

# AQIP Criterion Nine: Building Collaborative Relationships

## Context for Analysis

### 9C1 Key Collaborative Relationships

The key collaborative relationships that support Helping Students Learn (Criterion 1) are described in Figure 9-1. These relationships provide unique opportunities for collaboration, partnerships, and relationship enhancement.

Figure 9-1 Key Collaborative Relationships

Collaborative Relationships	Examples	Purpose and Nature of Relationship
<b>Educational Relationships</b>	CESA 4 (Community Education Service Agency)	Collaboration with post-secondary institutions to assist grades 7-12 partners ( <i>existing</i> )
	University of Wisconsin-Stout	Program transfer of graduates; partner in continuous quality initiatives and training (i.e. joint WFA application writing seminar training to organizations throughout the state) ( <i>existing and receiver</i> )
	Higher Education Partners (Viterbo University, University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, Winona State University)	Course and program transfer for students ( <i>existing and receiver</i> )
	Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC)	Joint technical assistance to area businesses ( <i>outsource</i> )
<b>Consortia</b>	La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, Inc.	Joint health-care educational training consortium ( <i>community support</i> )
	WTC PeopleSoft Consortium WTCS SW PeopleSoft Consortium	Technology upgrading ( <i>existing</i> )
	TechConnect	Electronic job placement resource developed at Western and offered through WTCS ( <i>community support</i> )
<b>Regional/Community</b>	7 Rivers Region Technology Business Alliance	Enhance economic well-being of the region ( <i>emerging and community support</i> )
	Greater La Crosse/Winona Collaboration	Promote regional collaboration in health care, education, and the economy ( <i>emerging</i> )
	City of La Crosse and other cities within the District	Enhance economic well-being of the region ( <i>existing and community support</i> )
	Chamber of Commerce	Community support ( <i>existing and community support</i> )
	Workforce Development Board/Job Center	Enhance economic well-being of the region
	Servant Leadership Learning Community	Enhance leadership techniques in region
<b>Labor</b>	Local 3605 Wisconsin Federation of Teachers and Local 695 Teamsters	Promote collaborative working relationship regarding wages, benefits, and working conditions for faculty and staff through collective bargaining ( <i>existing</i> )
<b>Accreditation</b>	Higher Learning Commission (AQIP)	Institutional accreditation ( <i>existing</i> )
	Specialized program accreditation bodies	Validation/recognition ( <i>existing</i> )
<b>Non-Profit Agencies</b>	Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc.	Partner in promoting continuous quality initiatives throughout the state ( <i>existing</i> )
	Community Organizations	Volunteerism and fund raising ( <i>community support</i> )
<b>State</b>	Wisconsin Job Service	Collaborative employment training ( <i>community support</i> )
	Statewide Marketing	Collaborative marketing efforts
	Districts' Mutual Insurance	Consortium designed to secure cost-savings
<b>National</b>	CQIN (Continuous Quality Improvement Network)	Consortium designed to promote continuous improvement within community/technical colleges ( <i>existing</i> )
<b>Donors</b>	Alumni Association and community	Provide financial support ( <i>emerging</i> )
<b>Foundation</b>	Western Foundation, Inc.	Provide professional development funding support for staff and scholarships to students ( <i>existing</i> )

<b>Suppliers</b>	Local K-12 School Districts	Supplier of potential students ( <i>feeder</i> )
	Per Mar Security	Provide campus security services ( <i>outsource</i> )
	ManPower and Olsten Staffing	Temporary employment suppliers ( <i>outsource</i> )
	Riverfront, Inc. (non-profit)	Employment supplier (developmentally disabled adults)

## ***9C2 Reinforcing Institutional Mission***

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These collaborative relationships support Western's *vision* as a "collaborative, innovative educational leader in the community" and one of Western's *values*, "partnerships that are important to the community's economic vitality and quality of life". Partnerships are one of the key factors analyzed as part of the planning process (Figure 8-5).

## **Processes**

### ***9P1 Creating, Prioritizing and Building Relationships***

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Western creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships by pursuing partnerships that provide opportunities for innovation with business and industry, the community, and other higher education organizations. Western is viewed as a leader in building and maintaining relationships within the community and our higher education partners. This strong presence in the community is evidenced by the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, Inc. created in the fall of 1993. This nationally recognized model represents an alliance among five partners: Western Technical College, University of Wisconsin—La Crosse, Viterbo University, Franciscan Skemp Healthcare/Mayo Health System, and Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center. This alliance has fostered regional economic development and enhances western Wisconsin primary care; strengthens medical health science education; and solidifies interactive research initiatives in the clinical sciences.

