

2023



COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING®
CONFERENCE

Collaborating for Student Success; Strategic Partnership Between Financial Aid and University Support Services



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Introductions

Justin Schuch

Executive Director of
Student Success and
Retention Initiatives

Bobbi Smith

Director of Financial Aid



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Agenda

- Introductions and Background
- Function Overview
- Collaborations
- Alignment of Support Services



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Two Campuses, One University

Macomb, IL – Traditional residential campus

Moline, IL – Urban campus setting

Fall 2022 First Year Class Profile

- 43.6% Male / 56.4% Female
- 38.3% First Generation
- 56.1% Underrepresented
- Law Enforcement and Justice Administration,
Nursing/Pre-Nursing,
Psychology
- 88.8% In-State
- 13.3% Special Admission



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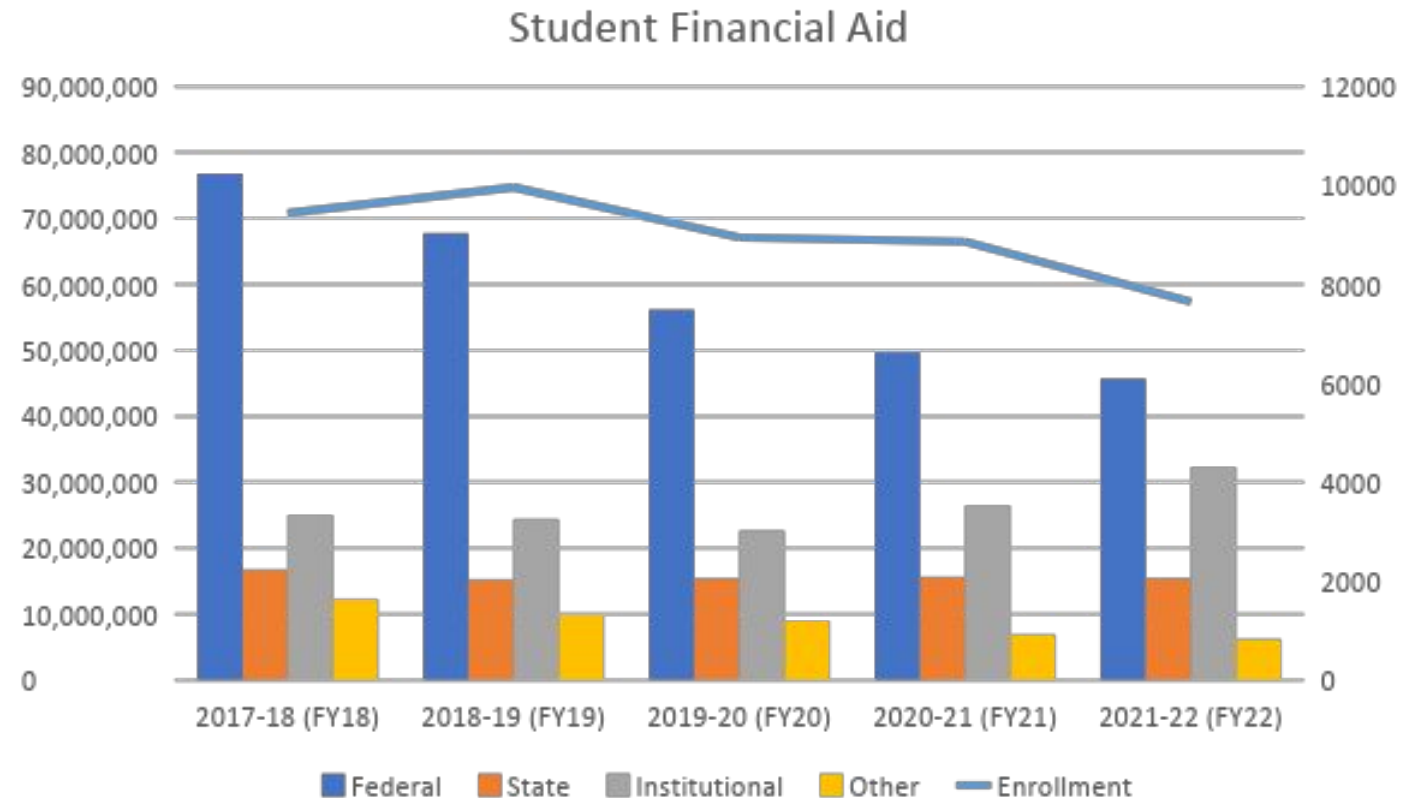
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School Code: 001780

2022 (FY) Financial Aid Profile

- 89% of students receive some form of financial aid
 - Average aid for incoming freshmen is \$19,001
- 42% of students receive a Pell grant.
 - 86% of those Pell eligible students have a zero EFC.
- The maximum Pell grant covers 69% of tuition/fees assessed by WIU.



