

University Plan III, Departmental Plan

Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center

College of Arts & Sciences, University of Wyoming

October 31, 2008

1. Mission and aspirations. The Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) at the University of Wyoming seeks to provide clear, accurate and useful information to decision-makers, on a contract basis, through applied social research, scientific polling, information technology services, and rigorous program evaluation. Without bias and with the highest standards of validity, WYSAC collects, manages, analyzes, and reports data for the public and private sectors in Wyoming and throughout the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.

Guided by this mission statement, WYSAC aspires to be a leader in the search for evidence-based solutions to the state's most pressing problems. Already designated by the Governor and by the U.S. Department of Justice as Wyoming's focal point for applied research on criminal justice and substance abuse prevention, WYSAC now seeks to extend our range. By participating in university-wide initiatives like a policy clearinghouse, a mental health collaborative, and multidisciplinary work on energy and the environment, WYSAC can strengthen our contributions to the research mission of the college and the university. Doing so will enhance our service to the state and the nation, will further diversify our funding, and will thereby increase our durability as an externally funded research unit.

2. Previous planning accomplishments. Flexibility to respond to shifting opportunities is the essential element in strategic planning for any unit dependent on external funding. To a much greater degree than UW's state-supported units, WYSAC must be not only entrepreneurial but also nimble and adaptive. When the university's first Academic Plan (AP-I) was being developed in 1998, UW had no WYSAC. Five years later, the Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center was a new unit, cooperating with but separate from the long established Survey Research Center. The merger of these two units in 2004 to form the current WYSAC marked one of the university's first completed action items under AP-II. Since then, WYSAC's revenues from grants and contracts have risen to about \$3 million per year, among the highest of any unit at UW, while the research staff has grown to more than 20 full-time and 80 part-time employees.

The merger transformed the opportunity structure, creating new priorities that had been unforeseeable in the planning for two separate units. As detailed in Appendix A, several of the action items in AP-II have now been accomplished in ways that far exceeded expectations. Most of the other items were completely or largely accomplished. A few were rendered moot by events flowing from the merger.

3. Relevant institutional issues. WYSAC is a research unit that exists to provide information for policy makers. Thus we are integral to the university's **leadership** and **excellence** motifs, as described in the third and final version of the planning document *Creation of the Future* (CF3). We are a key component of the "reserve of expertise to help solve the state's most pressing problems" that the university strives to nurture. WYSAC's activities also resonate with college-level themes, as described in the A&S planning document of 8/22/08. WYSAC epitomizes the A&S **commitment to interdisciplinarity**. Through joint projects with units in A&S and other colleges, we leverage our shared interests in "professions critical to the state and region ... health care ... mental health ... energy ... environment and natural resources." Specific citations to these two planning documents are provided in Appendix B.

4. Action items

Items 1-6 (italicized) will require coordination and resources at the university level.

WYSAC-1. *Involve WYSAC with other research centers (such as CRHRE, WIND, WTBC, WYGIS) and departments (e.g., Criminal Justice, Management, Psychology, Social Work) in creating a policy analysis clearinghouse, a mental health collaborative, a sustainability center, or other university-wide locus for applied interdisciplinary policy research.*

UW has “an enormous reservoir of faculty expertise in areas of interest to policy-makers” (CF3:18), areas like “mental health disciplines” (CF3:16), “sustainable business practices” (CF3:10), and others. WYSAC’s expertise in substance abuse prevention, criminal justice, public opinion, the environment, and information technology can contribute importantly to the university’s leadership in solving the state’s most pressing policy problems. The time has come for the university to devote resources to establishing a university-wide (indeed, a statewide) institute to coordinate such efforts.

WYSAC-2. *Assign space on the ground floor of the Office Annex to house a university-wide institute for applied interdisciplinary policy research.*

As a result of action item 107 in AP-II, WYSAC now occupies the upper floor of the Office Annex. Part of WIND is on the ground floor, as is the Law School’s Legal Services office. WYSAC’s proximity to these units has already facilitated some collaboration. Even greater synergy among these and other units would flow from locating the interdisciplinary policy institute contemplated in CF3 (p. 16) in the same building. When international services are brought together on the main campus, ELS will vacate the Office Annex, creating a rare opportunity for the optimal assignment of a substantial amount of prime, unclaimed space.