Western also builds and maintains relationships with higher education institutions through program articulation and degree transfer initiatives. Students have the option of transferring to various post-secondary colleges through program-to-program, degree completion, or UW-System-WTCS multi-institutional agreements. Examples include course articulation with local area post-secondary universities in various program areas. The post-secondary program articulation agreements (2+2 agreements) that lead to bachelor's degrees with various colleges and universities are identified in Figure 9R-6. Numerous colleges and universities also accept individual course credits.

Western builds and maintains relationships with K-12 districts in a number of formal and informal ways to increase the supply of incoming students. These methods include articulation meetings, Tech Camp, Camp W, Career Fairs, Technology Expo, Student Shadow Days, campus tours, and Youth Options. Through articulation efforts discussed in Criterion 2, credits are granted to incoming students for Advanced Standing Credit, Youth Options or Contracted Funded Courses for Transcribed Credit, Youth Apprenticeship and Certified skilled Co-Op Programs, Credit-by-Examination, and Advanced Placement exams.

Students transferring from other post-secondary institutions to Western may use past educational experience to fulfill six elective credits as well as transfer all appropriately matched general education, occupation-specific, and/or supportive courses. "Credit for Prior Learning" is recognized within the WTCS to provide appropriate credit for appropriate life experiences.

Western also partners with Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC) to provide technical assistance to area manufacturing businesses. Another partnership example is the 7 Rivers Region Technology Business Alliance that was launched in 2000 as a strategic not-for-profit partnership between education, industry, and government. Western is a core member of this partnership that was motivated by the perspective that information technology has emerged to the point that it could have an increasingly vital role in the regional economy and quality of life. In 2001 the College partnered with the local Mass Transit Utility to offer free student bus passes to alleviate parking congestion at the main campus.

Western takes a proactive approach to seeking out partnerships and collaborative efforts that will enhance the community and also provide opportunities for staff and students to contribute positively to the greater good. Western demonstrates its public responsibility and citizenship role by encouraging employees to be active members of local community groups. Many of Western's employees serve on local school boards, participate in United Way, Rotary, Lions, and other community service activities. Students are encouraged through their clubs, organizations, and through service learning to provide community service work. Student clubs donate time to community activities including Children's Miracle Network, National Alliance for the Mentally III, Habitat for Humanity, United Cerebral Palsy Telethon, New Horizons Women's and Family Shelter, and Rotary Lights.

### ***9P2 Meeting the Needs***

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Western ensures that the varying needs of the groups involved in these relationships are being met through (1) letters of agreement or memorandums of understanding that describe the nature of partnerships, (2) informal feedback that is obtained through ongoing dialogue with the various partners, (3) creation of steering teams to guide the relationships (4) Plan, Do, Study, Act approach at established intervals in the relationship, (4) Western's leadership role in educational and community activities, and (5) Western's initiative and/or invitation to continue partnering in activities that benefit the region. In addition, Western determines the satisfaction of higher education partners and K-12 suppliers through articulation efforts at both levels.

### ***9P3 Creating and Building Relationships within the Institution***

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Since 1976 Western has created and built a long-standing relationship internally with Local 3605, the bargaining unit of the American Federation of Teachers for faculty, NTP, and PSRP employee groups. Since 1998 Western has been collaborating with the Teamsters Local 695 who represent the custodial group.

Western ensures integration and communication with Local 3605 by having a representative from both the faculty/NTP and PSRP groups participate in steering committee meetings. Most recently, the Vice President of Instruction has established a forum (Learning Council) where faculty can share best practices, address faculty concerns, and provide a faculty voice in areas such as strategic planning and quality improvement. Western's President is active in campus activities that involve all employees and has an "open door" policy.

