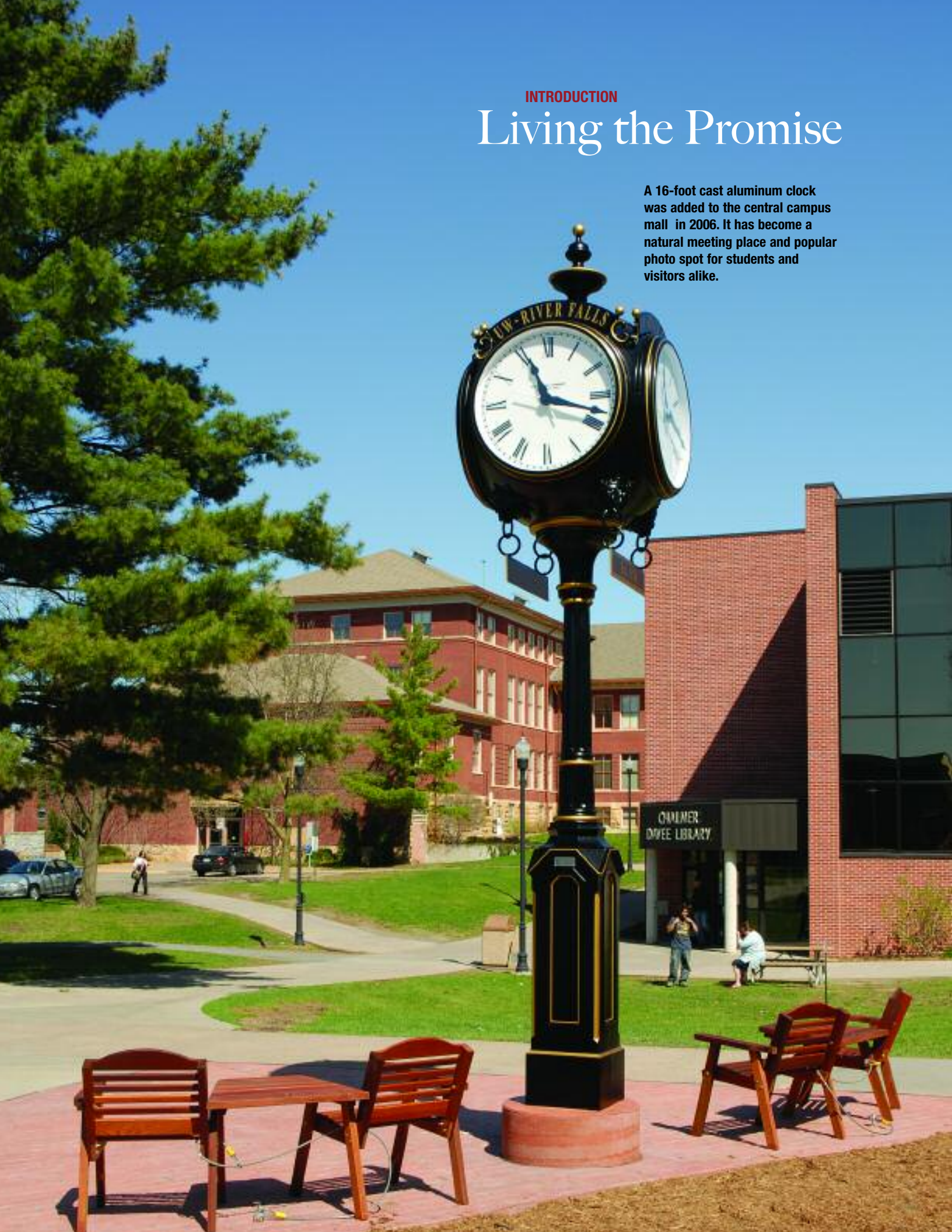


INTRODUCTION

Living the Promise

A 16-foot cast aluminum clock was added to the central campus mall in 2006. It has become a natural meeting place and popular photo spot for students and visitors alike.





Living the Promise

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls is located in the St. Croix River Valley (a national scenic waterway) in western Wisconsin. River Falls is a city of 13,000 on the eastern edge of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, less than 30 minutes from St. Paul and 40 minutes from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

The region's rapid population growth is transforming farms and small towns into outer-ring suburbs of the Twin Cities. River Falls is situated in the fastest growing area in Wisconsin and is among the top 100 fastest growing counties in the country. Our students enjoy our rural setting and experience the learning opportunities that a vibrant metropolitan area can provide.

The university's mission "to help students learn so that they are successful as productive, creative, ethical, engaged citizens and leaders with an informed global perspective" has resonated with our faculty and staff, our alumni, our students, and people in our region. The university is focused on sustainability, engaged leadership, global literacy, and inclusiveness. These four initiatives are major elements in our strategic plan, "Living the Promise."

UW-River Falls is part of the University of Wisconsin System, the eighth largest public university system in the country.

PROFILE

Our mission is to help students learn so that they are successful as productive, creative, ethical, engaged citizens and leaders with an informed global perspective.



THE UNIVERSITY'S HISTORY

The University of Wisconsin was incorporated in 1848 shortly after the admission of Wisconsin into the Union. The Wisconsin State University system had its origins in an 1857 state law creating a separate board of regents for the state normal schools.

UWRF was founded in 1874 as the fourth Normal School in Wisconsin and the first in the northwestern part of the state. The university's partnerships with the region began when local townships and community leaders pledged \$25,000 and land to assist with the school's construction. Our first building was dedicated on Sept. 2, 1875, with an enrollment of 130 students.

Since its very beginnings, the university has been contributing to the development and improvement of the state. Franklin Hiram King, professor of natural science at River Falls State Normal School, began the research that led to the development of the round silo. The new design solved the problem of storing winter cattle silage and allowed dairy to advance as a major farming enterprise in Wisconsin.



