

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

Washington State University Vancouver was created in 1989 as a branch campus of Washington State University. All such campuses were and remain limited to upper-division and graduate programs and assumed to rely on the local community colleges for lower-division instruction. The selection of Vancouver as a location for a branch campus was based on several factors:

- No in-state institution, whether public or private, was available to provide access to baccalaureate or graduate education within a 100 mile radius.
- The catchment area of the campus included nearly 300,000 people. Today that number is almost 500,000.
- Community leaders sought a campus or university to support the growing high technology economy of the region. The Portland/Vancouver community is host to several economic clusters including, but not limited to, semi-conductor and high technology manufacturing.

As of Fall 2004, WSU Vancouver has grown to include:

- Full-time equivalent (FTE) of 1,340, 8.7% above the funded enrollment of 1,228.
- 15 baccalaureate degrees and 8 masters degrees.
- More than 4,500 graduates, 75% of whom remain in the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area<sup>1</sup>.

Despite this progress, educational access and attainment continue to be restricted. The baccalaureate attainment rate is 20% for Clark and Cowlitz counties (the two largest counties in Southwest Washington) according to the US Census. This figure is less than the rate of the state of Washington (28%), only two thirds of the Portland metropolitan area (31%) and less than half the baccalaureate attainment rate of Seattle (48%)<sup>2</sup>. This attainment rate is inconsistent with a developing high-tech and knowledge-based economy and is one of the problems that this plan must address.

The low baccalaureate attainment rate stems from several factors:

- The state of Washington currently funds one full-time equivalent (FTE) per 71 citizens of the state. In Southwest Washington, this ratio is one per 484.
- Population growth continues to expand the demand for higher education.
- WSU Vancouver currently offers limited degree options.
- The only access model provided in Southwest Washington is 2+2 (two years at a community college and two years at WSU Vancouver).
- The option of transferring after one year at a community college, which is possible in other locations in the state (e.g. Whatcom County), is not available in Southwest Washington.
- No four-year option is available in Southwest Washington. Current and previously collected data indicate that the college bound population of high school students fall into three categories:
  - Those who intend to begin at a community college. This group is currently served by the 2+2 option.

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<sup>1</sup> Washington State University Vancouver Alumni Survey, 2003

<sup>2</sup> US Census, 2000

- Those who intend to leave the community and pursue a four-year option. This category is served by institutions both in and out of state.
- Those who prefer to stay in the community but who will not choose the community college as the beginning point. This group is not currently served.

Substitute House Bill 2707, enacted by the 2004 legislature, directed Washington State University Vancouver to conduct a self-study to address several questions:

- The higher education model that best serves the community;
- The role and mission of the campus, particularly the inclusion of research;
- Cost; and
- Whether the campus should be authorized to offer doctorates.

### **Assumptions**

In conducting the self-study WSU Vancouver made the following assumptions:

- The plan must serve students;
- The plan must serve the community;
- WSU Vancouver will remain the institution of choice for students transferring from Southwest Washington community colleges; and
- Adequate funding, both operating and capital, will be available to implement the plan.

### **Method**

To determine the community interests in WSU Vancouver's continued development, the study team surveyed approximately 4,000 individuals throughout Southwest Washington in several categories:

- Community leaders (business leaders, labor leaders, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, public sector elected and appointed officials)
- Randomly selected community members
- WSU Vancouver faculty and staff
- WSU Vancouver students and alumni
- Clark College and Lower Columbia College faculty and staff
- Clark College and Lower Columbia College students
- University and College trustees and advisory councils
- Current high school juniors and seniors (Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania counties)

Thirteen focus groups (8 to 12 participants each) were conducted to provide more detailed assessments with persons from the above categories who volunteered to participate. Twelve weekly meetings were conducted with WSU Vancouver faculty to assess interest in and to begin formulating an implementation plan for a lower-division proposal.

### **Results**

#### *Model*

A clear majority of the community expressed a preference for WSU Vancouver to function both as an upper-division transfer campus as well as a four-year campus. Community leaders (79%) and the randomly selected sample (67%) supported the combined role. Clark College and Lower Columbia College students supported the combined role at 71% and 70% respectively. Similarly, WSU Vancouver faculty and staff, WSU Vancouver students, WSU Vancouver alumni

and WSU Pullman administrators overwhelmingly support the combined role. The only category of respondents who believe WSU Vancouver should remain as an upper-division and transfer campus are community college faculty.

Responses from current high school students mirrored findings from a 2001 high school student survey indicating that 40% were considering a 2+2 option and 60% were considering only four-year options. Smaller percentages of those intending to major in engineering, (27%), science (24%) and human services (28%) indicated a willingness to consider a 2+2.

