

Management of Multi-Campus Systems by Top 25 Universities

White Paper

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Washington State University is at a critical juncture in its evolution. The state of Washington has one of the more robust economies in the nation, and since 2014 has yearly experienced a positive net migration in excess of 50,000 people. The state Office of Financial Management expects the state's population to increase by 1.6 million people by 2040. For this rapidly growing population the state provides only six public universities to accommodate the educational needs of its citizens, and only two of those, the University of Washington and WSU, are charged with active engagement in scholarly productivity. Further, WSU alone is directed to employ its expertise in the service of the economic and lifestyle needs of state residents, through its research and its outreach programs.

In the wake of the 2008-09 recession WSU experienced rapid growth in enrollment and now has a record-large student body. As well, the university embarked on an ambitious expansion campaign that resulted in a state-wide footprint, established a world-renowned center for the study of animal-to-human disease transmission, launched a medical school in response to critical statewide shortages in primary care physicians, created a fifth physical campus in Everett, initiated construction of a five-building life sciences complex, and opened a Wine Science Center at the Tri-Cities campus.

WSU has thus made some notable strides in establishing itself as a top-tier public university that remains true to its land-grant mission. However, full movement into this upper echelon requires a reconceptualization of the university that is forward-looking rather than a continuation of "how things have always been done". Our design is an evolutionary holdover from an earlier era, when WSU's goals and ambitions were modest and student body smaller, and our approach to multi-campus education has not been reconsidered in light of today's student body needs, learning technologies and political climate. Our current structure and budget model have led to considerable process redundancies and conflicts, as well as a failure to take full advantage of the expertise and resources that exist across the university system. This in turn prevents us from serving as many students as possible, meeting community needs, and making strategic and intentional resource allocation decisions to advance the research enterprise.

The purpose of this white paper is to review the evolution of WSU's operational system and analyze the systems employed by CMUP top-25 universities that operate multiple campuses. The goal is to identify an organizational structure that allows WSU to operate as a true *system* rather than an historical collection of locations, one that views the university as having distributed expertise that can be easily navigated and accessed by anyone regardless of where the experts reside. The revised structure can facilitate procedural efficiencies by making it easy for all locations to rely upon high-quality core services, thus freeing up resources to be invested in our education, research and extension/outreach missions. Finally, a revised structure will bring WSU into line with cutting-edge academic management practices that allow us to more easily and rapidly respond to the continuously-evolving dynamic of modern higher education. All of this will help WSU more easily strive toward the loftier aspirations that the university holds for academic excellence in our educational, scholarly and extension/outreach pursuits.

## **WSU's Current Structure**

### **WSU's Land-Grant Mission**

The Morrill Act of 1862 defines a land-grant institution as one which is to provide education in agriculture, military science, and engineering, with all students receiving a thorough grounding in the liberal arts and sciences. Further, the institution is to offer this education to all individuals regardless of background, social class, or income. The Second Morrill Act of 1890 extended this openness of admissions to all races and ethnicities. The Hatch Act of 1887 instructed land-grant institutions to conduct agricultural and veterinary research and to maintain agricultural research stations. Finally, the Smith-Lever Act of 1917 established the cooperative extension program, under which land-grant institutions place experts in counties throughout the state who can disseminate information and provide assistance to local residents. To facilitate this work, the federal government grants federal land to the state, to be used for the construction of a campus and establishment of research centers and county offices. While questions can be asked about the 21<sup>st</sup>-century relevance of an educational model that was designed 150 years ago, the land-grant emphasis on access to education for all and positive impact on local communities remains vital, especially for first-generation college students who often need extra supports and guidance. Land-grant institutions are also best positioned to tackle some particularly urgent and complex world problems. Agriculture in arid regions, control of zoonotic diseases, reduction of greenhouse gases in food production, and protection and conservation of groundwater are just a few examples of such problems.

Washington State University is the land-grant institution for the state of Washington. Unlike some schools that have distanced themselves from the mission, the land-grant identity remains core to WSU's functioning, and our achievements are significant. We have a decades-long reputation for development of wheat strains that can grow under a variety of challenging conditions. More recently, among other accomplishments WSU researchers have perfected a test that can determine whether a dog is at risk for adverse reaction to pharmaceutical treatment, established a nationally recognized bread research facility that helps wheat farmers make informed decisions about which varieties to grow, provides a soil testing service to help farmers determine whether their land is suitable for growing particular crops, developed tools and techniques for remote sensing of water and fertilizer needs in crops, and created a web-based pesticide education resource for citizens. On a yearly basis about one-third of WSU's freshman class consists of first-generation college students, and the university provides extensive and all-encompassing support for any student who needs assistance with adjustment to college life. We maintain Extension offices in each of the state's 39 counties and yearly have in excess of 1 million participants in the programs offered through these offices.