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Office of Retention Initiatives

The Office of Retention Initiatives focuses on the development of the student experience at Western Illinois University to enhance student success. Through programmatic development, process review and creation, and data analyzation, the Office of Retention Initiatives endeavors to positively impact student retention and success.



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Student Support Resources

Student Affairs

Student Engagement

Multicultural Center

Student Recreation

Student Development and Success Center

University Counseling Center

Career Resources

Academic Affairs

Academic Success Coaching

Academic Advising

Rocky's Resources Tutoring

University Writing Center

University Libraries

Academic Success Resources



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Personalized Student Support

"I was sent home and away from my college network, but I never felt alone or lost."

Leatherneck Care Referral Program

Referral program for students, faculty, staff, family, and community members.



Leatherneck Lookout Campaign and Outreach

Call and text campaigns to all students.

Leatherneck Lookout focuses on peer support and reaching out to call students to share resources, support, or good news throughout the semester.

EdSights "Rocky" Bot tool allows for questions to be answered 24/7 from students as well as proactive outreach and campaigns.

Streamline Resources

Increased accessibility, trainings, and merged resources.



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New Student Orientation

Leatherneck Launch

Redesigned new student orientation experience focusing on sharing information students need during the summer to find success in the fall. Goal is to launch students into their WIU experience to learn about campus resources and engage with other incoming students.



Liftoff! Summer Bridge Program

New summer bridge program, summer 2023, focused on assisting students in developing connections and skills to be successful at Western Illinois University. 3-week intensive program, students completing 6 credit hours (English, Finance, and University 100) including peer mentorship, along with the development of foundational skills for college success through campus resources and student engagement.

Leatherneck First Four

Redesigned on-boarding experience focused on the first four days, first four weeks, and first four months of a student's experience at Western Illinois University designed to help them find success and graduate within four years.



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Office of Financial Aid

The mission of the Western Illinois University Office of Financial Aid is to provide all students and their families with resources for success through efficient and timely customer service, equitable disbursement of financial awards, and educational programming related to financial literacy. Through these actions, our goal is to maintain a positive environment that will help create opportunities for equal access to post-secondary education and increase student retention.



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Personalized Student Support

"I chose WIU based on the individualized attention I received."

FAFSA Assistance

Virtual environment to assist students/families in completing the FAFSA.

Financial Literacy

1:1 Counseling to assist students with options in closing the out of pocket costs to attend WIU.

Default Prevention

Initiatives to curb default by identifying students who are at risk.



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Financial Aid Collaborations

Finance & Administrative Services

- Business Services
- Billing & Receivables
- Budget
- EOA

Student Success

- Retention Initiatives
 - Career
 - Academic Success Coaching
 - Transition & Academic Skills
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Student Development & Success
- Multicultural Center
- Office of Student Engagement

Academic Services

- Provost Office
 - Registrar
 - Graduate Studies
 - Global Studies
 - First-year Advising
 - Departments/Colleges



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Retention & Financial Aid Collaborations

Leatherneck Launch & Liftoff!

- Financial aid as one of the key central focuses throughout new student onboarding processes like Leatherneck Launch (orientation) and Liftoff! Experiences.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- “Warning” for students who are on the wrong path.
- Probation with the collaboration of Academic Success Coaching/Advising
- Suspension/dismissal for those that have been an opportunity but have not utilized that opportunity

Enrollment Verification

- Office of Financial Aid shares information about non-attendance used for reporting with the Office of Retention Initiatives in order to conduct direct outreach to students as an additional early intervention measure.
- Information shared with Academic Advisors and retention area team members.



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Retention & Financial Aid Collaborations

Non Registered Processes

- Collaboration and data sharing between Office of Retention Initiatives and Office of Financial Aid to ensure most effective communication is occurring with students.

Staff Training for Financial Aid Support

- Office of Financial Aid annually training First Year Academic Advisors and other retention staff members on base level financial aid information in order to provide students with timely support without having to be sent to the Office of Financial Aid.

Initiative Design

- Office of Financial Aid and Office of Retention Initiative collaborating on future retention focused scholarship plans.
- Continually connection to touch base on impacts of processes on financial aid, and financial aid processes impacting retention efforts.



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Questions?

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