WYSAC-3. *Complete the renovation of the Office Annex by remodeling the remaining ground-floor space, installing an ADA-compliant elevator, repairing the heating and ventilation system, repainting the exterior trim, landscaping, and reconfiguring the front walkway for more accessible, attractive, and convenient entry to the building.*

Further work on the Office Annex should be part of the “long-range development plan for UW properties east of 15th Street” (CF3:14). The upper floor and parts of the ground floor were thoroughly remodeled in 2007. Most of the remaining work was part of the tentative plan for that remodel (but was cut for budget reasons), was on the UW list for major maintenance (but is still deferred), or both. The cost will be modest relative to the purchase price for the building plus the cost of renovations already accomplished, and the work will add greatly to the value of those prior investments.

WYSAC-4. *Consider involving WYSAC in UW, college, and/or departmental efforts to assess student learning at the undergraduate and/or graduate levels, such as evaluation of the Hathaway program.*

WYSAC’s expertise in evaluation research and survey methods could be put to good use in “assessment of student learning” in general (CF3:6, 12) and in “assessing the Hathaway curriculum” in particular (CF3:6). With help from the UW central administration, WYSAC has recently sought both federal and state funding for research on the Hathaway program, and the prospects for some state funds currently look bright. A greater WYSAC role in other assessment efforts would be mutually beneficial, if the

university, the college(s), or particular departments devote resources to involving WYSAC's experienced and objective evaluators in the assessment process.

WYSAC-5. Seek base funding for WYSAC through the UW budget process.

The Governor's Executive Order (#2000-5) that established WYSAC was an unfunded mandate to the university. By that order, UW (through WYSAC) became the state's clearinghouse for policy research and data management on issues of criminal justice and substance abuse. However, the order made no provision for the financial support of WYSAC activities. For the first few years, three state agencies (Corrections, Family Services and Health) provided in total about \$1.5 million in start-up grants to WYSAC, with the last of these grants being awarded in 2005. Since 2004, A&S has absorbed the full cost of the Executive Director's salary, and in 2007 the UW central administration contributed about \$400,000 toward the cost of renovations in the Office Annex (with WYSAC covering the balance of about \$100,000). Though extremely valuable, and highly valued, these tangible expressions of support are no substitute for a reliable annual budget as a basis for planning and achieving WYSAC's mission. WYSAC has amply demonstrated its leadership in providing research to state policy-makers, and in contributing to excellence in several of the university's areas of distinction. A mechanism to sustain WYSAC's financial stability is needed to ensure that the investments already made in establishing WYSAC will continue to pay dividends to the university and the state for decades to come.

WYSAC-6. Fund one or more of WYSAC's existing support-staff positions from the university's state (Section 1) budget, for essential duties such as contract administration, bookkeeping, and/or information technology functions.

As UW moves toward "central staff position management" (CF3:13) and/or "a centrally funded structure for coordinated system administration to support research-based computing" (CF3:9), WYSAC urgently requests that at least one of our grant-funded staff positions be converted to a state-funded line. A substantial increase in the share of indirect costs returned to soft-money units is another possible solution to the following systemic problem. When a teaching department secures a grant, state-funded staff positions handle the administration and bookkeeping along with their other duties. That department typically receives a 15 percent share of the indirect costs generated by the grant, enough to cover any incidental expenses associated with, but not explicitly included in, the grant budget (such as IT support, office supplies, photocopying, equipment, or software). By contrast, in an externally funded research center the staff who administer contracts and grants must be paid out of those same contract budgets. At WYSAC, one full-time Business Manager, a part-time Office Associate, a part-time student file clerk, and one full-time IT system administrator handle the contract administration, bookkeeping, and IT support on more than 60 funded projects at a time. The 15 percent share of indirect costs does not come close to covering these essential staff positions, to say nothing of incidental expenses. Adding internal administrative costs to a proposed project budget can make the proposal less competitive, increasing the chance that UW will lose the contract to a lower bidder. Of potentially greater concern is the risk that an auditor might disallow the internal administrative charge, on the premise that indirect costs are meant to cover all contract administration. In short, externally funded units face a dilemma that requires "adaptivity or responsive decision-making as staff needs evolve" (CF3:13). One such adaptation would be the assignment of state-funded staff positions from a central pool to handle contract administration functions in grant-funded units like WYSAC.

