

## Strengths

- Going on medical leave and feel very supported, easy to navigate and get leave when needed. Even though things are tight within the department staffing wise, the department is supportive.
- Faculty are dedicated to quality of teaching, very caring in terms of students learning, our dept offers courses but also gives students experience through internship, we offer unique programs which equals successful students.
- We have outstanding programs; they far exceed WWU's reputation.
- There is high touch with professors and students, not taught by RA or TA, smaller class sizes, collegiality within their college.
- Faculty support each other.
- WWU portrays continued commitment to inclusivity, social justice, diversity... we are publicly staying strong in supporting that which is especially notable given the current political climate
- We are a regional liberal arts institution – we provide good opportunities and a strong liberal arts education. We are regional but we offer more than a typical regional university
- The level of commitment is different than at other universities by faculty.
- They felt they received a lot of support from departmental leaders and higher when first coming into WWU.
- WWU is a supportive environment, faculty are committed to excellence. Class sizes are better than many. Teachers are teaching rather than TAs
- There are a lot of meetings but they are part of the effort to unify the community. There is a commitment to shared governance.
- Support for grants – a lot of resources offered, they have been approved for 4 grants in 2.5 years which allows them to achieve their goals that wouldn't otherwise be possible.
- For me, it is the emphasis on teaching and social justice. Both put students first.
- Huxley and Fairhaven especially contribute to the reputation of the university, attracting socially responsible students who care about the environment.
- Undergraduate education in liberal arts and sciences. Excellent faculty governance and an engaged faculty union.
- Faculty is a strength
- Student access to faculty

- Collective bargaining
- Administration recognizes faculty strengths
- The moat between old main and the rest of campus has been healed since 2003 – shared governance is part of this
- We have students who are very strong in service learning and in internships
- We get good students
- The faculty does its part to make shared governance work.
- Multiple paths to a successful career as a faculty member –can be successful if strength is teaching, research, or service.
- I see our focus on the Salish Sea region; location; importance of land and people who came before us; the acknowledgement that Western gives and continues to think about
- Wise Well U – support of faculty and staff, wellness of full person; continue building on that; 8 hours of community service—push for people to do that
- Carry this over to focus on all students, not just traditional ones—support all types of students with different experiences, support for the whole student (not just educationally)
- Community partnerships—partner with schools, groups, it builds and builds—small business center; community connections where students, faculty and staff are out working in the community and bringing what we know to them, what they know to us; continue to grow this
- Proud of governance system—not designed to be efficient, but designed to be fair; impressed with integrity of leaders; “I’ve seen other institutions that are really an embarrassment”
- Teaching is excellent; embrace active learning; hands on learning; using research equipment, hands on for students
- Western is a small city, with a utility district, roads department, police department; maintains a small town attitude—different factions come together to focus on the task at hand
- I talk with prospective students about research opportunities specialized equipment, faculty labs—available to undergrads
- Good reputation across the state and country for strong baccalaureate programs, teacher ed, sciences, opportunities at Fairhaven and Huxley that are unique
- Western is doing a better job understanding its role serving citizens of WA and beyond; we are outward facing (institute); doing better feeling comfortable going out and facing people, being in that role
- They market really well, rankings going up nationally
- Look at how many volunteer for Peace Corps, Fulbright Scholars

- Lobby very good, Ralph a good pipeline
- Effective with Board of Trustees and high-level searches attracting candidates—hit a home run with Sabah—the disconnect is with the rank and file
- Western retains alumni, who come back to work here
- Bellingham is such a great place to live
- Commitment to diversifying the university, because Bellingham doesn't have much diversity, and they're doing a good job
- Compass2Campus, a pipeline program, it's a real community service, allows other communities in the region to use the campus—real responsibility with the community
- In the trades, in private sector it's all bottom dollar, but here people are involved, look for quality
- In the trades, people stay, so they own the work because they'll still be here 20 years from now dealing with it
- Commitment to service learning, the activism, they care about the community
- Western is a leader in the community, others take cues from us
- We have had failed searches because of low wages, plus the real estate—hard for people to move here
- It's the fourth-most expensive city in the state to live in—the private sector keeps up
- Quality instruction, the core responsibility
- Community support of the university
- Cooperative entity—they don't approach things as “academics in the room”
- Town-gown initiative has been a great start—continuing to do those things is a big part of the collaborative relationship
- Civic responsibility—Compass 2 Campus but more than that as well
- Different culture
- Student mentors – research – mentoring 1/1 relationships
- Size is a strength – Students to faculty and facilities is about right
- Access to opportunities
- Not too big and not too small