This first campus building was destroyed by fire in 1897. The current South Hall, built on its foundation, has been in use since 1898.

River Falls State Normal School experienced a slow and steady growth in curriculum and enrollment until 1912, when enrollment increased substantially with the establishment of the agriculture education department. The development of a four-year curriculum in 1926 preceded our designation as a state teacher's college in 1927.

In 1951, liberal arts programs were added and the institution became the Wisconsin State College at River Falls. In 1964, the state colleges were renamed state universities and we were authorized to offer graduate courses as the Wisconsin State University-River Falls. The University of Wisconsin System was created in 1971 when the two public university systems (University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin State Universities) were combined under a single board of regents, and we assumed our present name.

UWRF experienced very rapid enrollment growth in the 1960s and early 1970s, increasing the student headcount from 1,500 in 1960 to 4,500 by 1975. Additional faculty and an expansion of the physical facilities accompanied this change. The increased numbers of students and faculty provided a greater range of courses and programs, yet we maintained our emphasis on close student/faculty relationships. Since the mid 1970s, growth in student numbers at UWRF has been maintained at a slower pace. In the past three years, however, the university has begun to experience more rapid, planned enrollment growth. Overall enrollment increased by 2.04 percent in 2004, 2.16 percent in 2005, and 2.71 percent in 2007. UWRF enrollment in fall 2007 was 6,426.



The campus continues its historical commitment to teaching and learning. Nearly 60 percent of our faculty report working with undergraduate students on research and creative projects outside class. Most of our faculty members are on a first-name basis with their students, and many of our graduates maintain close contact with their professors and others on campus throughout their professional lives.

UNIVERSITY LOGO

The current university logo is symbolic of our commitment to the St. Croix region. The falcon at the top of the seal is an integral part of the St. Croix River flowing beneath its flight. The falcon is our mascot and the symbol of UWRF. The rolling hills of western Wisconsin surrounding the river represent our connection with the earth and our stewardship of the land.



UNIQUE PROGRAMS

UW-River Falls is a dynamic institution with over 60 distinctive programs. The 2008 *U.S. News and World Report* ranks us among the top 15 public Midwestern master's level universities. The *Princeton Review* includes UWRF in its 2008 list of "Top Midwestern Colleges." The following are a sample of the innovative programs that mark the work of our faculty and staff.

- UWRF is the only non-doctoral institution involved with [Project IceCube](#), an international consortium of 27 research institutions collaborating to build the world's largest scientific instrument—a massive neutrino telescope—in the ice at the South Pole. In conjunction with the project, UWRF physics faculty members and undergraduate students have spent time working in Antarctica.
- We have one of the largest non-land-grant undergraduate enrollments in agriculture in the country. In 2004, we offered one of the nation's first sustainable agriculture courses. A 2007 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant will support the development of a major in sustainable agriculture.
- Since 1991, we have been the [summer home](#) for the Kansas City Chiefs of the National Football League. The Chiefs bring visitors and [national media coverage](#) to River Falls, while providing internship experiences for our students. In 2007 the camp and the campus were featured in the HBO Sports series "Hard Knocks." The production crew employed five of our students.
- [Marketing Communications](#), celebrating its tenth year, was the first undergraduate program with that name in the nation. Designed with a strong input from industry, marketing communications combines several aspects of communications—visual, spoken, written and electronic—into



an interdisciplinary major. We currently have 280+ majors, which is one of the largest undergraduate programs of its kind in the nation.

- We have the oldest continuing [commissioned composer program](#) in the country. The program, which began in 1967, annually attracts prominent musicians to our campus to work with students and faculty and to create an original composition that is premiered on campus. Many of these works have subsequently been performed and recorded around the world.
- [Falcon Daily](#), our daily electronic campus newsletter, won the International Communicators Award of Distinction in 2006, and the Hermes Creative Gold Award from the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals in 2007.
- The [Department of Health and Human Performance](#) is one of the few physical education programs in the Midwest to pass the rigorous standards of the [National Association of Sport and Physical Education \(NASPE\)](#). It is the only NASPE accredited program in Wisconsin.
- We created the first intercollegiate rodeo team east of the Mississippi River. Our annual Rodeo Days event has been a highlight for the campus and the region since 1964. In 2007 [the rodeo was featured on Wisconsin Public Television](#).
- [UWRF physics ranks](#) among the fastest growing physics departments in the nation, and the Student Physics Society chapter is the second largest in the nation. [Interactions magazine](#) (March/April 2007) listed our program in their national honor roll of “thriving” undergraduate physics departments.

“The International Traveling Classroom allows students to use Europe as a classroom. It sparks an interest and knowledge of the wider world that is important for them as global citizens and develops skills that many employers have identified as important for competing in the global economy.”

— Geology Professor and ITC Program Coordinator Charles Rader

- We have a number of innovative international programs. Since 1963 the [Semester Abroad](#) (originally Quarter Abroad) program has provided individualized, research based, semester abroad educational experiences in Europe. We provide leadership for a consortium of colleges and universities with the [Wisconsin in Scotland \(WIS\)](#) program, founded in 1986. WIS is a semester-

long residence program located in a historic mansion just outside Edinburgh. In 2005 we developed the [International Traveling Classroom \(ITC\)](#), a program that takes students and faculty to four or five countries in Europe over the semester. This model has since been adopted by other UW institutions.

- UW-River Falls has become the first campus in Wisconsin to receive a FEMA pre-disaster mitigation planning grant to help the university plan for natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes or fires. The grant’s goal is to



create a comprehensive and regularly updated plan to identify and prioritize specific actions and projects to reduce the effects of hazards.

- A survey in 2002 by the National Science Foundation revealed that, despite our relatively small size, we are one of the top 10 comprehensive universities in the nation in terms of the number of our graduates who go on to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry.