Items 7-9 (underlined) will require coordination within A&S.

WYSAC-7. Establish an interdisciplinary certification in Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation.

Consistent with the college's "commitment to interdisciplinarity" (A&S theme 7), WYSAC has been involved in discussions with Political Science and Statistics, among others, about the possibility of conferring both undergraduate and graduate certificates in evaluation methods. The main need initially is for coordination and encouragement from the A&S Dean's office; no new resources would be necessary to get the program started. The courses required for certification would be designated from courses routinely offered through the participating departments. Over time, a separate rubric might evolve for new courses in evaluation research (much as WIND has created a rubric for courses in disability studies), but a new rubric is neither essential nor inevitable. WYSAC's research scientists, faculty affiliates, and director could supervise internships and independent study credits under existing department rubrics, using WYSAC facilities as a laboratory and WYSAC projects as case studies. WYSAC does some of this kind of teaching already, on an occasional and ad hoc basis. WYSAC also instructs some of our paying clients in evaluation methods, in an effort to develop evaluation capacity around the state and on the Wind River Indian Reservation. A certification program within A&S would "expand opportunities for undergraduates to become involved in research" (theme 2), "enhance graduate education" (theme 3), and increase "student community involvement" (theme 6). If college or departmental funds were available to cover some additional part-time teaching, researchers from WYSAC might provide classroom instruction in support of the program as well.

WYSAC-8. Increase WYSAC's interactions with relevant A&S departments and programs, such as the proposed new M.A. program in Criminal Justice and/or a Ph.D. program in Communication/Journalism.

In support of A&S theme 3, WYSAC's external grants and contracts could help to fund Graduate Assistantships in departments throughout A&S (and university-wide), and our facilities and shared research interests could be helpful in recruiting students and faculty to these programs. In addition, by assisting with the evaluation component of grant proposals originating in other units, WYSAC can help to increase the total number and success of such proposals. WYSAC data could provide the basis for high quality undergraduate papers, graduate theses, and faculty publications. WYSAC researchers with adjunct appointments in relevant departments might serve on thesis or dissertation committees, supervise internships or directed readings courses, and/or participate in the advising of students who have interests in policy research. As the state's federally recognized statistical analysis center for applied criminal justice research, WYSAC would especially welcome closer ties with the CJ department. Similarly, the importance of public opinion polling in communication research and media studies suggests a natural linkage between the Communication/Journalism department and WYSAC.

WYSAC-9. Clarify the place of WYSAC in the A&S divisional structure, and take steps to enhance WYSAC's stature throughout the college.

During this planning cycle, A&S expects to "evaluate the composition of our College divisions to examine whether they enhance our mission and governance" (themes document, page 3). As part of that evaluation, attention should be given to the ambiguity of WYSAC's place in the organizational structure. For example, which (if any) member of the A&S Central Committee is WYSAC's representative? Similarly, WYSAC's academic professionals are excluded from eligibility for some college opportunities, such as the Basic Research Grants program. Beyond the college, WYSAC has no direct representation on the Faculty Senate. As a unit that does applied research rather than classroom

teaching, WYSAC is often treated as not quite an academic department, but not exactly a support unit, either. We urge actions at the college level to clarify and elevate our status.

Items 10-17 (bolded) can be implemented internally by WYSAC. To save space, these items are listed here without elaboration; the rationale for each is provided in Appendix C.