- Undergraduate reputation – hard for us to do anything else –
- More outreach – more graduate programs – strength is also a weakness
- Excellent teaching is rewarded
- Even the way Leave is granted – freedom to innovate in classrooms
- Teacher/Scholar model – strong research culture
- Campus is beautiful – visceral reaction to the physical place
- Location – Mount Baker – close to water – have capitalized on this within our curriculum
- Passion for environment – Huxley and Shannon Point –
- Think about way to strengthen the ties between the physical environment/culture and broaden into interdisciplinary programs
- Attract a particular kind of student – desire to make a difference – high quality on critical thinking – Active Minds/Changing Lives
- But we need to think more broadly – we could be more demographically rich – without giving up our current identity
- Great students – narrow – upper middle class kids – 9% come from the lowest 40% socio-economic
- support; consistently felt supported in different roles I've been in across departments people; wonderful colleagues, passion and commitment
- teaching and devotion to students people care and value Western
- students are our strength and backbone, keep us on task
- people who are so dedicated they will serve on so many committees to make sure things happen be aware of danger of burning out—sense of volunteerism
- classified staff often absent from work because they are not given release time
- compare to other campuses—I've been places I felt no support; Western has created a structure that we're working to improve
- where we are in our evolution—on cusp of change and transition; potential; hope
- change in senior leadership that will continue; retirements in faculty and staff, so we have chance to increase diversity and richness—not just ethnic, but geographic
- passion that people have around this issue is a strength provincialism as a challenge

- in library—problematic access for those with disabilities
- innovative thinkers—for this issue, there is an idea for striping on walls to direct access, but rules about colors prevent this from happening
- support for colleagues in different groups to report out our strategic priorities
- some colleges didn't report on diversity as strategic initiatives (to UPRC) even though this is a university wide priority; strength in making small inroads with major players, but they are lacking support to push things through
- how to synergize energies across campus
- we're in a paradigm shift and ready for it, but where is the next step in this direction
- Faculty governance
- Involvement of undergraduates in scholarship
- Selective/strong student body
- Strong programs that attract good students
- Faculty senate & -- create strengths of faculty governance
- Leadership that is supportive of shared governance
- Faculty maintain control of quality of curriculum
  - o Be it outline or EE or changes)
- The amount of undergraduate research going on and how many undergrads have an opportunity to work with faculty on a research project.
- Balance between teaching and research
- Recruit and retain – teaching and research culture – Western's Professional Leave policy – is a powerful – recruitment tool
- Faculty Senate and Faculty Union – Faculty Union is something that we do well – made progress – CBA – distinguished as a model – Not a potential threat to shared governance – it isn't a threat – both have to be outward looking – Administration and Union working together
- Culture of Social Justice – Service Learning – theory into direct practice – express their individuality
- Facilitating a sense of agency
- For a non-PhD university we ride the line toward research – involvement of students – hard judges on ourselves – tenure requirement – amount and quality of research beyond most non-PhD

- Masters students are extremely successful – into PhD – strong jobs for Masters students – especially in CHSS – prepare undergrads for graduate work
- Limit influence pressure to do something else – campus has limits – faculty emphasized shared governance
- Improvements needed – for financial aid – but it is a good deal – overall – especially for quality of faculty
- Union. Strengths are connected to challenges, so it's hard not to separate the two. Strength is keeping the smaller size, interesting curriculum, value of liberal arts education.
- Engaged student body. When change happens on campus students are in the middle of it. We have students who are really able to do that, to organize themselves. I've worked with the AS, they are far from perfect but they provide an important arena for students to mobilize. And to respond to students mobilizing outside of the AS. I certainly saw it around students organizing on diversity and social justice. Environmental sustainability. Students willing to tax themselves for environmental sustainability projects.
- They are strengths but there are problems around them. Faculty and staff have been carving out more time for international and service learning experiences. There are students who would like to do this but can't afford it, but I'm glad to see more faculty and staff getting involved.
- Students – service learning is increasing. More experiential work and work in the community, Fairhaven does that already, but I see that more in the university now. Despite my criticism earlier, there are some rays of hope. I have been fortunate to meet people who get it. It is gratifying and refreshing, although I think they are over worked and probably up against some friction.
- Students have strength and have organized, but I don't think we handle it particularly well, it should be on them to push the change, we should be working on that systematically. (Challenges)
- Nimbleness, putting together degrees that are not siloed—students can learn to either be a specialist or combine areas
- Student involvement in many aspects of the university
- The campus itself
- Students being taught by professors
- Students' thought process is so much more mature than from other schools
- The value Western offers is important
  - The value proposition appeals to a lot of people
- Undergrad programs are running well, high quality; allow undergrads to participate in faculty research
- Impressed with administrative response to emergency situations, political issues, etc.; communication with the students is timely and caring; admin does a good job of creating a culture of compassion, respect and caring
- Our strengths can also be our challenges, i.e. we have a very strong faculty program but that can also slow us down at times, faculty governance here leads to silos;