STUDENTS

Our headcount enrollment in fall 2007 was 6,426 (5,846 FTE). Slightly more than 92 percent of our students are undergraduates, and 93 percent of those undergraduates are enrolled full time. Fifty-three percent of the students at UWRF come from Wisconsin, and all of the state's 72 counties are represented in our student body. With our location on the western border of the state, 44 percent of our students are from Minnesota, attending on a tuition reciprocity agreement between the two states. Approximately one percent are international students and the remaining two percent come from 23 different states. Approximately 47 percent of our undergraduates live in the residence halls on campus. Student involvement is a priority for the campus, and over 160 student organizations are available for nearly every interest.

Our students have been achieving significant recognition for their work. A brief sample of the accomplishments of our students includes the following:

- Moria Clinton, a student in our recently instituted theatre major, won the top prize at the American College Theatre Festival in Washington, D.C., for costume design in 2003 and make-up design in 2004. Clinton is the only student ever to win two top awards in this competition.
- Jill Crandall, business, was named the women's National Field Athlete of the Year by the United States Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association in 2007. In 2004 Rich Melzer, health and human performance, was named the NCAA Div. III Player of the Year by the National Association of Basketball Coaches.
- Nick Kesler, journalism, received an Emmy award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in 2002 in the college news category.
- Kendra Scudder, biology, completed a study titled *Estrogen Induced Sexual Abnormalities: A Genetic Model for Assessing Estrogenic*



Moria Clinton received a special joint resolution of commendation from the Wisconsin Senate and Assembly to recognize her precedent-setting achievements at the American College Theatre Festivals.



Pollutants in the Environment. In 2006, Scudder presented her research at the Council on Undergraduate Research Posters on the Hill event in Washington, D.C.

- Kaleb Santy, agricultural education, was named the national winner in the area of emerging agriculture technologies at the National Future Farmers of America convention held in Indianapolis in 2006.

Excellence in teaching is valued above all endeavors at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. To recognize this essential mission, the university initiated the Distinguished Teaching Award in 1965. It is the most prestigious honor bestowed on campus.

— Inscription on the Distinguished Teacher Wall in Wyman Education Building

FACULTY

Teaching and advising are the first priorities for our faculty as we work to fulfill the primary mission of our university—helping students learn.

Faculty and teaching academic staff (professionally qualified non-tenure-track teachers) teach all of our courses. Our

student/teacher ratio is 20:1, and we make every effort to keep class sizes small enough for effective instruction and interaction. The *Princeton Review* conducted anonymous interviews with students and noted the following about UWRF in August 2007:

“Students benefit from small classes and caring professors, an equation that results in ‘excellent one-on-one relationships with professors.’ Professors here ‘are dedicated to helping students and are available for those who ask for assistance. They do not use assistants in the classroom,’ and ‘they take note of students’ individual abilities and special needs, adapting instruction and assistance as needed.’”

The standard teaching load for full-time tenure-track faculty members is 12 semester credits per semester. Effective teaching is considered to be the most important performance criterion in tenure considerations, but faculty members are also expected to be actively engaged in scholarship and professional service in their disciplines. Faculty statistics are presented in Appendix A (Institutional Snapshot).

FACILITIES

The main campus of UW-River Falls sits on 160 acres of rolling land, on both sides of the picturesque South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River. The [campus](#) features 26 major buildings and a spacious interior campus pedestrian mall in addition to a complex of walking trails along the South Fork and extending to the Ramer and Hunt-Knowles athletic complexes. The adjacent Campus Laboratory Farm (143 acres) and the Mann Valley Farm (480 acres), located three miles northwest of campus, complement our agriculture science facilities.

Our two oldest buildings, South Hall (1898) and North Hall (1914), are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the campus has the largest vertical



sundial in North America. The majority of our classroom buildings were built between 1965 and 1980. We have consistently renewed and remodeled space whenever possible, despite significant funding challenges.

In 1997 we completed a major \$7.1M renovation of the [Chalmer Davee Library](#). The building also houses our Academic Success Center, the textbook rental library, and Information Technology Services (ITS), which maintains four [general access computer labs](#) and five computerized teaching classrooms in that building. ITS also maintains five open access labs and 13 specialized departmental computerized teaching facilities in other campus buildings.

Each of the major classroom buildings has specialized facilities and laboratories to help our students learn in the various disciplines. We have [three distance education classrooms](#) and [54 technology-enhanced classrooms](#) that include both Mac and PC computers connected to the Internet, a document camera, VCR/DVD players, and video projection capabilities. The Department of Communication Studies has four rooms with mounted cameras to record student presentations. There are also four “[Quasi-TEC](#)” rooms that are equipped with projectors, speakers and Internet connections to be used with laptop computers or video devices. Mobile tech carts are available for use in rooms that are not technically equipped.

The [Kleinpell Fine Arts building](#) houses the arts, humanities and many of the social science departments. It includes a designated GIS (Geographic Information Systems) lab, two distance education rooms, an art gallery, the 400-seat Abbott Concert Hall, the 325-seat Davis Theatre, the 100-seat flexible Syse Theatre, and a television studio which is used both as a classroom and as the base of production for [Focus On U](#), an award-winning student-produced show covering events on campus, and [NewsCenterU](#), a student-produced news program. There are specialized art studios for painting, drawing, photography, ceramics, metals, printmaking, fibers and glass.

The [Agriculture Science building](#) has a 34-seat distance education classroom used to send and receive video courses and conferences. In addition to biology, geology and specialized agriculture and environmental science labs, the facility houses two greenhouses, a planetarium, and food and dairy processing facilities. The Falcon Foods store sells specialty meats, ice cream and cheeses that are produced on campus.

We have continued to change the face of the campus, with over [\\$65M](#) dedicated to new construction since 1998.

Students collaborate on a project in the Educational Technology Center housed in the Wyman Education Building.