WYSAC-10. Improve recruitment and retention, with special attention to increasing WYSAC's depth in criminal justice research personnel.

WYSAC-11. Locate new and durable large-scale funding opportunities, in public health as well as other research areas.

WYSAC-12. Expand WYSAC's research in policy issues related to energy and the environment.

WYSAC-13. Promote mixed-mode and multi-frame research designs, building on WYSAC's strengths in community surveys and health-related surveys throughout the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.

WYSAC-14. Strengthen research proposals through innovative uses of information technology.

WYSAC-15. Integrate and coordinate the activities of our sub-units while also decentralizing responsibilities and authority to the managers of those sub-units.

WYSAC-16. Refine and institutionalize mechanisms for quality control.

WYSAC-17. Enhance WYSAC's visibility within UW, statewide, and nationally.

5. Implementation. The table below summarizes an approximate timeline for implementing the action items identified above. Naturally, the implementation of actions that require coordination and/or resources at the university or college level depends on approval of the corresponding proposals at those higher levels.

Table 1. Tentative Timeline for WYSAC Action Items 1-17, by Hierarchical Level for Implementation

Level	Short-range: 2009, 2010	Mid-range: 2010-2013	Long-range: 2013, 2014
<i>UW</i>	<i>3, 6</i>	<i>2, 5</i>	<i>1, 4</i>
<u>A&S</u>	<u>7, 9</u>	<u>8</u>	-
WYSAC	12, 14, 15, 17	10, 13, 16	11

Appendix A. WYSAC-Related Action Items in Academic Plan II: University, College, and Unit Plans*

Item	Intent	Outcomes	Summary
UW-107	Relocate SRC/SAC to Office Annex	Annex renovated; move accomplished	Plan exceeded
UW-108	Study combining SRC/SAC	Study completed; SRC/SAC merged	Plan exceeded
HS-2	Study integrating functions of CRHRE/SRC/SAC	SRC/SAC merged; WYSAC/CRHRE allocation of functions agreed	Plan exceeded
A&S-57	A&S to analyze summer school (SS)	WYSAC conducted SS surveys	Plan exceeded
SRC-1 (and SAC-9)	Discuss a UW public affairs center (and work closely with other UW research centers)	SRC/SAC merged; cooperated with CRHRE, WIND, WYGISC; discussed policy clearinghouse/collaborative	Plan partially met
SRC-2	Be available to help with assessment, enrollment management, course evaluations	Assessed College of Education graduates; consulted on A&S course and advisor evaluation forms	Plan partially met
SRC-3	Departments to acknowledge faculty work (with WYSAC) in job descriptions and faculty evaluations	One job description in Sociology (SOC) and one in SOC/Statistics revised to note WYSAC work	Plan partially met
SRC-4	Discuss capstone research courses with departments	Discussed a potential capstone with SOC, not yet developed	Plan partially met
SRC-5/ SAC-10	Develop internal assessment	Compiled and monitored client list; tracked revenues; obtained client feedback; implemented employee evaluations	Plan met
SRC-6	Evaluate WinCATI software	Evaluated and upgraded software	Plan met
SRC-7	Adapt to trends in survey technology	Developed Web capability; added cell phone sampling; automated data entry	Plan met
SRC-8	Gradually increase capacity, especially staffing	Call stations and total (SRC/SAC) staff doubled; paper surveys up	Plan exceeded
SRC-9/ SAC-8 (and SAC-1)	Involve UW faculty in projects (especially Criminal Justice faculty)	Involved faculty in Economics, Psychology, SOC and (less so) Criminal Justice (CJ), English, Political Science, Statistics, etc.	Plan met
SRC-10	Increase market/visibility across UW, state, and region	Doubled total (SRC/SAC) revenues; secured new UW, local, state, regional, and national clients/honors	Plan exceeded
SAC-2	Hire a joint CJ/SAC faculty member	Discussed a joint CPM submission	Plan not met
SAC-3	Work with CJ in developing their master's program	CJ master's program not yet started	Plan not met
SAC-4	Focus research specifically on issues in criminal justice and substance abuse	Due to the merger, and in response to funding opportunities, research expanded to include also polling, education, environment, and information technology	Plan superseded
SAC-5,6,7	Work with other UW research units on recruitment of both full-time researchers and graduate assistants	Due to the merger, which allowed greater flexibility to address staffing needs internally across SRC/SAC, joint recruitment with other centers not pursued	Plan superseded

