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8 Periodic Review Report

9 prepared for

10 Middle States Commission

11 on Higher Education, June 1, 2016

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16 *Presented by*

17 West Chester University, West Chester, PA

18 *Chief Executive Officer:*

19 Greg R. Weisenstein, President

20 *Date of decennial evaluation visit:*

21 March 27-30, 2011

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1. Executive Summary

Overview of West Chester University

Throughout its history, West Chester University (WCU) has served residents of Greater Philadelphia and the tri-state region of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware and has been a cultural center for Chester County. WCU had its origin in West Chester Academy, a private, state-aided preparatory and teacher-training school founded in 1812. The academy became West Chester Normal School in 1871, West Chester State Teachers College in 1927, West Chester State College in 1960, and West Chester University in 1983, when it also became one of 14 universities in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE).

Since the 1960s, WCU has offered a broad range of liberal arts and professional degree programs as a Master's I comprehensive institution. WCU is the largest campus in PASSHE and the fourth largest institution of higher education in the Philadelphia region. Within PASSHE, WCU is known for its academic excellence across all of its five colleges, the diversity of its student body, its innovative business processes that promote efficiency, and its distributed-leadership approach.

The University continues to be ranked in Kiplinger Magazine's "best buys" in American public higher education for seven consecutive years. Best buy is defined as a combination of affordability and excellence and West Chester is one of only four public Pennsylvania schools ranked in the top 100.

Academic Programs

Currently, the University offers 118 baccalaureate-degree and more than 70 master's-degree and graduate certificate programs as well as three doctoral programs through five academic colleges:
- College of Arts and Sciences, with thirteen departments
- College of Business and Public Management, with seven departments
- College of Education, with seven departments
- College of Health Sciences, with six departments
- College of Visual and Performing Arts, with nine departments

Students and Enrollment

In fall 2015, WCU enrolled 16,611 students (14,226 undergraduate and 2,385 graduate students):

Figure 1.1: WCU Fall 2015 Enrollment

Fall 2015	Full-time	Part-time	Male	Female	White	URM
Undergraduate	12,781	1,445	5,762	8,464	11,523	2,703
Graduate	856	1529	679	1706	1796	494

This total enrollment represents a planned increase of 2,119 students from 5 years earlier. The decision to grow was a function of declining allocations from the state and continuing applicant demand resulting from favorable demographics in the Philadelphia region. To support the institution's growth, both undergraduate and graduate admissions operations increased recruitment efforts and investments in marketing were made. Most undergraduate students are of traditional age

60 (17-24). The campus residence halls and university-affiliated housing accommodate about 36% of the
61 total undergraduate student population and 64% live off-campus.

62 The Office of Undergraduate Admissions processed 17,258 first-year and transfer applications for fall
63 2014 and more than 20,000 applications for the spring and fall 2015 semesters. For fall 2015, 9,503
64 first-year and transfer applicants were offered admission, and 3,810 new students (2,395 first-year
65 students and 1,415 transfer students) were enrolled.

66 The University's top ten feeder high schools are within a 50-mile radius of WCU. The entering
67 classes for fall 2014 [including special admits, defined as students with demonstrated potential who
68 have either SAT scores or grade point averages below those of the regular admission criteria and who
69 take a reduced (12-credit) course load during their first WCU semester] had a mean combined SAT
70 score of 1077, a grade point average of 3.51, and were in the top 34% of their graduating class. The
71 fall 2015 class (including special admits) had a mean combined SAT score of 1068, with a grade point
72 average of 3.49, and were also in the top 34 % of their graduating class.
73

74 ## Faculty and Staff

75 In fall 2015, West Chester University employed nearly 900 faculty members (627 regular and regular
76 part-time, and 269 temporary). Temporary faculty taught 24.6% of the institution's courses. Of the
77 permanent faculty, 53.5% are female and more than 14% are underrepresented minorities. Of the
78 permanent tenure and tenure-track faculty, 93.1% hold terminal degrees. Permanent and adjunct
79 faculty teaches all courses, and none are taught by graduate students.