In 2000 the campus dedicated the [Walker D. Wyman Education building](#). The \$6.5 million center provides a contemporary education facility housing the College of Education and Professional Studies. It is built around a large, open Educational Technology Center. With the resources from a PT3 Grant (Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology), the college has incorporated best practices in the use of technology in its programs. The building also includes a [speech, language and hearing clinic](#); a [pre-school program](#); and 12 technology-enhanced classrooms. Appropriately, the building houses the university's [Distinguished Teacher Awards Wall](#), with plaques honoring the winner of each year's teaching award.

The UW-River Falls [C.H.I.L.D. Center](#) (Creative Hours in Learning Development), funded entirely by student fees and grants, was [dedicated in 2004](#). The 7,800-square-foot facility contains six classrooms, a kitchen, a motor-skills activity area, and work and storage areas. UWRF students use the center as a fieldwork site for programs in early childhood education, elementary education, communicative disorders, school counseling, and school psychology. The C.H.I.L.D. Center provides services for up to 90 children, ages six weeks to 10 years.

In 2002 we marked the opening of a [new colt barn](#) as part of our equestrian facilities on the Campus Lab Farm. The building serves our equine science program, the second largest in the country. The barn contains 50 stalls, two offices, a wash stall, a tack room and a laundry facility. A former student in the animal sciences program donated the total cost of the project (\$504K).

Our new \$9.2M [Dairy Science Learning Center](#), located on the Mann Valley Lab Farm, provides state-of-the-art educational facilities to support Wisconsin's strong dairy industry. The groundbreaking for the new construction was held in 2006, and the building opened in fall 2007. In addition to state funding, the building was supported by donations from dairy companies and individuals throughout the region.

The [George R. Field South Fork Suites](#) residence hall opened in 2005. It houses 240 students in 60, four-person, fully equipped apartments. The hall also features several meeting rooms and a high-tech conference room. The \$11.6M facility was funded entirely by student fees. In 2008-09 it will double in size to accommodate a total of 480 students, funded again by student fees. This brings the number of residence halls on campus to 10. The other nine dormitory-style residence halls have also received technological upgrades in recent years. Wireless access became available in every residence hall in 2007.

In January 2007 we opened our new \$34M [University Center](#). The building combines the operations of the former student center (originally constructed in 1958) and the dining hall (constructed in 1967) into a single unit located in the center of campus. It was completely funded by students, and our students play a significant role in the management of the facility. The students voted to tax themselves an additional \$1.3M to ensure that the building would be an efficient, sustainable facility for the entire campus community. The environmentally friendly elements include the following:



Addressing the campus community at the grand opening of the new University Center in January 2007, Chancellor Betz hailed the new building as a “model for bringing people together to learn, collaborate, create and enjoy.”

- Over 90 percent of the building materials (concrete, steel, brick, and stone) from the Ames building, which previously occupied the site, were recycled for use in the University Center.
- The majority of building materials for the new structure came from within 500 miles of campus, reducing energy costs for transportation.
- The University Center design elements include a 48,000-gallon storage capacity of collected rainwater that is used as grey flush water.
- The structure incorporates natural building materials, with a white roof to reflect sunlight, and south facing windows designed to allow maximum solar heat in the winter.
- The design will result in a 40 percent energy reduction compared to other contemporary student unions.
- An educational kiosk is on display in the University Center Great Hall, which monitors various elements of the building’s resource consumption.

The building serves approximately 5,000 people per day—an increase of 1,000 per day over the previous facilities. Initial event bookings and attendance have also increased by over 20 percent from previous levels.



In 2004 the State of Wisconsin approved \$2.2M for a significant addition to the Hunt-Knowles recreation and athletic complex. The addition provided two new locker rooms, a training room, a whirlpool room, and improved laundry and office spaces. In addition to serving students and members of the community who use the facility, the space also serves the Kansas City Chiefs, who have held their summer training camps at UWRF since 1991.

After many years of planning, we received approval from the state building commission to begin planning for the construction of a new health and human performance building in fall 2007. The funding for planning (\$1.04M) was approved Oct. 26, 2007, as part of the 2007-09 state budget. Funding for construction (estimated at \$55.86M) is waiting approval. The building will take several years to complete, but will ultimately provide a much-needed replacement to our aging HHP facilities.

In addition to the construction of new buildings, we completed several other significant building projects in the last decade. These included a major renovation of South Hall, the university's oldest structure, in 2002, and new window installation in North Hall in 2006. The university recently received \$5.6M to replace the entire ventilation system in the Kleinpell Fine Arts building. The project, scheduled for 2008-09, is intended to significantly improve the air quality and temperature regulation in the building. We will also be constructing a new chilled water plant loop in 2008 to provide more efficient cooling for several buildings.

The new facilities indicate that this is a vibrant and dynamic campus. In keeping with our focus on student learning, our buildings, regardless of age, are under continuous review. The university has a well-developed campus space plan and an established process for regularly assessing facilities needs and planning for change. However the lack of state resources for addressing required maintenance presents us with continuing challenges.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The University of Wisconsin System includes 26 institutions (13 two-year colleges, 11 comprehensive master's-level universities and two doctoral universities) governed by a single 18-member Board of Regents appointed by the Governor. The board establishes policies and guidelines for all of the institutions.

President Kevin Reilly, who directs and coordinates the work of the 13 campus chancellors, heads the system. The chancellor of UW Colleges and Extension, David Wilson, heads the thirteen two-year institutions as well as the state-wide extension system.

