# THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

# Statewide Strategic Planning Listening Sessions

# *Torrington, Wyoming*

# Friday, December 2, 2016

A community member expressed concern that there were not many jobs available in the state of Wyoming that enticed people to stay in the state, especially following graduation from UW. She added that there seemed to be some efforts to retain students in Laramie for the technology transfer companies that have been created but was wondering if there were any other strategies that were being proposed to keep students in the state after they graduated. The community member added that many students want to stay but were unable to find jobs in the state.

Another community member stated that he had received hard copy materials from the College of Education and the Alumni Association that were of high quality and he hoped that this same quality would continue despite budget reductions. He added that UW should consider improving their programs on campus to better recruit students to attend UW following their time at EWC instead of attending out of state institutions.

A community member added that the outreach that was being proposed to the community colleges, including a better transfer credit process, was welcomed by the different communities, because many students were struggling to afford to pay to attend college and could get a better start at a community college. He stated that these efforts would help with recruitment and affordability for students in the state.

A member of the community expressed concern regarding the University’s ability to align with the agriculture sector more and not just the oil and gas industries. She suggested since agriculture played such a large role across the state that the strategic plan look to include stronger partnerships with the agriculture community.

A community member stated that athletics needed to play a strong role in the strategic plan, especially based on the current success of the UW football team.

A staff member from EWC stated that many students from EWC were transferring to universities outside of Wyoming based on the fact that they had struggled to contact people in Laramie to assist with their transfer process. He added that often times students were transferred from department to department with no resolution. The staff member suggested there be one specific person that transfer students were able to contact to assist with the transfer process so students were not lost to schools outside of Wyoming. He noted that UW would benefit from stronger recruitment efforts in the state of Nebraska and other boarder states.

A community member expressed support and additional support for the regional center located in Torrington to assist with the services they provided.

Another community member stated that this corner of the country had fewer energy resources than other parts of the state, but were rich in cultural resources such as the Oregon Trail, however there was not nearly enough support for that type of resource. He suggested that it would be beneficial to the state if this resource was developed and supported at an increased level especially since tourism was a critical aspect of the states economy.

A community member commented that many students were being lost to other universities outside of Wyoming because they could be directly admitted into programs like nursing and be guaranteed a place in that program, which was not the case at UW. He suggested that UW take a closer look at their qualifications.

A member of the community expressed concern about students being able to stay in Wyoming following graduation and as they progressed through their careers. He stated that it would be helpful if UW continued to work with the Governor on his work to diversify the economy in the hopes that these efforts would produce more jobs.

Another community member stated that it would be important for UW to consider updating their residence halls, as they had not been truly updated in many years. He added that this type of improvement would increase enrollment and retention. The community member also noted that the community college system supported the success of many students as many were not ready to attend UW following graduation from high school and were ultimately more successful if they attended a community college first.

A community member brought multiple students that had participated in the 4-H program in Torrington. She asked that these students share their experience with President Nichols to show support of agriculture programs and outreach programs around the state.

A student stated that he currently was attending EWC. He expressed gratitude for the 4-H programs as they had led him to want to pursue a degree in elementary education. The student stated that he hoped the 4-H programs would continue to have partnerships and funding from UW so that younger kids around the state could benefit from these programs as he had.

A staff member from EWC stated that the articulation work that had been created between EWC, the other community colleges, and UW had been incredibly helpful and created a common set of course numbers and assessments that created continuity. She added that UW had provided a distance program for student across the state and had strongly benefited this community but it was taken away. The staff member suggested that UW look to reinvest in their distance programs for people around the state that were unable to move to Laramie to receive their degrees, so that these students did not attend different universities. She added that UW could look to partner with the faculty already at the community colleges to provide these courses as well.

A community member stated that UW had the most affordable education for student in the state and for those students from out of state. She suggested that UW continue to support the Hathaway Scholarships and keep the requirements at the highest standards.

Another 4-H student expressed support for those programs by stating that these programs were the foundation of the youth in Torrington and the state and that these programs helped them discover their passions. She added that these programs also helped the youth of the state realize they wanted to attend UW.

A member of the community thanked UW for the creation of the Articulation Summit. She added that this meeting had been incredibly valuable for her and her colleagues to come to campus and meet with UW instructors. The community member stated that this summit had allowed her to make connects for her students when they were ready to transfer to UW and allowed her to provide advice on professors to work with.

A community member stated that the accomplishments she had achieved in her life were in large part to the education she received in 4-H and at the University of Wyoming. She complimented the number of students enrolled, the number of degree programs, the amount of research, among other things. The community member ask that UW keep up the good work.

A member of the community expressed support for the master’s degree in secondary education. He stated that this program had made a huge impact on his life and enhanced his skills at his current job. The community member expressed a desire to finish this program even though it was up for elimination. He also stated that at EWC they were working to create a Agriculture Technology Education Center and he would like to create infrastructure and partnerships with UW. He suggested that UW look at offering more bachelor’s degrees through the community colleges because transfer student numbers were not increase at the rate that they should and it had become more likely that students would likely complete their education at the community colleges. The community member noted that the 2 plus 2 model that was currently in practice might need an updated to be structured as a 3 plus 1 or 4 plus 0 model.

A staff member from EWC thanked UW for their efforts regarding transfers students and he encouraged UW to continue those efforts.

A community member stated that she was a transfer student from LCCC and had graduated from UW with an associates in equine training and management. She explained that UW did not offer any equine programs and was required to spend an extra two years at UW because credits did not transfer. She thanked UW for improving the transfer credit process. The community member stressed an importance for UW to improve and create an equine program on campus as there were programs of this nature at the community colleges around the state.

A member of the community stressed the importance of offering master’s programs through distance learning. She stated that there were a lot of people in the state that could not move to Laramie to receive a degree based on jobs and families. The community member added that more people would stay in Wyoming if they could receive their master’s degree while staying in their jobs.

A community member stated that it was concerning the students were required to have a plan for what they wanted to do for the rest of their lives when they are sophomores in high school and never allowed to change that path. He stated that this often was the case based on cost of attendance at UW, he encouraged UW to stick to the outline of the constitution and keep tuition as free as possible. The community member stated that it might be of interest to UW to stop building builds and rely on the faculty to draw in the students to attend UW and not the aesthetics of the campus. He added a desire to keep the liberal arts at the forefront of the education provided at UW.

A member of the community asked if it would be possible for UW to look to partner with more companies and factories in the agriculture industry to provide a greater service to the entire state. He added that this outreach would be incredibly welcomed and could work to provide jobs for graduates of UW.

A community member expressed support for applied agriculture research, including the research farm in Lingle. He stated that these units were important to the many issues that agriculture production would face. The community member also expressed support for UW Athletics and stated that these were so important to the university as a whole.

A member of the community thanked UW for the outreach that had occurred in Platte County. He expressed support of the university apartment system that provided options to students that no longer wanted to stay in the Residence Halls. The community member noted that he knew the university bus system was a nice to have but he suggested keeping it in service as it was a helpful and convenient service for UW students.