

**University of Wyoming Outreach School**  
**University of Wyoming Casper College Center (UW/CC)**  
**University Plan III (2009 – 2014):**  
**Access, excellence and leadership**

**Mission and aspirations**

At the core of the University of Wyoming Casper College Center (UW/CC) mission is the delivery of University of Wyoming degree programs to central Wyoming. We do this largely through on-site, in-class courses. Many of our students are non-traditional, with spouses, families, and jobs. We strive to accommodate their schedules, with many of our courses in the evenings or on weekends. At the same time, many UW degree programs would not be possible in Casper without the support of Outreach Credit Programs. They deliver courses for the University Studies Programs (general education), major content, and elective courses on a regular basis.

In addition to delivering UW academic credit programs, UW/CC also helps support cultural pursuits in the central part of the state by sponsoring several annual lecture series and helping to underwrite cultural programs.

**Previous planning accomplishments**

Short-term

Planning goal	Result
1.1 UW/CC will secure PTSB approval for a industrial arts education program through UW/CC.	UW/CC did secure this and has now graduated three cohorts of students. The program has been renamed technical education.
1.2 In cooperation with the College of Education, UW/CC will begin delivering a secondary science education degree program.	UW/CC and the COE did develop this and the program has graduated its first cohort of students.
1.3 In cooperation with the College of Education, UW/CC will begin delivering a school library/media endorsement program.	After extensive discussions internally and with UW/CC, the relevant department determined that it could not adequately support the delivery of the program. There were also significant questions about adequate student demand. As a consequence, this initiative was dropped.
1.4 In cooperation with the UW Foundation, UW/CC will seek funding for	This has not been done; relevant potential donors have not been identified.

its fall Environmental and Natural Resources course/public lecture series.	
1.5 UW/CC will develop funding to support “student leadership” scholarships.	An endowment has been established that is now annually awarding such scholarships.
Mid-term	
2.1 UW/CC will work with Casper College to explore the possibility of a new, shared facility.	A shared facility is in CC’s new campus master plan and the discussions are moving forward.
2.2 UW/CC will work with the COE and the department of Secondary Education to consider the feasibility of a business education degree program through UW/CC.	Administrators agreed that the delivery of the program through UW/CC was not viable. BOCES funding was unlikely; student demand appeared low; school districts did not have much demand for graduates of the program.

### Relevant institutional issues

The University of Wyoming has identified a number of planning themes for University Plan III (2009-2014), including a continued emphasis on *areas of distinction* identified in UP II, a focus on *building depth rather than breadth*, and *access, excellence*, and *leadership*. For its UP III planning, the Outreach School has determined to continue its focus on its priorities of *learning, access, partnerships and synergisms*, and *welcoming change*. The University of Wyoming Casper College Center goals for UP III will focus primarily on areas of access, excellence, professions vital to the state and region, and partnerships.

For access, UW/CC will continue its tradition of seeking to add to the degree programs it delivers in central Wyoming. We will also work with Outreach Credit Programs about making the UW Honors Program available state-wide. There are a number of institutional issues regarding excellence. Ideally, we will have a good balance of UW/CC tenure-track and academic professional lecturers, and junior and senior faculty, in order to maintain Casper as a site for productive research and intra-faculty professional discussions. Tenure-track faculty in particular are essential to UW/CC’s long-term credibility within UW. Senior faculty can often more readily engage in committee work, service on faculty senate, and so forth. Maintenance of a good mix will require keeping (and hopefully expanding) tenure-track lines in Casper. We also need to ensure that assistant and associate professors make good progress towards successful promotion and tenure decisions. This requires support for research, collegial relations between the UW/CC associate dean and department chairs, and institutional efforts to promote success of UW faculty members in settings outside the Laramie campus. Another important institutional issue concerns the recruitment and retention of quality personnel. One benefit of the OS scenario planning process has been the identification of this as an even more pressing issue in the future, for demographic and other reasons. In order to attract and retain talent, UW/CC and its partner units in the Outreach School will be

attentive to the maintenance of adequate salaries. UW/CC will strive for flexibility in staff scheduling as a matter of policy, as far as is consistent with our mission and quality of work. UW/CC will maintain its commitment to professional development, and give strong consideration to promotion from within.