Demand for educational access by Washingtonians will by all accounts continue to grow through at least 2040. The state Office of Financial Management expects Washington's population to increase by 1.6 million people between 2020 and 2040, and the educational consulting firm of Ruffalo Noel Levitz predicts Washington to have the fourth-largest increase among all states in high school graduates between 2020 and 2030. WSU must thus anticipate continual and unbroken growth in enrollment. This requires an examination of how the WSU system operates and whether it is optimal for absorbing and accommodating enrollment growth as we continue to invest in our research and extension/outreach missions.

### **WSU's Multi-Campus System**

Washington State University's statewide campus system was established in 1989 under former WSU president Samuel Smith in response to instruction from the state government for WSU and the University of Washington to offer education at multiple locations around the state. WSU located campuses in Vancouver, the Tri-Cities (Richland), and Spokane, with Spokane being a cooperative venture with Eastern Washington University. A campus in Everett was added in 2014. The purpose of these campuses was to bring public education to geographic areas in which such was not readily accessible, and to focus on degree offerings that would be in high demand in those areas. The campuses originally offered upper-division classes only and thus began as destinations for transfer students, which necessitated establishing strong relations with local community colleges. As the original three campuses developed, lower-division and graduate courses were added. Everett remains a transfer campus. Instructional sites now also exist in Bremerton and Yakima. Importantly, while developing the multi-campus system WSU retained its college-based academic structure under which a single department chair or school director is responsible for all faculty in the unit regardless of where they reside, and a single dean is responsible for all units in the college. This means that all faculty, regardless of work location, must meet the same standards for tenure and promotion.

In parallel with the development of these campuses, in the 1990s WSU created a distance degree program under which students anywhere could earn a WSU degree by enrolling in courses for which lectures had been videotaped and were mailed to the student. This program evolved into the internet-based Global Campus, which is the sixth campus in the WSU system.

While degree offerings at the physical campuses have evolved to some extent, the operating and governance structure for a multi-campus system has not, nor has it been reconsidered. As a result, today there is considerable duplication of administrative functions and services. A key idea underlying the multi-campus structure was that, while some courses would be offered by local-campus faculty, others would be delivered by Pullman-based faculty through video technology. The original notion of a multi-campus system was that it would be one WSU faculty supported and managed by college-based academic leadership. In the early days of the multi-campus system, this was indeed done, using the WHETS videoconferencing technology. The technology presented a variety of challenges involving clarity of broadcast and consistency of signal, and so as campuses expanded, the tendency was to add faculty who could offer in person courses that were being taught over WHETS and thus reduce reliance on that system. As such, WSU moved away from, rather than toward, system-wide sharing of instructional expertise, resulting in considerable duplication of course offerings each semester. Some of this duplication may be appropriate to meet student needs and expectations. However, in light of the vast improvement in broadcast technology and generational student change in expectations for technology-supported learning, the current state of affairs should be reevaluated and transitioned to a 21<sup>st</sup> century learner-centered model. A 21<sup>st</sup> century learner-centered model would allow for fluid student movement, leveraging of instructional resources across locations using technology and efficient use of resources by colleges. This would allow the university to expand its offerings and its local reach.

In terms of administrative operational functions, WSU is also essentially unchanged. When the campuses were established, the technology for coordinating personnel and processes was either nonexistent or primitive. Each campus thus had to implement local cells of major academic and nonacademic units that would act as proxies for core, central services. As a result, duplicate and inconsistent administrative and student services are available to faculty and students across the system and the perceived independence of campuses leads to very high coordination costs and significant

inefficiencies. As with instruction, today's technology makes it easy for a single office to manage a process across many locations, regardless where the single office is based. Coordinated central services, no matter where they are based, would allow for significant resources to be freed up to invest in the core academic mission – education, research, outreach/extension.

Finally, the original legislative plan for the multi-campus systems expected that campuses would develop focus areas in accordance with local needs and interests. Once again, in the early days when the campuses were dependent on Pullman for most of their expertise and needing to devote significant resources to provision of basic operational functions, pursuit of degrees and research programs of local interest was challenging. As noted above, a system redesign will free up resources that can be redirected to development of programs that take full advantage of unique local opportunities. Such development will then broaden the expertise across the entire system, allow WSU to establish novel lines of scholarly inquiry, expand local access and build existing lines that hold promise. A fully functioning cross-system instructional model would be student-centered and focused on the learner, allowing students to locate at a convenient campus while still learning from all our experts, regardless of location. Such a model does not have to be limited to electronic access to faculty. Today's student is more mobile than the student of 30 years ago and it is entirely plausible that he/she would be willing to relocate for one or multiple semesters in order to take advantage of a local opportunity at another campus. Unfortunately, the current administrative system works against this by coding each student as a member of a specific campus and providing local services only to students who are identified as members of the local campus. Among other problems, this prevents a student who is a member of one campus from enrolling in a physical course offered at another campus. Once again, in the early days of the multi-campus system this was necessary for coordination of proxy-collected data with central recordkeeping, but today it functions only as an impediment to student access to distributed resources.