80 The faculty, athletic coaches, certain technical and professional employees, and all other staff except
81 for managers and executives are unionized. Collective bargaining for all unions takes place at the state
82 or System level, with no local control over collective bargaining agreements. The unions represented
83 on campus are as follows:
84 • American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees: AFSCME
85 • Association of Pennsylvania College and University Faculties: APSCUF
86 • State College and University Professionals Association: SCUPA
87 • Security, Police, and Fire Professionals of America: SPFPA
88 • Office of Professional Employees International Union Healthcare of Pennsylvania: OPEIU
89

90 ## Campus

91 WCU's 402-acre campus combines 19th century collegiate Gothic and contemporary architecture,
92 and its quadrangle is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The campus comprises 62
93 major buildings with 2.6 million square feet.

94 On February 2, 1895, the campus of West Chester Normal School—now West Chester University—
95 was the site of the last public lecture by abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass. In February 2006,
96 the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission approved a historical marker to commemorate
97 Douglass' last lecture, and in June 2008, the National Park Service certified the University's Frederick
98 Douglass Institute as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.   A statue
99 honoring Frederick Douglass was erected on campus in 2012.

100 The University continues to implement its comprehensive facilities and technology master plans to
101 provide the necessary and appropriate support for its curricular and co-curricular programs. At the

102 same time, the University is committed to incorporating environmental sustainability into its projects
103 and operations. In 2010, President Weisenstein signed the American College and University
104 President's Climate Commitment, which obligates WCU to make a good faith effort to achieve a
105 carbon-neutral environment by 2025. This commitment includes constructing a campus-wide
106 geothermal HVAC system that will support new facilities and many existing campus buildings.

107 *Building on Excellence*
108 The new strategic plan *Building on Excellence* commenced in 2013. The plan is segmented into three
109 phases with each phase lasting three years. The plan is directly aligned with the university mission:

111 *West Chester University, a member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, is a*
112 *public, regional, comprehensive institution committed to providing access and offering high-quality*
113 *undergraduate education, select post-baccalaureate and graduate programs, and a variety of*
114 *educational and cultural resources for its students, alumni, and citizens of southeastern Pennsylvania.*

116 As an academic institution of higher learning, WCU holds education as its primary purpose. This
117 fundamental goal is supported by five themes of the strategic plan: Academics, Diversity,
118 Engagement, Enrichment, and Sustainability. The relationships between the themes and the key
119 elements of WCU's mission are shown in Figure 1.2:

121 **Figure 1.2: Alignment of WCU Mission and Strategic Plan**

WCU Mission Element	Most Closely Associated Strategic Plan Theme
Access	Academics, Diversity
High-quality undergraduate education	Academics, Sustainability, Enrichment
Select post-baccalaureate and graduate programs	Academics, Diversity, Engagement
Educational resources	Academics. Sustainability, Enrichment

123 Because WCU is one of 14 institutions in the State System, the University's mission and strategic plan
124 are also aligned with the goals of the State System. The core areas articulated in PASSHE's *Strategic*
125 *Plan 2020: Responding to the Challenge* relate directly to the themes in *Building On Excellence*:

126 • Ensure academic program excellence and relevance (WCU Academics Theme)
127 • Enable more students to obtain credentials that prepare them for life, career, and the
128 responsibilities of citizenship (WCU Enrichment and Diversity Themes)
129 • Develop new funding strategies, diversify resources, and manage costs to preserve
130 affordability (WCU Engagement and Sustainability Themes)
131 • Increase accountability and transparency, focus on results (WCU Academics, Diversity,
132 Engagement, Enrichment, and Sustainability Themes)

134 **The University's Approach to the Preparation of the Periodic Review Report (PRR)**
135 Led by the Vice Provost's office, the preparation of the periodic review report began in fall 2014 and
136 a two-year timeline was developed to prepare the document. Key informant interviews were held
137 with Vice Presidents and other unit heads to determine important elements to include in response to
138 PRR guidelines. In addition, a plan that allowed for multiple rounds of input on drafts was employed
139 to ensure inclusivity for the final document. (We will say more here when the process is complete).

141 **Summary of Major Changes and Developments Since the Decennial Evaluation**
142 *This will be written after feedback and revisions are made from the campus community*

143 **Abstract of the Highlights of the PRR:**
144 *This will be written after feedback and revisions are made from the campus community*
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