Respondents indicate that degree programs should be developed in a variety of disciplines. More than 80% indicated that WSU Vancouver should develop or expand programs in each of the following areas: science, health, engineering, education, computer science and business.

#### *Role and Mission*

Respondents in all categories supported WSU Vancouver retaining a role as a research institution (83%). This support rose to 88% when asked whether WSU Vancouver should focus on research that influenced the local community issues.

#### *Doctoral Degrees*

A small majority of the community supported the possibility that WSU Vancouver would offer doctoral degrees while a preponderance of WSU students, faculty and administrators support such a role.

### **Proposals**

#### *Model*

##### **Four Year Track**

We recommend expanding the role of WSU Vancouver to include select freshmen and sophomores. Only students who meet WSU admission criteria will be permitted to enter as freshmen or sophomores. In expanding its role to include lower-division students, WSU Vancouver will be able to offer a local alternative to those students who want to remain in the region but do not want to pursue a baccalaureate degree by beginning at a community college. These students do not have a four-year, in-state option to currently meet their needs.

We propose admitting 200 freshmen in Fall 2006. This number is derived from faculty planning and evaluation to determine minimum numbers necessary to permit high quality programs both for general education and lower-division prerequisites for the various degrees. We anticipate this number will grow significantly during subsequent years contingent upon additional operational funding. This proposal assumes a growth rate of 7.5% annually.

#### *Upper Division Transfer*

While we recommend implementation of a four-year option at WSU Vancouver, we do not recommend eliminating our transfer option. Our projections indicate that even after full implementation the majority of WSU Vancouver upper-division students will have initiated their academic careers at a community college.

The original purpose in creating the branches as upper-division and graduate campuses is still very valid for Southwest Washington. WSU Vancouver is still the only state-supported University for students to receive a baccalaureate degree in the region. Beyond serving placebound students, this campus has become the institution of choice for Southwest Washington students who begin their higher education at Clark College or Lower Columbia College and transfer to complete their four-year degrees. In addition, WSU Vancouver has taken steps to improve the basic transfer program. These actions were taken to make the 2+2 option as effective and efficient for students as possible and will continue even with the initiation of a four year track. In fact, the combination of the 2+2 with the four year track will provide options for students in the latter track to take courses at the community colleges that are not offered at WSU Vancouver. We propose that WSU Vancouver's upper-division transfer and graduate tracks continue to grow. Our current model assumes a growth rate of 7.5%, contingent upon operational funding.

However, there are additional steps that need to be taken. Clark College is currently over-enrolled, serving many more students than supported by state funding. In order for WSU Vancouver to experience continued growth, even without adding lower-division, we need to accommodate additional transfer students. Funding during the 2005-2007 biennium for at least an additional 500 FTE at Clark College and 170 FTE at Lower Columbia College is an important and strategic element in plans for WSU Vancouver.

#### *Doctoral Degrees*

WSU Vancouver will not pursue doctoral degrees. Rather, the WSU system will make available appropriate doctoral degrees in areas where demand is demonstrable and where resources are available. Even then, appropriate resources from all campuses will be made available to support the program offerings.

#### **Academic Plan**

As a four-year university, WSU Vancouver will be better able to fulfill its mission and legislative mandate. The expansion of the campus positions us to respond to the ever-growing expectations of our community. Our plan is to expand degree offerings in focused clusters as we move forward.

#### *Lower Division*

Planning for the lower-division curriculum centers around both general education and lower-division prerequisites for individual degrees. The general education program will be organized around a set of specific outcomes and delivered via a thematic curriculum that emphasizes learning communities. We anticipate that a new general education curriculum will be developed in conjunction with the WSU Center for Undergraduate Education and ultimately be extended to WSU as a whole. The general education curriculum relies heavily on the colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences. As a consequence, we anticipate growth and greater differentiation of our science and liberal arts curricula in this plan.

#### *Health and Human Services*

Southwest Washington is greatly impacted by a growing need for health care and allied health care providers. This need is evidenced by the number of vacant positions in health care sectors

as well as the excess number of students who apply for related programs. The success of our joint efforts with the community colleges in engineering and science should be extended. A coordinated and strategic effort, similar to the WSU Vancouver Engineering and Science Institute, among the three local institutions (WSU Vancouver, Clark College and Lower Columbia College) could have a major impact on the availability of health care professionals. We also anticipate developments in biomedical sciences at WSU Vancouver to compliment this articulation.

#### *High-Tech and Information Sciences*

The degree most often requested by local employers is a bachelor of science and/or master of science in electrical engineering. In addition, it is apparent that the development of new high-tech procedures and devices has not been accompanied by an understanding of how best to use these new technologies. Educational technology is one example. The general areas of information sciences, management information systems and Informatics serve a variety of employer's demands and help to advance the implementation of new technologies. Students interested in these majors are the ones *least* likely to pursue a 2+2 option.