The university's current operational structure is thus a hybrid of centralization and independence. Campuses follow a common academic structure, faculty belong to single statewide departments and colleges, and there is a systemwide Faculty Senate that manages the curriculum and faculty issues. All faculty are held to a single set of promotion standards, and tenure-line faculty have a common set of criteria to win tenure. Students must fulfill the same requirements to earn a degree regardless of at which campus they matriculate. Each campus chancellor reports directly to the president. There is no (direct or indirect) reporting line to the provost and no administrator who coordinates across the campuses. This hybrid model produces incentives for campuses to compete for student recruitment, penalizes collaboration across campuses by impacting local budgets when such occurs, encourages the emergence of local "mini-departments" that operate with little input from the academic department proper, and puts personnel in the middle of growing conflicts between university needs and campus needs that are detrimental to faculty and unit success. If, for example, a faculty member would like to move to a different campus that better suits his/her scholarly needs and would be advantageous for the university, a contract transfer may be necessary with corresponding impact on the new campus's budget, and the current campus may be faced with a problematic vacancy in its instructional offerings. Either of these can present a disincentive to support the faculty member's request. These are barriers to multidisciplinary research, enrollment growth, and excellence.

The “Drive to 25” goal is academic excellence, defined by the metrics used by the Center for Measuring University Performance (CMUP).<sup>1</sup> Central to achieving this goal is enhancement of scholarly productivity. As an institution, WSU’s aggregate productivity is low relative to top 25 schools. However, WSU is above average on per-faculty productivity. The issue is not that we need existing faculty to work harder. The issue is that we need to grow the faculty and support our existing research faculty who produce our scholarly work. Our current organizational structure has contributed to hiring practices that are not aligned with the Drive to 25 goal. Since 2014, for every one faculty member who has been hired onto the tenure track, multiple faculty have been hired onto the career track with instruction as the primary responsibility. While the university values the skills that every career-track faculty brings to WSU and we value our teaching mission, this hiring pattern is not consistent with the Drive to 25. If we want to change the trajectory of WSU, we must focus our hiring to intentionally diversify our faculty in ways that advance scholarly productivity. Migrating toward a cross-campus instructional model will allow units to worry less about hiring to cover instructional gaps and allow them to focus on hiring to develop lines of scholarly inquiry.

The analysis that follows resulted from a thorough review of each school in the CMUP Top 25 that maintains multiple campuses. The goal was to determine if there is a dominant management model across these institutions. It will be seen that there are three general approaches to multi-campus system management. All three approaches have much to recommend them, but also some notable drawbacks. As well, the most popular approach is built on a philosophy that is quite different from that informing the other two approaches.

### **Analysis of CMUP Top-25 Multi-Campus Systems**

Twenty schools in the CMUP top 25 have a multi-campus system. The median number of regional campuses is five, with a low of two campuses (seven schools) and a high of 21 campuses (Penn State). Table 1 lists the schools.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that there 43 schools in the CMUP “top 25.” A school qualifies for overall top-25 status if it is in the top 25 on at least one of nine (9) performance metrics tracked by CMUP.

**Table 1**

University*	Number of campuses	Main campus	Regional campuses
California	10	Berkeley	Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara Santa Cruz
Colorado	4	Boulder	Aurora, Colorado Springs, Denver
Connecticut	5	Storrs	Avery Point, Farmington, Hartford, Waterbury
Illinois	3	Urbana-Champaign	Chicago, Springfield
Indiana	9	Bloomington	Columbus, Fort Wayne, Gary, Indianapolis, Kokomo, New Albany, Richmond, South Bend
Maryland	4	College Park	Baltimore, Baltimore County, Princess Anne
Michigan	3	Ann Arbor	Dearborn, Flint
Minnesota	5	Minneapolis	Crookston, Duluth, Morris, Rochester
North Carolina	7	Chapel Hill	Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Pembroke, Wilmington, Winston-Salem
Ohio State	5**	Columbus	Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark
Oklahoma	3	Norman	Oklahoma City, Tulsa
Penn State	22***	University Park	Abington, Altoona, Beaver, Berks, Brandywine, Carlisle, DuBois, Erie, Fayette, Harrisburg, Hazleton, Hershey, Lehigh Valley, McKeesport, Mont Alto, New Kensington, Schuylkill, Scranton, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, York
Pittsburgh	5	Pittsburgh	Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown, Titusville
Purdue	3	West Lafayette	Fort Wayne, Hammond
Rutgers	3	New Brunswick	Camden, Newark
Tennessee	4	Knoxville	Chattanooga, Martin, Memphis
Texas	8	Austin	Arlington, Dallas, El Paso, Permian Basin, Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio, Tyler
Texas A&M	3	College Station	Galveston, Qatar
Washington	3	Seattle	Bothell, Tacoma
Wisconsin	13****	Madison	Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Parkside, Platteville, River Falls, Stevens Point, Stout, Superior, Whitewater