Chancellor Don Betz leads UW-River Falls. Reporting to him are Connie Foster, interim provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, and Mary Halada, vice chancellor for administration and finance. A comprehensive institutional [organizational chart](#) is found in [Appendix B](#) along with direct report charts for the offices of the chancellor, provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs

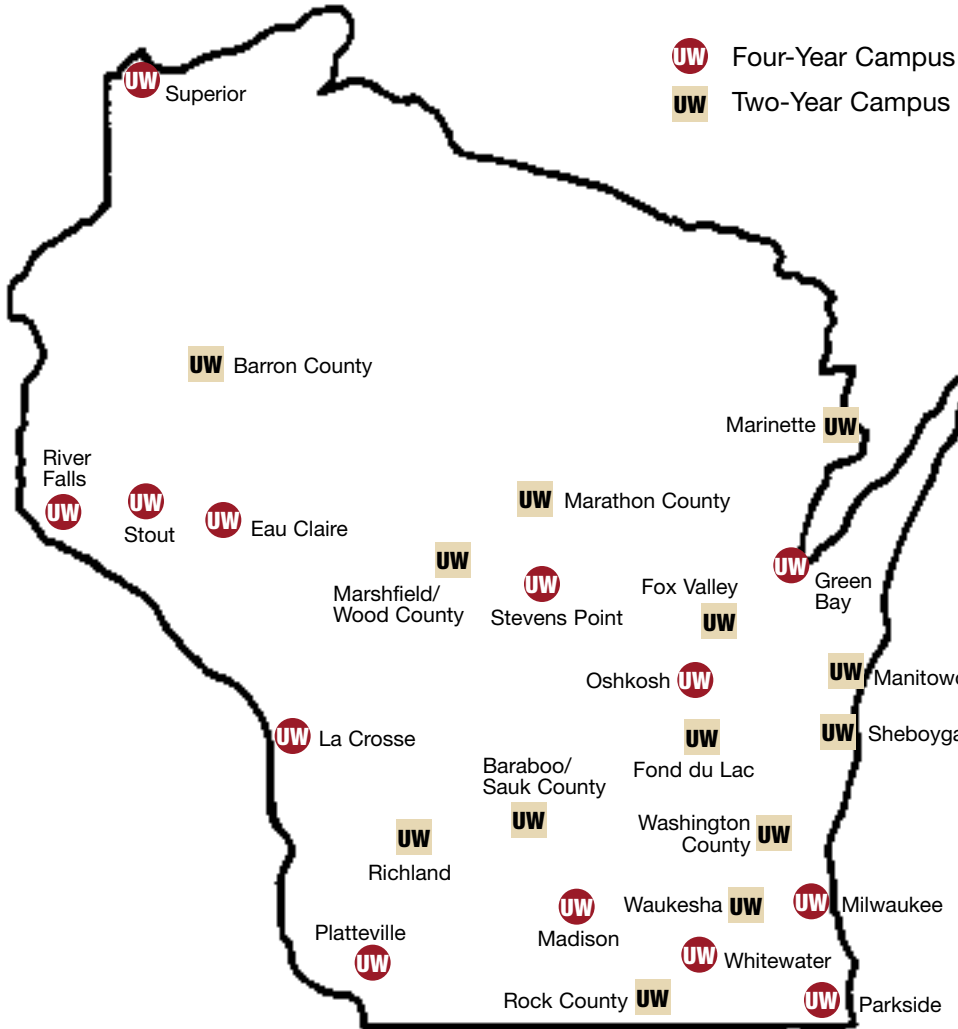


Figure I-1

University of Wisconsin System Institutions

and vice chancellor for administration and finance.

Mary Halada, vice chancellor for administration and finance, directs administrative services. The associate vice chancellor for student affairs, budget director, campus planner, director of facilities management, executive director of information technology services, and a number of other administrative offices report to the VCAF.

The associate vice chancellor for enrollment services and the deans of the four colleges report to Interim Provost Connie Foster. The academic programs of the university are located in four colleges: the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences (CAFES); the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS); the College of Education and Professional Studies (COEPS); and our newest college, the College of Business and Economics (CBE). The associate provost coordinates the graduate studies program. A chair, normally aided by a classified program assistant, heads each of the academic departments.



Colleges and Departments

Figure I-2

The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences		
Departments:	Agricultural Economics	Agricultural Education
	Agricultural Engineering Technology	
	Animal and Food Science	Plant and Earth Science
<p>The college also offers general education courses in geology, oceanography, food science, plant science and environmental studies, as well as a global perspectives course in agricultural economics. The college actively contributes to the UW-Extension mission to provide service to the state and region. CAFES also manages the two university laboratory farms.</p>		

Figure I-3

The College of Arts and Sciences			
Departments:	Art	Biology	Chemistry
	Communication Studies and Theatre Arts		
	Geography and Mapping Sciences		
	English	History and Philosophy	
	Journalism	Mathematics	Modern Languages
	Music	Physics	Political Science
	Psychology		
	Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice		
<p>All of the departments offer courses in the general education program. CAS also houses a number of interdisciplinary programs: biotechnology, ethnic studies, film studies, international studies, marketing communications, and women's studies.</p>			

Figure I-4

The College of Education and Professional Studies		
Departments:	Communicative Disorders	
	Counseling and School Psychology	
	Health and Human Performance	
	Social Work	Teacher Education
<p>HHP also offers courses for the general education program. Most of the programs in the college are professionally accredited. Students in the college receive extensive applied pre-professional experiences, and the programs are heavily involved with professionals in the field.</p>		

Figure I-5

The College of Business and Economics	
Departments:	Accounting and Finance
	Computer Science and Information Systems
	Economics
	Management and Marketing
<p>The college also provides the professional master of management degree, and it is actively involved with the economic development of the region. The college houses the Center for Economic Research, the Center for Economic Education, and the Small Business Development Center.</p>	



A complete list of all [major and minor academic programs](#) is available online.