*UW=university; HS=Health Sciences; A&S=Arts & Sciences; SRC=Survey Research Center; SAC=Statistical Analysis Center

Appendix B. Planning motifs and themes

As a research unit that exists to provide information for policy makers, WYSAC is integral to the university's **leadership** motif. Specifically, we are a key component of UW's efforts to nurture a "reserve of expertise to help solve the state's most pressing problems" (CF3:15). We take an interdisciplinary approach to such problems, as reflected both in the composition of our WYSAC research teams and in our research collaborations with other units. Prizing **depth over breadth**, we seek to capitalize on "shared scholarly interests and overlapping areas of expertise across department and college boundaries" (CF3:3). For example, through joint projects with the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) and the Center for Rural Health Research and Education (CRHRE), both in the College of Health Sciences, we leverage our shared interest in "professions critical to the state and region" (CF3:3), while avoiding duplication of efforts. Current and anticipated WYSAC projects with these two units directly address "statewide policy discussions related to health care" (CF3:15) and also "the mental health issues that are widespread in Wyoming's communities" (CF3:16). Other recent WYSAC projects and proposals (e.g., with researchers from Economics in the College of Business, Agricultural Economics in the College of Agriculture, the School of Energy Resources, and the Enhanced Oil Recovery Institute) have focused on policy questions concerning "environment and natural resources" (CF3:10), an area of distinction identified under the **excellence** motif. In the coming years, we seek to build on these existing interdisciplinary collaborations.

WYSAC's activities and aspirations also resonate with A&S themes described in the college's planning document of August 22, 2008. Even without a direct teaching role, WYSAC helps **provide foundational knowledge and skills** to students. By employing undergraduates as survey interviewers and research aides, we offer them the opportunity to participate in applied policy research. Similarly, we **enhance graduate education** by securing external research grants that increase the number of Graduate Assistantship openings, and by making available high-quality data that would otherwise be beyond the reach of a thesis or dissertation project (such as statistically representative statewide and national surveys). Collaborations with faculty in various A&S departments yield related benefits, helping to **improve and expand research** opportunities in general. As noted above, one new area of research attention at WYSAC involves environment and natural resources, including the **changes that are occurring in Wyoming due to the energy boom**. And as also noted, WYSAC epitomizes the A&S **commitment to interdisciplinarity or multidisciplinary**.

Appendix C. Rationale for Internal, WYSAC-implemented Action Items

WYSAC-10. Improve recruitment and retention, with special attention to increasing WYSAC's depth in criminal justice research personnel.

As a grant-funded unit, WYSAC is not authorized to make tenure-track or extended-term-track appointments, nor can we offer classified staff status when hiring from outside UW. One consequence is a higher rate of employee turnover than in the typical teaching department. Our annual turnover rate of only 10 percent means that WYSAC is recruiting for about two full-time positions each year, and more than that in years of growth.

Effective recruiting is crucial to WYSAC's success, but it requires large investments in time and money. Streamlining our search process will help somewhat. A certification program in policy research could serve as a pipeline for potential future WYSAC employees. We must also continue encouraging our student employees, including international students, to consider WYSAC in their long-term career planning.

Finding ways (other than tenure) to enhance our workers' attachment to WYSAC could help even more. WYSAC must make every effort to keep our salaries competitive, relative to both the UW labor pool and the national market. Promotion standards and procedures must be clear, and more senior personnel should mentor their junior colleagues to achieve the standards. WYSAC must be aggressive in providing non-financial rewards as well, such as training opportunities, conference participation, and other avenues for professional development. WYSAC will continue to support our employees in taking advantage of the UW policy on tuition waivers. We will continue to make WYSAC data available to our employees for theses and dissertations, and will encourage them to seek advanced degrees (such as the proposed new master's degree in criminal justice and/or the Ph.D. in communication).