#### *Education*

K-12 education is the largest employment sector in Southwest Washington. The changes occurring in that area demand that WSU Vancouver not only respond to the employment needs but also to the innovation needs of this sector. Consequently, expansion of the education program is envisioned with the implementation of this plan.

#### *Business*

The increasing needs of local business clearly dictate growth in our current business program. In addition, the needs for administrative services, management, policy and innovation in the not-for-profit and public sectors drive demand for graduates of programs in public administration and human services.

### **Role and Mission**

We propose that WSU Vancouver retain the existing name and continue to be a campus within the Washington State University system under the governance of the WSU regents and WSU administration. As a part of the system, this campus can rely on the larger university for curriculum expertise, research initiatives and administrative support that would be absent from an independent campus. Concurrently, the WSU system acknowledges the separate role of its individual campuses and has recently granted authority for each campus to respond to the unique needs of the individual communities.

The specific role and mission of WSU Vancouver is shaped in many ways by the community. Because the current focus is on addressing community needs, we propose to continue being primarily a commuter campus and do not envision dormitories at this time.

As the only public institution offering baccalaureate degrees in Southwest Washington, WSU Vancouver has an obligation to be a general service higher education institution for the region. As such, a broad array of degree programs will be necessary with more of an emphasis on the liberal arts and sciences than may be the case for a more focused institution. At the same time,

the community needs and students demand more of an emphasis on professional programs than might be the case at a typical university. The existing economic clusters, professional service, commerce and planning needs of the region generate pressures to emphasize programs in those areas.

In asking the question of the role and mission, the legislature appears to assume that the choice is between only two models: research or comprehensive. Increasingly, however, universities of a third kind, called urban or metropolitan universities, have emerged. These institutions are characterized by active community engagement expressed through:

- The degree to which the institutions actively address issues that are important to the community: healthcare, education, criminal justice, arts and culture, urban planning, community services and economic development;
- The degree to which the university education incorporates the community in its instructional activities;
- The degree to which instructional programs emphasize professional ones and offer programs in non-traditional places and at non-traditional times;
- The degree to which the student body is diverse, particularly in age and having roles other than that of a student;
- The degree to which the faculty conduct research and engage in service activities that have a community focus; and
- The degree to which the universities develop via regional partnerships with community agencies, other academic institutions including K-12 and with private sector entities.

In many cases, including that of Vancouver, the community needs the university to have a research role. Research contributes to the product, process and policy development that drives the local economy and helps to expand professional service functions in new and innovative ways. Research also helps to address specific problems faced by local governments such as criminal justice and environmental preservation.

Our proposal is that WSU Vancouver continue to develop as an urban or metropolitan university with a strong research component that focuses on local community issues and the needs of target economic sectors important to the growth of the Southwest Washington economy.

### **Impact**

The current proposals are intended to address major higher education needs of the state and particularly Southwest Washington. The addition of a four-year track to the campus allows us to provide baccalaureate degrees to place-bound students who will not pursue the 2+2 option, thus providing an opportunity for students not served by our current 2+2 programs. Expansion of the 2+2 option with greater articulation of WSU Vancouver and the local community colleges provides additional access. Projections show that the expanded WSU Vancouver will provide 450-1,300 additional students access to bachelor and master degrees each year in Southwest Washington between now and 2004. The proposed expansion will increase the access ratio from 1:484 to 1:151 for the current population and with time bring Southwest Washington in line with the rest of the state.

Concurrently, the curriculum expansion will address many of the identified needs of the community. Graduates from WSU Vancouver will be ready to take jobs in high-tech and related fields, health and human services, K-12 education and fill many needs facing public and private agencies. Graduates who have been exposed to a broad based education are able to function as well informed citizens.

The impact of the university on the community goes beyond the economic benefits. As the campus expands, the fabric created by the interweaving of the university and community becomes increasingly rich and strong. WSU Vancouver will influence the cultural expansion of the community. The campus will be a major resource for arts, athletics, events, university extension, consultation, facilities and engagement of faculty and students with every thread of the community. As more than one scholar has noted, there are no great communities without great universities.

Our expectation is that the proposed addition of a four-year track will have no or little impact on enrollment at the community colleges. Data indicates that the community college bound high school students are a different group from those who prefer a four-year program. Other institutions that added lower-division courses saw increased enrollment at local community colleges. Community colleges have several advantages that will continue to draw students including: lower tuition, open door (as opposed to restricted) admission and a wider array of programs from which students can select.

### **Cost Requests**

There are multiple components to the proposal to improve degree attainment in Southwest Washington at WSU Vancouver. Adding students in a four-year track will require funding at a four-year rate, while continued reliance on the 2+2 program dictates maintaining funding for those students on a per FTE upper division rate. Beginning a lower-division program will require start-up funding. Community feedback suggests continued expansion of high-demand funding for select programs. This operational funding will be spent primarily on additional faculty and staff. Finally, expanded enrollment and programs will require the addition of buildings and incurring capital costs. Summary costs are shown on page 10.