UW/CC will continue its work in assisting professions vital to the state and region. For instance, UW/CC has the only bachelor's in technical education available in the state. Given how Wyoming's economy is disproportionately dependent upon resource extraction, the technical and industrial arts are important for the state's economy. UW/CC helps train those who will serve as the state's next generation of industrial arts teachers in junior highs and high schools.

Partnership is the final area of emphasis in this plan. The partnership between Outreach Credit Programs and UW/CC is critical to the success of the university students we share. As we look ahead in this plan, one of the background prerequisites to success for any of our goals is the maintenance of a close, working relationship with OCP. The long-term success of UW/CC is premised upon other partnerships as well. Clearly the relationship with Casper College is critical. UW/CC plays an important role in the overall University's relationship with Casper College and we believe that the University—Casper College relationship is a model for the rest of the state. UW/CC also has a good relationship with the Natrona County School District, placing over 40 students in residency there every year, with dozens of others having practicum placements. The Central Wyoming Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) currently supports two degree programs delivered through UW/CC, as well as providing matching funds for scholarships and awards.

During the years of the implementation of the next academic plan, UW/CC will seek to deepen our current partnerships, including with UW academic departments. It will also explore the possibility of creating new ones. In particular, UW/CC should explore how we can work more closely with the Center for Conferences and Continuing Education and the Science-Math Teaching Center. Our partnerships allow us to better leverage resources and heighten our flexibility. New relationships would only heighten those benefits.

## **Action items**

### **Areas of Distinction**

Short term:

1. UW/CC will work with the Department of Secondary Education and the College of Education to secure long-term support for a tenure-track faculty position in technical education.

University Plan III is committed to reinforcing areas of distinction for the university, including in professions critical to the state and region. One of those professions is that

of industrial arts and vocational teachers in the state and region's high schools and middle schools. According to the Professional Teachers' Standards Board, more than one-half of the state's industrial arts teachers will become eligible for retirement in the next five years. UW/CC has the only technical education degree program in the state. It graduates students every other year, moving them through in a two-year cohort model (after students transfer from a community college). Those students quickly secure teaching jobs, usually prior to graduation.

The salary for the primary faculty member in technical education has been supported by BOCES since 2003. That Board has signaled its intent to end its funding for the program. We will work cooperatively with the Secondary Education department and the College of Education to secure long-term funding for this program. By doing so, UW and UW/CC will show a commitment to workforce development and the continuation of degree programs that are important to the state.

Medium term:

2. UW/CC will work with departments in the life sciences to secure a tenure track faculty position through CPM.

UW/CC has a long history of strong enrollments in the life sciences, which Creation of the Future III identified as a UW area of distinction. The recent addition of the secondary science education degree program has placed even more pressure upon these programs, since UW/CC students in this education program can only pursue the biology option. UW/CC has also taken a leadership role in INBRE. A Casper-based faculty member supporting biology, secondary science education (biology), and the math/science distributed degree, along with assisting in research opportunities with students, is important for long term programmatic quality and sustainability. The preference is for a faculty member in biology with an organismal background, or a botanist.

### **Access**

Short term:

1. UW/CC will work with the Elementary and Early Childhood Department and the Educational Studies Department to create a new tenure-track, shared position to be located in Casper.

During the time frame of APII, UW/CC began delivering two additional education programs. That, combined with increased enrollments in elementary education and the adoption of the Partner School model, has greatly increased the pressures upon faculty and resident supervision for education personnel in Casper. A position written so that a qualified faculty member could teach courses in education studies and elementary education, in addition to performing residency supervision, would alleviate UW/CC's capacity issues. EDST, EDEL, and UW/CC have already collaborated on CPM requests for a shared position to be located in Casper. This collaboration will continue and our hope is secure a position in the first two years of UPIII.