Recruitment and retention have proven especially difficult in criminal justice, a field where both academic and non-academic job openings tend to exceed the number of applicants. In the coming years, WYSAC will make further efforts to recruit an applied criminologist to develop new lines of research and new funding sources. WYSAC will continue to explore the possibility of cooperation with the CJ department in that effort, perhaps through a proposal for a joint hire via the Centralized Position Management (CPM) process.

WYSAC-11. Locate new and durable large-scale funding opportunities, in public health as well as other research areas.

For several years WYSAC's largest single funder, by far, has been the Wyoming Department of Health, and specifically its programs in substance-abuse prevention. The ultimate source of much of that funding has been the class-action suit against the U.S. tobacco industry. Our largest single project, evaluation of the state's tobacco prevention and control efforts, is funded directly from that source, but other projects benefit indirectly from the tobacco settlement funds as well.

Annual disbursements of tobacco settlement funds to the states may have peaked nationally, and will likely begin declining in Wyoming in the coming decade. Indeed, the very success of evidence-based programming (in no small part due to evaluations by applied research organizations like WYSAC) implies that, over time, tobacco use will continue to decline. Therefore, less funding will eventually be

needed to deliver programs for tobacco cessation and prevention, and correspondingly less funding will be available to evaluate such programs.

For WYSAC, these foreseeable trends mean that tobacco settlement funds will not indefinitely support the large fraction of our activities and personnel that they currently do, either directly or indirectly. Given the 5-year time horizon of the current planning process, this concern is not yet acute. However, it is likely to become so in 10 years or less. We should therefore begin now to envision life-after-tobacco, and to direct research proposals toward new, big-ticket funding streams.

Evaluation of substance abuse treatment would be a natural outgrowth of our work on substance abuse prevention. Evaluation of mental health programs more generally would be another. WYSAC should redouble its efforts, especially in partnership with other units such as CRHRE, to secure major grants from the National Institutes of Health and other federal agencies.

Beyond public health issues, we will keep alert to opportunities to rebuild relationships with state agencies that may previously have had problematic interactions with the university in general (e.g., Wyoming Homeland Security) or specifically with WYSAC (Wyoming Game & Fish). We will also seek to expand our client base by cultivating strong relationships with a wider variety of Wyoming agencies, such as the Division of Criminal Investigations.

WYSAC-12. Expand WYSAC's research in policy issues related to energy and the environment.

WYSAC's existing expertise in environmental economics, polling, and public health has already produced major funded research at the intersections of these interests. We need to build on these strengths. The impact of the state's energy boom on migration, with attendant effects on crime and substance use, is one promising topic. Public opinion about global climate change is another. WYSAC will aggressively seek opportunities for research funding on such topics, an area of distinction for UW in general and for WYSAC specifically. When recruiting, we will continue to treat environmental expertise as a valuable qualification, and we will consider undertaking a specific search with environmental expertise as the primary focus. Growth in this area could result in establishing a new WYSAC sub-unit for environmental policy studies.

WYSAC-13. Promote mixed-mode and multi-frame research designs, building on WYSAC's strengths in community surveys and health-related surveys throughout the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.

Telecommunication in the U.S. is undergoing rapid change, both technological and cultural, that presents ongoing challenges for survey researchers. In addition to keeping our own expertise up to date, WYSAC needs to educate clients and potential clients on the improvements in data quality that result from the use of cutting-edge survey methods. We must continue to develop our capabilities for combining telephone, mail, phone, web, and/or in-person data collection in any one survey. Similarly, WYSAC needs to stay current with the latest developments for the sampling of landlines, cell phones, addresses, and individuals within households. We may need to increase the number of our call stations for telephone interviewing, upgrade our software for Computer-Aided Telephone Interviewing, and/or acquire hardware and software for Computer-Aided Personal Interviewing.