Since the last Higher Learning Commission accreditation report, several significant changes have occurred, driven by our ongoing assessments and our desire to focus more efficiently and effectively on our ultimate goal—helping students learn. The major developments are highlighted below.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1998

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

— The creation of the [College of Business and Economics \(CBE\)](#)

Discussions were underway in 1998 to create a new college to provide a clearer identity for faculty, to enhance student learning, and to meet the needs of businesses in the region. Initially created with an interim half-time director, the unit hired its founding dean in 2001. The college became the fourth academic college on campus, with faculty drawn from three departments that had previously been housed in the College of Arts and Sciences.

— The creation and organization of the office of [Outreach and Graduate Studies \(OGS\)](#)

The development of the new master of management degree in CBE provided an impetus to move the administration of graduate programs out of the College of Education and Professional Studies. There was also a desire to give a higher profile to our outreach programs in the region. The Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies was organized and a new dean was hired in 2001. When that dean moved to an administrative position with UW Extension in Madison in 2004, the duties were divided, and separate directors of outreach and graduate studies were appointed. The new structure has helped both programs grow more efficiently.

— Reorganizations in [Student Affairs](#)

In 2004 the dean of students assumed a number of duties related to diversity and multicultural services. In 2005 Blake Fry took the position of dean of student development and campus diversity. In January 2007 Fry was named the special assistant to the chancellor, and issues regarding diversity became part of the responsibility of his new position, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity as one of the major goals in our strategic plan.

The responsibilities associated with student services, including the supervision of the student center, residence halls, food services, conferences and events, intramurals and recreation, student life programming and the campus leadership center were assigned to the director of student services and programming in 2005. That position gained responsibility for student disciplinary action, and the position was re-titled associate vice chancellor for student affairs in 2007.



– **Creation of the Enrollment Services Office**

In 2005 the offices of admissions, financial aid, and the registrar were combined into a single administrative unit, enrollment services. The new office is headed by the associate vice chancellor for enrollment services, reporting directly to the provost. This new structure allows us to manage records and serve students more efficiently throughout their careers on campus.

– **Creation of the Small Business Development Center**

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) was created in 1999 to meet the expanding needs of businesses in the region. Affiliated with the Wisconsin SBDC, our center is partially funded under cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The SBDC provides information, advising and training to Wisconsin entrepreneurs, small business owners, and managers located in surrounding counties in the St. Croix Valley.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

- Changing the College of Education and Graduate Studies to the [College of Education and Professional Studies](#)
- Restructuring the Personnel Office to an Office of [Human Resources](#)
- Renaming and reorganizing our Office of International Programs as the [Global Connections Office](#) and appointing a full-time director
- Renaming the Rural Development Institute as the [Regional Development Institute](#) in response to the changing nature of our work in the region
- Creating the [St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development](#) (SCISCD) and the [St Croix River Institute](#) in line with the institution's emphasis on sustainability

The structural changes that have been made are reflected in the university's organizational chart (Appendix B).

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Since the last review, UWRF has undergone significant administrative changes. Five individuals have held the position of chancellor since 1998. Gary Thibodeau was chancellor at the time of the last HLC visit. He retired in 2000. Chancellor Ann Lydecker succeeded him and served until her death in an automobile accident in March 2004. Provost Ginny Coombs served a brief period as acting chancellor until the appointment of Virgil Nylander as interim chancellor in June 2004. Nylander served until the appointment of Chancellor Don Betz in July 2005.

The rate of administrative change is unprecedented in the history of UWRF, which previously had a remarkably stable administration marked by consistently long terms. By way of contrast, the terms of the four chancellors prior to Chancellor Thibodeau extend back to 1917.

Many other administrative changes have occurred. With the exception of the



director of public affairs and the campus planner, none of the individuals on the campus leadership team were in their positions in 1998. Four people have held the office of provost: Robert Milam, Ginny Coombs, Charles Hurt and Connie Foster. Since the beginning of 1998, there have also been four deans each in CAFES and COEPS, and three deans in CAS. CBE has had a single dean, but two people served as interim directors as the college was being organized.

The university has benefited and grown from an infusion of new ideas and visions. Although positive changes are often accompanied by stress, the ability of the university to maintain focus while adapting to the evolution in leadership reveals our resiliency and clarity of mission.

CURRICULAR CHANGES

The most significant curricular change in the past 10 years has been the development of a new [general education program](#) for all undergraduate students. Following extensive discussions, the program was developed with clearly defined and assessable goals. The new program has an interdisciplinary focus and regular peer review of assessment data from courses in the program. See chapters three and four for a more complete discussion of the general education program and its assessment.

The purpose of the UWRF general education program is to facilitate the acquisition and integration of knowledge, abilities, and ethics in order to form a foundation for lifelong learning.

— mission statement for the UWRF general education program

Since the last NCA review, the campus has also gained permission from the university system to establish new degree programs in the following areas:

Undergraduate majors:

- [Dairy Science](#) (1999) — Designed to meet the needs of Wisconsin's signature industry, the program is one of the three largest undergraduate dairy programs in the nation.
- [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages](#) (1999) — With the regional growth of the non-English speaking population, demand for TESOL education has been significantly increasing. The program became the only undergraduate TESOL program in western Wisconsin and in the Twin Cities area. It is also an attractive major for international students.
- [Environmental Studies](#) (2000) — This interdisciplinary program replaced four sub-major options, capitalizing on our unique blend of agriculture and arts and sciences strengths. The major builds on regional needs and fits campus sustainability initiatives.
- [Theatre](#) (2002) — Strongly recommended by external consultants in our program review process, this evolution from a sub-major to a major capitalizes on our access to the active Twin Cities theatre scene.
- [International Studies](#) (2005) — This interdisciplinary major was built on the success of a minor program that had grown from six students in 1998 to over 100 minors in 2004. The major is growing quickly, contributing to our



mission of helping students become “engaged citizens and leaders with an informed global perspective.”