Long term:

2. UW/CC and CC will proceed with collaboration in building of a shared facility.

This is a continuation of an item from Academic Plan II. It is also referenced in Creation of the Future II (p.5). This project will likely involve working closely with the CC Foundation. UW, including UW/CC, needs to more fully envision what unique opportunities such a shared facility will create, in order to explain to the community and potential donors why this move is important to UW in Casper. Given that UW/CC has strength in delivering College of Education degree programs, one likely goal is to bring together UW/CC and CC education personnel, with dedicated education classrooms. A UW building will also allow us to consolidate classroom space that currently is split between the Outreach Building and CC campus, which creates commuting and other difficulties. A shared building with two floors devoted to UW/CC will create a stronger UW presence on campus.

The timeline for a shared UW—CC facility will be affected by a number of factors external to UW/CC, such as whether the CC bond proposal passes, and state support for a shared building. During the 2009-2014 period, UW will likely pursue funds for construction and begin work upon design. There is a good chance that construction will begin during this period. UW, including UW/CC, will need to work closely with the CC Foundation. The role of Outreach Technology Services in helping to plan for technology in the new facility will be crucial.

3. UW/CC will continue its development work with a focus upon student populations that are non-traditional or otherwise will not benefit from Hathaway.

One of the central themes in this round of academic planning is access, which is also one of the core values of the Outreach School. At UW/CC, we are committed to access, including for our many students who are non-traditional, many of which are taking coursework on a part-time basis. The average UW/CC student is 30 years old and thus the impact of the Hathaway program is limited. Casper College is doing a good job of bringing many Hathaway-eligible students onto campus so it is likely that UW/CC will have a good number of Hathaway students in the future. Still, given that UW/CC disproportionately serves a site-bound population of older students, a dedication to development work focused upon non-traditional students is appropriate. This work will continue throughout the timeframe of UPIII.

4. During the timeframe of UPIII, UW/CC will undertake serious discussions with our partners in the academic colleges and departments about the possibility of delivering new degree programs through UW/CC.

The development of new degree programs is vital to UW/CC's long term growth and its mission of delivery of UW educational opportunities to the people of central Wyoming. At the same time, as Creation of the Future III talks about in terms of building depth

rather than breadth, discussions need to be realistic and seek to identify areas where there will be sufficient departmental commitment and adequate student demand. The process also should be attentive to program cost and sustainability. UW/CC is strongly committed to long term growth in the number of degree programs it offers.

### **Excellence**

Long term:

1. As UW faculty in Casper retire or otherwise leave the university, UW/CC will work with the relevant academic deans in order to ensure a good mix of faculty, including tenure-track personnel, and the retention of positions located in Casper.

As mentioned in the “Relevant Institutional Issues” section above, in order for UW/CC to maintain educational excellence, it is important that tenure-track lines be maintained in Casper, even as the faculty in those lines sometimes retire or otherwise leave the university. Support from the academic deans for maintaining and creating tenure-track lines located in Casper is critical. While professional lecturers will be appropriate for some positions, they should not become the overwhelming majority of faculty. It will also be important to have search processes that involve significant departmental input in order to establish early departmental support for faculty located off the main campus. Retirements and replacement of faculty in Casper is likely to be an ongoing issue throughout the time frame covered by UPIII.

### **Leadership**

Short term:

1. UW/CC will work with OCP and the UW honors program to determine the feasibility of UW honors at a distance.

Creation of the Future II spoke of the need for UW to play a constructive role in the cultivation of leadership, particularly among students. As part of this, CFII urges attentiveness to the role of the UW honors program. UW/CC will work collaboratively with OCP and the honors program to explore the possibility for students at a distance to become UW honors program graduates.

Casper College has a new honors program that will begin graduating significant numbers of students in 2009. Western Wyoming Community College has an honors program that continues to do well. Laramie County Community College’s honors program has had a small enrollment, but the appointment of a new director and allocation of additional resources promises larger enrollments over the next few years. Central Wyoming College discontinued their program, but has recently begun discussions about restarting the program. Sufficient demand statewide, plus a renewed focus within UW on honors, means that it is a propitious moment to explore the delivery of UW Honors at a distance. The discussions and a decision about delivery of UW honors should occur within the first two years of UPIII.