#### *Initial Freshmen and Sophomore Program Offerings*

Once at a critical mass, the four-year track should be funded on par with the main WSU campus. Two hundred FTE are requested for fiscal year 2007 at \$6,303/FTE or \$1,260,600. The total cost/FTE is \$9,785, with operating fees funding the difference, as shown in Appendix 1.

#### *Freshman and Sophomore Start-up*

One-time funding is required for faculty start-up, equipment, advertising, processing technology, office conversion and publications. For fiscal year 2006, this amount is estimated at \$1,000,000.

### *2+2 Transfer Enrollment*

Transfer enrollment will remain the predominant method of achieving baccalaureate degrees. Additionally, graduate students continue to grow at WSU Vancouver. WSU's existing budget request includes 100 additional transfer and graduate students at WSU Vancouver for each year of the biennium.

### *High-demand Enrollment*

This biennium's high-demand requests are for Nursing, Engineering and Digital Technology. Twenty five FTE are requested in fiscal 2006 at a \$300,650 cost to the state, with an additional 25 FTE in fiscal year 2007 at the same rate. These FTE would be in addition to forecast transfer and four-year enrollments.

### *Clark College/Lower Columbia College/WSU Vancouver Health Professions Institute*

One of the greatest manpower shortages in Southwest Washington is in the arena of health care. Shortages occur in categories where educational requirements range from associate to graduate and professional degrees. Insufficient educational capacity in many of these degree programs contributes to the shortage. There is a limited number of available opportunities for clinical teaching opportunities in Southwest Washington. Articulation among the academic institutions requires additional efforts for student advising, curriculum development, etc. Some categories lack sufficiently prepared entering students to produce the required number of skilled professionals. We propose to create a Health Professions Institute as a joint effort of Clark College, Lower Columbia College and WSU Vancouver. To support this effort we are requesting base-level funding for WSU Vancouver of \$1,006,000 beginning in fiscal year 2006 ("Summary of New Funding" page 10).

## **Capital Facilities**

The addition of lower-division enrollment will require instructional spaces that do not currently exist. The evolution of academic programs also suggests increased reliance on specialized facilities, particularly in high-demand areas of applied technologies and allied health care. Increased academic space demands also drive additional support and special use spaces, together with infrastructure expansion to serve facility growth and to address associated community off-site impacts of campus development. (See Appendix 1)

Our plan assumes approximately 60,000 gross square foot (gsf) of buildings which conform to existing buildings on campus and provide for efficiencies of development while allowing reasonable customization for multiple uses. Demand requires the following instructional space:

- Applied Technologies and Classroom Building; 76,000 gsf; \$35.0M
- Library Building Conversion to add Library space; \$3.3M
- Undergraduate Classroom Building; 60,000 gsf; \$25.8M
- Education Building; 60,000 gsf; \$28.9M
- Instructional Space (undesignated); 60,000 gsf; \$30.1M

Enrollment through FY 2015 also requires the following capital projects:

- 90,000 gsf of support and ancillary facilities at a cost of \$28.9M including new Student Services Center
- Infrastructure: \$12.0M

**Summary of New Funding (Operating WSU Vancouver Summary by Fiscal Year**

OPERATING (1)	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	New PBL Total	One-Time Total
Four Year FTE		200	215	181	180	58	63	67	72	78		
\$/FTE		6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303	6,303		
<b>SUBTOTAL 4 YR \$</b>		1,260,600	1,355,145	1,141,631	1,132,708	366,756	394,263	423,833	455,620	489,792	7,020,348	
Fresh/Soph Start-up (one-time)	1,000,000											
Health Institute (PBL)	1,006,000											1,000,000
<b>TOTAL COSTS THROUGH FY 2015</b>	<b>2,006,000</b>	<b>1,260,600</b>	<b>1,355,145</b>	<b>1,141,631</b>	<b>1,132,708</b>	<b>366,756</b>	<b>394,263</b>	<b>423,833</b>	<b>455,620</b>	<b>489,792</b>	<b>1,006,000</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

**CAPITAL(2)(in millions of dollars)**

Instructional:	
Applied Technologies	35.0
Library Conversion	3.3
Undergraduate Classroom	25.8
Education	28.9
General Instructional	30.1
Support & Ancillary:	
Student Services	10.6
Other Buildings (1)	18.3
Infrastructure (1)	12.0
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL</b>	<b>\$ 164.0</b>

Notes:

1. Operating summary reflects no cost escalations beyond current biennia
2. Capital costs are based on completed facilities and indexed for inflation and scope differential