Graduate programs:

- [Master of Management](#) — Established in 2000 as an interdisciplinary program rooted in business administration, we developed the master of management program in response to needs revealed in surveys of area business people. It provides a practical and flexible degree program serving individual students and businesses in the region.
- [Education Specialist in School Psychology](#) — In 1999, UWRF was one of six comprehensive campuses authorized by the Board of Regents to offer the education specialist degree in school psychology.
- [Masters in Education–Professional Development](#) — This program was approved in 2005 with an emphasis in shared inquiry communities. In 2007, an emphasis in [principal licensure](#) was added.
- [Sustainable Community Development](#) was added as an option in the master of science in agricultural education program in 2006.

As part of continued efforts to serve the region, the university has established a number of new certificate programs offered by the faculty and coordinated by the Office of Outreach and Graduate Studies. New programs established since 1998 include graduate certificates in: [learning disabilities](#), [technology for educators](#), [wildlife recreation and nature tourism](#), and [alternative education](#).

ACCREDITATION HISTORY

UW-River Falls has been an accredited member of the North Central Association since 1935. Our most recent visit in 1997-98 resulted in accreditation for a period of 10 years.

The campus is committed to educational excellence, and we see specialized accreditations as an important indication of the quality of our programs.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accredits the teacher education programs. This accreditation covers all of the majors and minors across campus that lead to the certification of teachers. The most recent NCATE visit was spring 2003.

In April 2007, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International approved accreditation for the College of Business and Economics. Members of the AACSB board remarked that the time to accreditation by UWRF was the shortest in their memory for a new school. AACSB International accredits approximately 10 percent of all university business programs.

Programs which have [discipline-specific accreditation](#) from national professional organizations include: communicative disorders, chemistry, food technology, K-12 physical education, journalism, math education, music, and social work.



Speaking at the annual Unity in the Community celebration in April 2007, Mayor Don Richards noted that River Falls had become the second city in the state to join the Partnership for Working Toward Inclusive Communities.

The visitation team in 1998 indicated four challenges that the university was asked to address. Much of the material on these issues will be discussed more completely within the context of the criteria in the later chapters. The following discussion highlights some of the work that has been done in these areas since our last review.

CHALLENGES CITED IN THE LAST REPORT

DIVERSITY

Issues of diversity have been a significant focus for the campus in the years since the last review. See chapter 1b for a more complete discussion of our efforts in this area. We note the following highlights:

- Diversity and inclusivity have been a consistent part of our strategic planning efforts, and the creation of an inclusive campus is one of the prime goals of “Living the Promise.”
- In 1999 we first received federal funding to create an Upward Bound program. We also have a Student Support Services program for currently enrolled students, and we are very active participants in the McNair Scholars program. We have continued to receive federal support for these programs that are designed to serve under-represented students.
- As an indication of our many efforts to enhance diversity on our campus, UWRF received the first Wisconsin Award for Educational Diversity in 2003, granted by the State of Wisconsin’s Office of Employment Relations and the State Council on Affirmative Action.
- In 2004 Roger Ballou, then dean for student development and campus diversity, initiated a community dialogue in conjunction with the city



mayor and other community leaders on the issues of diversity. As a result of those discussions, the continuing River Falls Community Diversity Committee has been established, and the City of River Falls became the second community in Wisconsin to join the [Partnership for Working Toward Inclusive Communities](#) sponsored by the [National League of Cities](#).

- In 2006 UWRF became a charter institutional member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE).
- In 2006 [Unity in the Community](#), a celebration of diversity which has been a campus tradition since 1992, was expanded to include events in downtown River Falls.
- In 2007 the issues of inclusiveness and diversity became an integral responsibility for the special assistant to the chancellor.
- In 2007 the Faculty Senate created a new diversity committee, combining the efforts of a number of separate groups to develop a unified approach to the issues of creating a diverse and inclusive campus.
- The number of students of color at UWRF has increased 84.7 percent (from 229 to 423) since 1998. Students of color and international students now make up 6.79 percent of the student body—up from 4.08 percent in 1998. We are determined to diligently pursue the recruitment and retention of students of color.

We believe that we have taken strong steps to become more inclusive, but we recognize that enhancing diversity is a vital issue that will require continuing focus to improve opportunities for everyone.

SHARED GOVERNANCE

The 1998 visitation team detected tensions between the principle constituencies of shared governance and the administration. As the self-study team examined this issue, the general consensus was that the tension was largely the result of perceptions about a “top-down” implementation process associated with “Reach For the Future,” the 1995-2000 strategic plan, related to the reallocation of resources.

The university has a very strong tradition of shared governance. The responsibility of faculty in determining its own organizational structure and participating in the formulation of policies and programs is written into the state statutes ([WI Stats. 36](#)) that govern the University of Wisconsin System. UWRF has a vital and active [Faculty Senate](#) with broad representation. We also have an [Academic Staff Council](#) that participates actively in the governance of the university.

Faculty Senate has taken a leadership role in the development of the planning process for “Living the Promise,” our current strategic plan. A spring 2007



survey of faculty and staff indicates high levels of participation in governance and university committees. The survey also revealed general satisfaction with governance processes. Although a large number of respondents were neutral, more faculty/staff were satisfied than dissatisfied with the relationships with administration. (This issue is discussed more fully in chapter one.)