WYSAC has a very strong reputation for conducting surveys to assess public services in counties and municipalities in Wyoming and Colorado, and for statewide surveys on health-related issues in

Wyoming and Montana. We will seek to expand these market niches to include other neighboring states. To serve more of Wyoming's small towns in the most cost-effective way, we will try to encourage communities to pool resources for a recurrent, generic survey with a few community-specific questions added for each town. We will also renew our efforts to secure the contract for the state's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (currently conducted by a commercial vendor in Idaho), when that contract is put up for bid again in 2012 by the Wyoming Department of Health.

WYSAC-14. Strengthen research proposals through innovative uses of information technology.

One of WYSAC's competitive advantages in applying for grants and contracts is that we combine, in one organization, subject-matter expertise in fields like criminal justice, public health, education, and the environment; methodological expertise in survey research and program evaluation; and technical expertise in database design and software development. In the coming years we will seek new ways to build an IT component into our research proposals, to maximize this competitive advantage and to enhance the value of the research services we provide.

WYSAC-15. Integrate and coordinate the activities of our sub-units while also decentralizing responsibilities and authority to the managers of those sub-units.

As just noted, one of WYSAC's main strengths is that we combine in a single organization a wide variety of expertise and skills. Our success since the merger in 2004 has flowed in no small part from the positive synergy that results when such diverse capabilities are brought together. Our future success will also depend on our working together on behalf of a single organization, WYSAC.

Our success has produced growth and, consequently, internal differentiation. With more than 20 full-time employees and 80 part-timers, WYSAC has long passed the point where it could be administered effectively without some internal structure. Our differentiation into sub-units (currently: criminal justice, survey research, public health, and IT) has evolved successfully over the past three years. In the coming years, sub-unit managers will take on greater responsibility and will be assigned correspondingly greater authority. Project costs will continue to be tracked and monitored centrally, and efforts will continue to contain the cost of contract administration. We will also make increasing use of information technology to streamline and automate administrative functions. In these and other ways we will seek to balance coordination and decentralization to obtain the benefits of both.

WYSAC-16. Refine and institutionalize mechanisms for quality control.

As we sometimes say at WYSAC, we are in the information business and anything inaccurate is not information – it's misinformation. We are therefore, and quite rightly, obsessed with quality. We need to continue our efforts to systematize our approach to quality control and to standardize protocols across our sub-units. Every WYSAC report should undergo rigorous checks and double-checks, regardless of which sub-unit produces it. We will refine the existing template for WYSAC reports, and will develop a template for WYSAC PowerPoint presentations. Every survey instrument will be vetted through a WYSAC survey specialist before it is finalized; every evaluation design will be vetted through a WYSAC evaluation specialist before it is implemented; every IT acquisition will be vetted through a WYSAC information technology specialist before it is purchased.

WYSAC-17. Enhance WYSAC's visibility within UW, the state, and the nation.

Success in securing external grants and contracts is ultimately dependent on reputation. WYSAC's positive reputation has grown immensely in a relatively short time, but more as a result of the quality of our work than our overt efforts to raise WYSAC's visibility.

In the near future we will improve our marketing by revising our website, updating our logo, giving our newsletter a new look and publishing it semi-annually, and developing a professional-quality brochure and other promotional materials. We will be more consistent in our "branding" by emphasizing the WYSAC acronym to the outside world, and reserving our sub-unit acronyms mainly for internal use.

We will continue to present WYSAC research results frequently at state, regional, national, and international conferences, and will continue to publish our findings for both scholarly audiences and practitioners. Although technical reports and other contracted deliverables must remain our first priority, we will seek to increase the number of such reports that are subsequently published in scholarly outlets.

We will also strive to increase cooperation with a wide variety of UW departments in A&S and other colleges through co-authorship of proposals and publications and by co-sponsoring guest speakers, conferences, and other events. We will seek adjunct appointments in relevant departments for WYSAC researchers, and will use such links to improve the flow of communications and awareness between WYSAC and various departments throughout the university.