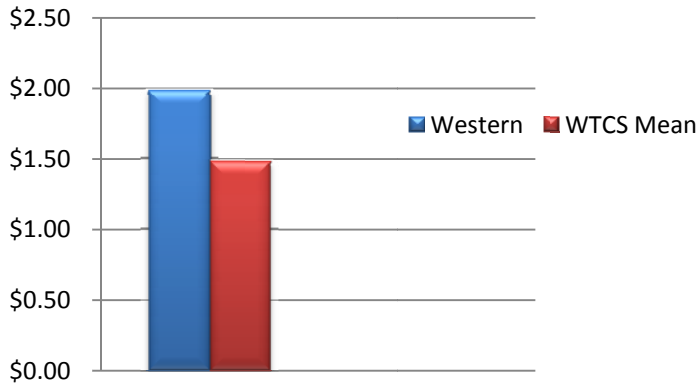
Source: Finance & Operations, Baird Report, Appendix A, September 4, 2007

**Figure 6R2-5 Unreserved Fund Balance**



Source: VP, Finance and Operations

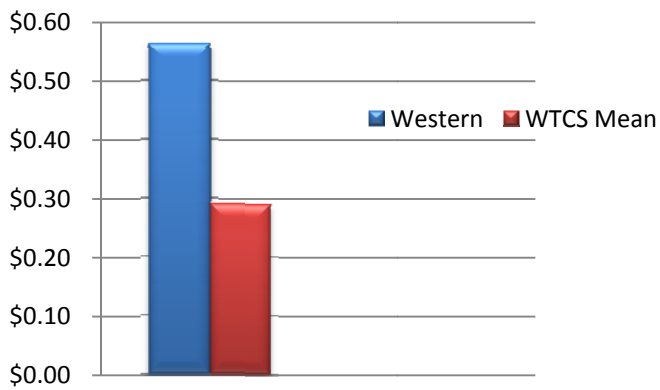
**Figure 6R2-5a Total Mill Rate**



Source: Wisconsin Technical College System website

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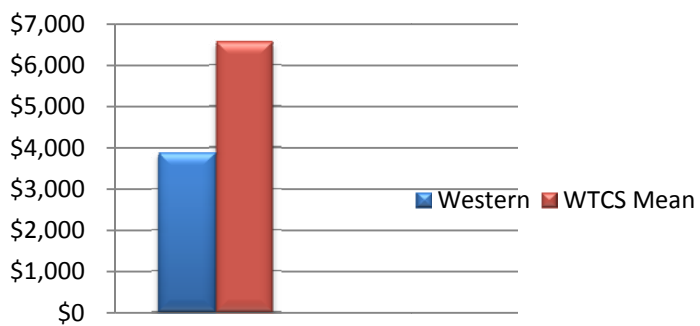
**Figure 6R2-5b Operational Mill Rate**



Source: Wisconsin Technical College System website

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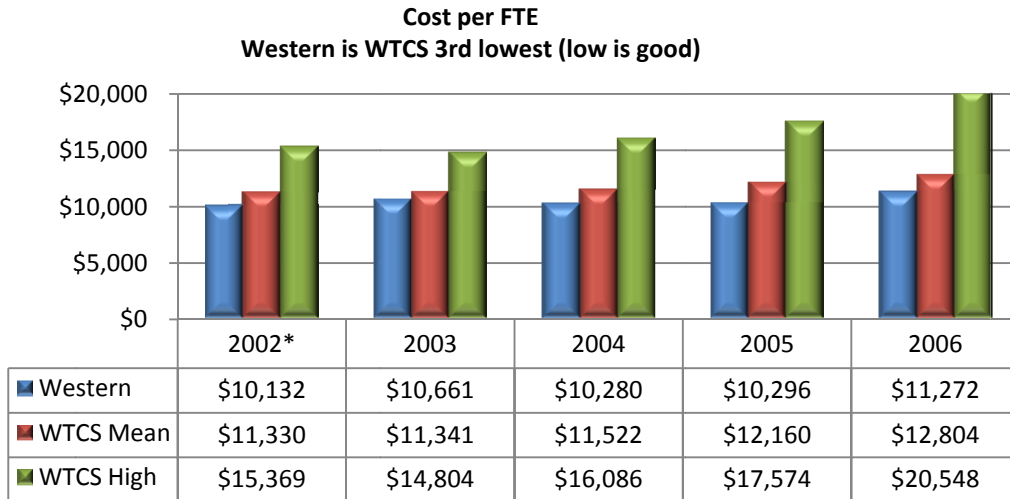
**Figure 6R2-5c Valuations Per FTE**



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Western's cost per FTE (Figure 6R2-5d) is the third lowest in WTCS and is a measure of cost-containment.

Figure 6R2-5d Cost Per FTE



Source: VP, Finance and Operations - from VE-CA-5

Western provides wellness-focused services to both students and employees. Figure 4R1-2 depicts Wellness Center membership over the past five years. Western continues to develop innovative ways to bring wellness to the forefront of student development. It has recently implemented a tobacco free environment and has formed an alcohol awareness committee.

### 6R3 Comparative Results

Western comparative data for 6R1 and 6R2 is in an early stage of development. Western recognizes the opportunity to compare itself to other higher education institutions and organizations outside of education. Currently, the WTCS financial information, the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, and the PACE are valuable sources for comparison.

## Improvements

### 611 Improving Processes

Western is piloting a model to evaluate student services and will consider the model for all student and administrative support services.

### 612 Improving Processes

Short-term and long-term targets are set as part of the annual program and services, budget, and facilities planning process. Units, departments, or teams set targets for improvement for students and administrative support processes based on analyzing past performance and monitoring current processes.

Current results and improvement priorities are communicated to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders using established mechanisms identified in 5-1 and 5-2.

Priorities for improvement in this area are aligned with Western's strategic plan and include:

- Re-engineer the centralized intake admissions process to be more efficient and customer focused

- Align costs within Western's budget resulting in a percentage of district total expenditures to be not less than 60% salaries, not more than 25% benefits and 15% operational overhead through focused negotiations
- Establish a revolving 3 year business plan for college enterprise areas to operate as profit centers
- Establish a process for internal and external group purchasing and/or utilization of Western internal vendors
- Develop partnerships with external agencies to share expenses or increase revenue streams
- Expand workforce development grants
- Establish a venture capital fund of \$500,000 to support BIS expansion through the Lunda Center