Figure I-6

Faculty and Staff Views on Governance

Question	Number of Responses	Yes	No				
Have you served on:							
• one of the faculty/staff governing bodies in the past 10 years?	268	41%	59%				
• a university or college level committee in the past 10 years?	270	82%	18%				
Question	Number of Responses	VS	S	N	D	VD	
How satisfied are you with:							
• election of representatives?	286	11%	45%	38%	5%	1%	
• work of governance committees?	286	8%	41%	40%	9%	3%	
• communications from governance groups?	283	13%	44%	34%	6%	2%	
• overall ability to represent your interests?	285	6%	35%	42%	12%	5%	
• the working relationships between faculty/staff governance units and administrators?	286	5%	28%	42%	18%	8%	
• the general working relationships between administrators and the faculty/staff?	287	5%	34%	33%	19%	9%	
• your personal and professional relationships with (other) administrators?	286	14%	45%	30%	8%	3%	

KEY
 VS = very satisfied
 S = satisfied
 N = neutral
 D = dissatisfied
 VD = very dissatisfied

UWRF Faculty Staff Survey Report. David Trechter et.al., Survey Research Center Report 2007/18

The dynamics of an active governance program will probably always involve points of conflict and concern between the faculty and administrators. Attitudes about governance were not part of the survey conducted at the time of the last visit, consequently we do not have benchmarks or comparative data. However, the recent cooperation on the development of the mission/vision statements, the strategic plan, and the selection of budget priorities,



demonstrate a commitment to shared governance by faculty and administration. We believe that we are making progress regarding the campus perceptions of the relationship.

ASSESSMENT

The visitation team noted the need for more attention to assessment at UWRF. We realize that this is a vital issue of continuing concern, and we initiated a process that facilitates on-going assessment and continuous improvement. Chapter 3a more fully describes our efforts in the assessment of student learning. Chapter 2c addresses our commitment to assessing the various organizations and operations of the university.

There has been a great deal of activity in the area of assessment in the past 10 years, although the efforts have not been consistently coordinated and documented. In 2001 the university was required to give up a large number of positions as part of a statewide budget reduction. At that point the position of associate provost was eliminated and the process of overseeing assessment was assigned to the various colleges. Several units continued to have a strong commitment to assessment, although due to decentralization our assessment efforts were uneven across campus, and we did not have a consistent method of reporting or recording results. The Office of Institutional Research also went through a series of reorganizations, relocations and personnel changes during this period which further complicated the maintenance of data.

Even though assessment efforts were decentralized, those efforts have driven curricular changes on this campus since the last re-accreditation visit. The campus maintained focus on assessment in several ways. We sent teams of faculty to national assessment conferences and general education conferences with a focus on assessment. Nationally recognized assessment specialists, Susan Hatfield and Barbara Walvoord, came to campus on multiple occasions from 2002 to 2007 to conduct assessment workshops. We held three assessment fairs where departments shared the processes and results of their assessment work. Every department now has an assessment plan in place and is required to collect data in connection with those plans.

In addition to the departmental assessment activities and assessment workshops described above, UWRF has demonstrated the centrality of assessment to our community by the following:

- As part of our self-study process we recognized the need for more coordination and leadership of our assessment efforts and requested that the position of assessment coordinator be re-established. Campus administration agreed, and an office was created and a person named in spring 2006 to coordinate and help lead our assessment efforts.
- We required all departmental assessment plans to be regularly reviewed and approved and assessment data to be collected annually by the assessment coordinator.



- We revised our program review process in 2004-05 to make assessment of student learning a much more central part in the examination of the effectiveness of our academic programs.
- We made assessment the central goal of our new [general education program](#). The general education plan makes assessable results the focus for the approval and continuation of courses in the program.

Departmental reports and surveys verify that student learning outcomes are being assessed across campus, and programmatic changes have been made based on assessment results. Significantly, a 2007 survey of department chairs indicated that 94 percent of all departments and programs on campus have undergone curricular changes based on results of assessment programs.

The campus is acutely aware that assessment is an area that requires continued attention and development. We have just begun to centrally collect the data on student learning outcomes needed to gauge the effectiveness of every program on campus. We understand the assessment process and believe that we have established structures and processes that will allow us to collect and utilize data to measure the effectiveness of our programs. We are using this data to make improvements to our curriculum.

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

The [1998 report](#) noted student concern with support services on campus. While the team did not identify specific offices or problem areas, they recommended that student perception of support services should be measured regularly and that training in customer relations should be available to all “front line” workers.

In response to those suggestions, the university offered a number of staff development workshops on topics such as “customer service” and “dealing with difficult people” that were designed to improve our ability to respond more effectively to concerns raised by students and others.

We also began the process of regularly surveying students about their perceptions of their campus experiences. In the fall of 1998 and 1999, we utilized the [College Student Experience Questionnaire \(CSEQ\)](#). Since 2002 we have been administering the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) on a biennial basis to assess student perceptions. (See chapter 2c for additional information.) Many of the offices that deal with students have also used individualized questionnaires and other techniques to assess their effectiveness and responsiveness. Based in part on the data from the surveys and questionnaires, we have made structural, operational and personnel changes in the areas of student support. We created the [Office of Enrollment Services](#) to respond to concerns from students and to coordinate the work of several of the student support offices. We also created the [First Year Experience program](#) to enhance student transitions to college and to improve retention. Finally, we reorganized [student affairs](#) operations to enable



us to be more responsive and efficient in our work for and with students.

In December 2006 we worked with Noel-Levitz to administer the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) (SSI) to our freshmen. The [UWRF survey](#) indicated that in almost every area of connection with the university (except for the food in the cafeteria) our students were more satisfied than their peers at other public universities. The [2007 New Student Transition Survey](#) revealed that 94 percent of our new students felt that customer service was a strength of our campus, and 99 percent would recommend UWRF to others.

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

We believe that we have made positive progress in all of the areas of concern cited in the last report: diversity, shared governance, assessment, and student perception of support services. We have significantly expanded our diversity efforts and have taken strong steps to centralize and collect assessment data. Our recent planning efforts have had a high level of governance participation, and we regularly evaluate student perceptions and have made changes in the organization of student support services. However, we are not assuming that we have found permanent solutions and that we can simply move on to other issues. These are ongoing areas of concern for most institutions and will require continuous monitoring and attention.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

The following report is organized to address each of the criteria of the Higher Learning Commission. Each chapter corresponds to one of the major criteria, e.g., chapter one addresses Criterion One: Mission and Integrity.



INTRODUCTION