### ***9P4 Measures of Building Collaborative Relationships***

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Western uses the following measures to determine our effectiveness in building collaborative relationships:

- Western/NWMOC partnership activities
- Western's customized training activities
- Socio-economic impact of the College
- United Way Campaign contributions
- High school graduates market share
- Employee perception of climate
- Post-secondary student transfer within Wisconsin
- Post-secondary program articulation and degree transfer agreements

## Results

### 9R1 Results in Building Key Collaborative Relationships

Western's results for building key collaborative relationships can be found throughout the portfolio as follows:

**Figure 9R-1**

Relationship	Measure	Figure
Western/NWMOC partnership	Customer satisfaction	3R4-4
Western's customized training activities	Revenue generation and business impact	2R1-2, 3R4-3
United Way	Campaign contributions	9R-3
High Schools	Graduate market share	3R4, 5, 6
Employees	Perception of climate (PACE), effectiveness of communication	4R3-1, 5R-1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
Post-secondary institutions	Post-secondary transfer within Wisconsin, post-secondary program articulation and degree transfer agreements	9R-4, 5
Community	Socio-economic impact, service learning activities, percent of residents enrolled at Western	9R-2, 2R-11, 12, and 13, 3R-7
Foundation	Foundation scholarships	6R1-2

The Wisconsin Technical College System contracted with a third party (CCBenefits) to determine the socio-economic impact (Figure 9R-2) generated by each technical college. In addition to Western's contribution to local job and income formation and taxpayer return on investment, two areas of benefits have been tracked: (1) higher earnings captured by exiting students and (2) a broad collection of social benefits. This study supports Western's efforts to enhance the economic well-being of the region.

**Figure 9R-2 Socioeconomic Impact of College**

Annual Socioeconomic Impacts of Western on the State and Regional Economy	
Higher Earnings	\$14,028,414
Absenteeism Savings	\$882,720
Medical Cost Savings	\$980,939
Incarceration Savings	\$203,865
Crime Victim Savings	\$65,979
Additional Productivity (fewer incarcerations)	\$122,959
Welfare Savings	\$359,030
Unemployment Savings	\$161,465
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,805,371</b>

Source: *The Socioeconomic Benefits Generated by Western Technical College Report – January 2006*

Western encourages employee support of local charities and participates in the United Way Campaign, one of the nation's leading community solutions providers (Figure 9R-3). By encouraging employee participation, Western can focus on the most important needs in the community--building partnerships, forging consensus, and leveraging resources to make a measurable difference.

**Figure 9R-3 United Way Employee Contributions**



Source: Human Resource Department

Figure 9R-4 reflects the results of Western’s post-secondary program articulation and degree transfer efforts to facilitate continued education and training for students who complete courses at the College.

**Figure 9R-4 Post-Secondary Program Articulation and Degree Transfer**

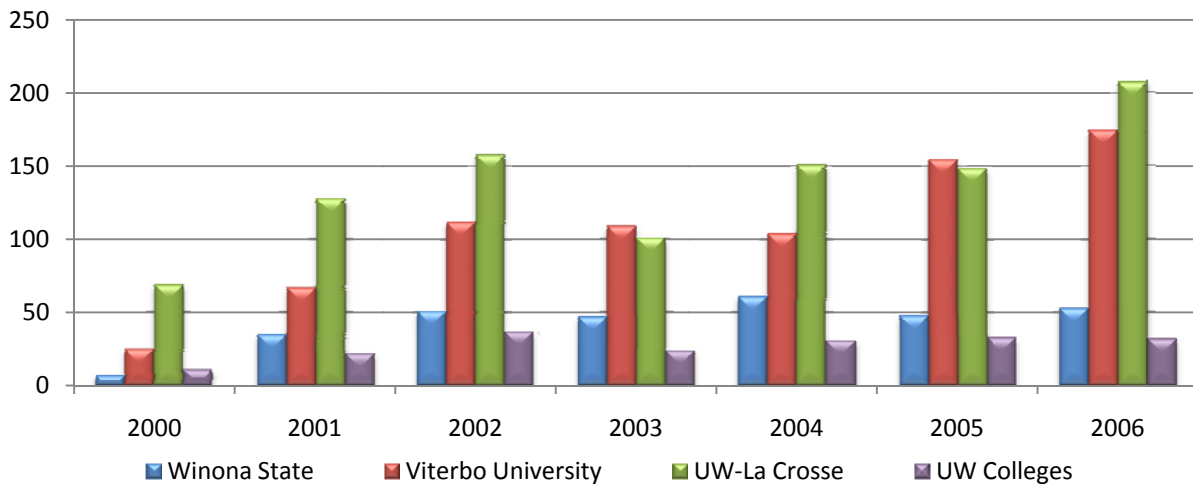
College/University	Program to Program Articulation (2+2) and/or Baccalaureate Degree Completion
Capella University	Bachelor of science degree in various programs in the School of Business and School of Technology
Ferris State	Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration
Franklin University	Bachelor’s degree in business administration; computer science; digital communication; human resources management; management; marketing, health care management; public safety management; management information systems; technical management; and new majors as developed.
Lakeland College	Early Childhood Education
Marian University	Nursing
Milwaukee School of Engineering	Electronics; B.S. in Electrical Engineering Technology
Silver Lake College	All AAS degrees
University of Minnesota- Crookston	Bachelor of science in business management; health management; hotel; restaurant and institutional management; and early childhood program management
University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire	Nursing
University of Wisconsin- Green Bay	Nursing
University of Wisconsin- La Crosse	Finance; Accounting; Business Administration-Personnel; General Marketing; Programmer Analyst; Marketing; EET; CET; CLT; Radiography; Network Specialist
University of Wisconsin- Madison	Nursing
University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee	Early Childhood Education; Nursing
University of Wisconsin- Oshkosh	Nursing; Early Childhood Education; Supervisory Management
University of Wisconsin- Parkside	Early Childhood Education
University of Wisconsin- Platteville	Electronics; Programmer Analyst-CIS; Electromechanical Technology; Mechanical Design; Electronic Publishing; Accounting; Finance; Agribusiness/Science Technology; Marketing; Supervisory Management; and Visual Communication
University of Wisconsin-Riverfalls	Agribusiness and Science Technology