- Faculty and students doing research together is a normal part of our culture.
- Our students are on par with U of O;
- Supportive of innovation and risk taking in teaching; attitude is “sure go ahead and give it a try”.
- More supportive of diversity and inclusion.
- WWU Everett is judged as one of the top quality schools of our size for the money. One student was told to come to WWU when they called around to employers and asked about a Master’s degree in Teaching. Even outside of Washington, WWU has a reputation for having a strong program in teacher ed.
- They get feedback from schools/employers that students come into field experiences exceptionally well-prepared; there is a noticeable difference in students from WWU.
- The Grad school is phenomenal, faculty and support staff always have the best interest of the students in mind.
- Western provides a well-rounded undergraduate liberal arts education. Students come away with easily transferable skills and the ability to read, write, create, and think critically. Faculty involve undergraduates in high-level research projects, exposing them to open investigations and pressing questions in their respective fields. Students at Western are particularly successful once they are admitted into their majors. Time-to-degree is very good (or “short”) in comparison to other schools. Focus on experiential learning within majors has been deliberately and intentionally increased over the last 25 years at Western.
- Western seeks the students’ voice on all of the main issues before it. A student representative is invited to most meetings where major decisions are made.
- The current transition in senior leadership gives the institution a chance to grow and seek out new opportunities.
- Western offers strong student advising programs, which are a joint collaboration between staff and faculty. Advising is less robust for lower-division students without an assigned major; however, the Student Success Collaborative (SSC) is helping to improve that program.
- Decentralization is a strength. For people who want to be innovative, it’s very empowering.
- Staff passion. Everybody is helpful, even when people from off campus call.
- seems like students are moved through in a fairly efficient way. for better or worse. from the perspective of tuition, students get to move through.
- according to students and alums, student led activities and student directed activities were very powerful and even more so than courses.
- what really kept my excitement. variety of educational experiences. variety of degrees. fairhaven -- build your own. arts, sciences, huxley, and everything in between

- not having a Greek system. allows students to socialize in a more meaningful way
  - the lack of Greek system is a lack. it is an obvious absence.
- comparable issue is the football program -- is the lack a strength or not?
- whether or not it is good or bad that we don't have a football and Greek system -- as a consequence -- many other activities are more visible -- i.e., track and field, crew, clubs, basketball, and other activities.
- might be a detriment for funding, but it does allow other things to show up more.
- depends on who you are
- students have school spirit but it is around other things, not typical things, i.e.,
- school spirit -- but not attached to ordinary ways -- our size of campus, i.e., but lobbying Olympia in larger percentages than UW or other campuses, speaks to the energy of our campus.
- other institutions might have a lot of money and research dollars but don't have the same energy for impacting campus, state, and region
- we don't necessarily capitalize on our specificity and what our students and faculty are most proud of and focus on. we don't have as much of a "go zags" moment. and perhaps we should around environmentalism, social diversity -- would be really cool to emphasize and capitalize on in an intentional way.
- for example, the vehicle research institute -- we should celebrate more or as much as we outwardly did several years ago.
- some of the things that we publicized and specialized a couple of years ago, we don't focus as much as we should
- some of our achievements have been muted. we like to see more emphasis on our
- unique programs for nontraditional students. not the football scholarship student but the Fairhaven or Huxley student. environmental or social science program. in a way that the public can understand the complexity of the research. students as well as staff.
- on a personal note, appreciate being able to find my own niche and develop my own potential to contribute even more.
- you wouldn't necessarily find that at a bigger research institution in the state.
- Breadth of Interdisciplinary Programs
- Building student relationships that develop into strong alumni relationships
- Small classes that facilitate relationships
- Quality of faculty and students
- A genuine commitment to academics



- 80 percent of our freshmen graduate somewhere, double the national average
- Graduation rate for underserved students is high
- A diverse leadership shows we put our money where our mouth is
  - In 10 years, 75 percent of youth will be people of color; how many other communities look like us (in leadership)? Tout that strength, let people know
- Build on high level of collegiality, engagement, and commitment of faculty and staff
  - See that passion more focused
- Staff's willingness to stretch and to be risk takers, explore new technology; a leadership that says go ahead and take risks, give it a try
- Take advantage of our ability and desire to collaborate
- We are a non-elitist campus, that stands out here
- If WWU does grow, champion the liberal arts base, even as STEM grows, so it's not just get into your major
- Western has longevity in its people, who make deep personal and career investments here. That's built the excellence, the institutional memory, the ability to operate with less staff. How can we support faculty and staff to keep this high level of commitment?
- Faculty commitment to teaching is outstanding, as is the integration of internships in undergrad ed
- Relatively low cross disciplinary boundaries
- Another take on "Western Cares:" We have smart, creative, engaged people who are willing to work together to figure things out, create new stuff, get the job done.
- Universal commitment to students and their success
- Pride – "which will ultimately make the commitment manifest in agility"; this is true of the alumni too – we're not a "rah rah" campus, but we are very proud
- Compassion and true respect for students.
- Students are highly regarded, there is a lot of integrity around students.
- Willing to deal with race, equality, social justice – difficult issues.
- Safe environment for students to raise their voice.
- Community feel.
- There are many strengths.
- Staff is passionate.

- Deep commitment to WWU. It is good but people can get burned out. Allowing people to pursue their passions.
- Perhaps- critical mass of people willing to work themselves to death
- Work hard to make environments good for our students.
- Work on healing students/collogues who are suffering.
- There are mechanisms to promote strength Faculty Senate, Shared Governance, Union.
- Less fear here.
- Balance power.
- Staff is left hanging – students/faculty are empowered.