University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point	Criminal Justice; Early Childhood Education
University of Wisconsin-Stout	Criminal Justice; Early Childhood Education; Electronics; Finance; Programmer Analyst-CIS; bachelor of science degree in industrial management; Service Management or vocational; technical, and adult education; Bio-med; Clinical Lab Tech; DisAbility Support Specialist; Network Specialist; Marketing
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	Early Childhood Education; Marketing
Upper Iowa University	Accounting; business and management; general education courses; 60 credits of Associate Degree apply toward a bachelor's degree (offer their classes at the WWTC Viroqua and Mauston extended campuses)
Viterbo University	Criminal Justice; Nursing; bachelor of integrated studies or business administration; accounting; criminal justice, law enforcement; Early childhood education; Human Resources, Business Administration; Instructional Assistant; Computer Support Specialists, Network Specialists; Program Analyst; Marketing; Supervisory Management
Winona State University	Criminal Justice; Nursing; Business Education

Source: *Tech Prep Specialist*, October 2007

Four-year educational institutions are one of Western's key collaborative relationships. One of the purposes of the WTCS is to provide students with an option to transfer to four-year institutions. Figure 9R-5 represents a steady growth in the number of Western students who transfer to four-year institutions within western Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota.

**Figure 9R-5 Post-Secondary Student Transfer**



Source: *National Student Clearinghouse, Report on Initial Transfer, 2006*

## ***9R2 Comparisons***

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Comparative results and internal trends, where available, are summarized with the results for each measurement (see Figure 9R-1). Western compares itself to other WTCS colleges and national norms (PACE). Western exceeds WTCS college means in high school market share (3R-5, 6) and percent of district residents enrolled (Figure 3R-7). Western is slightly below the norm base for employee perception of climate (PACE results, Figure 5R-1).

## **Improvement**

### ***9I1 Improving Current Processes***

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Western improves its processes for building collaborative relationships by meeting periodically with College steering teams and partners to discuss effectiveness of relationships. When appropriate, letters of agreement or memorandums of understanding provide guidance and parameters of relationships. These are used as tools to review the effectiveness of relationships. Western also improves its processes by analyzing data that is collected in Figure 9R-1.

### ***9I2 Setting Targets and Priorities for Improvement***

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Targets for improvement for building collaborative relationships are set after data are reviewed and analyzed. Western targets increased participation and/or revenue generation. When comparative data is used, Western's target is to exceed the mean and/or be the best in class. Specific improvement priorities include the following:

- Increased transfer of general education credits from the technical college system to the University of Wisconsin System. This issue is being addressed jointly by senior leaders and administrative staff within the Wisconsin Technical College System, University System, and among state legislators.
- Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) Initiative: New regional partnerships and industry sector initiatives designed to target training investments and align technical college and state university programs; pioneer local industry-driven career pathway models; and connect worker education to student and employer needs.

Western communicates current results and improvements to relationship partners, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate students and stakeholders by sharing information via District Board meetings, College steering committees, Informational Flow Sheets, and publications such as local newspapers and newsletters. This information is also posted on the intranet WIRE.