**Notes:**

\*The University of Georgia and Virginia Tech University each operate numerous “learning centers” which focus on professional development and offer a few degrees. These centers are not structured like campuses. Arizona State University and the University of Cincinnati have campuses that are suburban to the main campus. Since they are not geographically dispersed they are not included in this analysis.

\*\*Ohio State University also operates a specialized campus in Wooster (ag tech).

\*\*\*Penn State University also operates a specialized campus in Malvern (professional development).

\*\*\*\*The University of Wisconsin also has 13 sub-regional campuses which operate as satellites of their regional campuses (e.g., UW-Green Bay at Sheboygan).

Indiana, Ohio State, and Penn State offer AA or BAS degrees through at least some of their regional campuses. Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Penn State, and Tennessee have a dedicated health sciences campus within their system.

The twenty schools use a variety of organizational structures to manage their multiple campuses. Table 2 shows the variety of oversight models that are used across the schools.

**Table 2**

Campuses are led by	Reports to system CEO	Reports to system CAO
Local CEO and CAO	8	2
Local CEO	3	3
Director		4

There are three general classes of systems:

- Regional campuses are led by a CEO-CAO tandem who typically report to the system CEO;
- Regional campuses are led by a local CEO (chancellor, president) who may report to either the system CEO or system CAO (provost, vice president for academic affairs); and
- Regional campuses are led by a director-level manager (dean, director, vice provost) who reports to the system CAO.

The following sections elaborate each of these models, review pros and cons, and consider the changes that WSU would need to make if we wanted to implement the system. This analysis is informed by reviews of each institution’s strategic plan, budget model, student recruitment structure, and enrollment numbers. For a few institutions I was also able to have conversations with faculty. Nothing in my analysis should be taken as implied endorsement or rejection of a particular model. Any wording that suggests such is purely accidental.

*Local CEO and CAO Model*

**Schools that employ this model:** University of California, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, University of Wisconsin, University of Illinois, University of Texas, University of Maryland, University of Colorado, Rutgers University, University of Tennessee

**Schools for which the main campus is run by a local CEO and CAO:** University of North Carolina, University of Wisconsin, University of Illinois, University of Texas, Rutgers University, University of Tennessee

**Management:** Under the local CEO/CAO model campuses operate as mostly independent entities. Campuses share a common academic philosophy, adhere to a common set of policies and practices, and have uniform quality standards, but have separate mission statements, independent strategic plans, and different standards for faculty performance. Indeed, in their advertising materials, regional campuses will often point out that, by virtue of being part of the University of...system, students are assured of receiving an education that meets a high level of quality. The independence often includes different



nicknames and school colors. At the majority (60%) of schools the campus at which the system CEO resides is also managed by a local CEO and CAO; the system CEO has no special responsibilities to that location. Basically, campuses function as franchises of a parent organization and the goal is to replicate the educational experience regardless of where the campus is located.

**Faculty:** Faculty are members of independent units that are housed within independent colleges. Each campus has a separate Faculty Senate and Faculty Manual. Most institutions also have some type of systemwide faculty body consisting of representatives of the campus senates that meets regularly with the system CEO and evaluates new degree proposals to ensure they meet system quality standards. Tenure and promotion standards are determined separately at each campus, with the caveat that they must be consistent with system quality standards. The local CEO is responsible for making final T&P recommendations to the system CEO.

**Academics:** Campuses are free to develop and structure degrees as they see fit, though as with tenure and promotion, curricula and degree requirements must adhere to system quality standards. As an example of the independence this model affords, the University of Michigan – Flint touts that local industry is actively involved in the development of curriculum and that experiential learning, in the form of involvement in the problems that the city of Flint faces, is a key part of their programs.

**Budget:** Each campus has its own budget. Budgets are managed locally but a system finance manager has oversight of all budgets and campuses must follow system policies for financial management. All research-related income and expenditures remain at the investigator’s campus.

#### **Pros of the Local CEO and CAO Model:**

- The regional campus has the autonomy to develop programs and initiatives that are tailored to the needs and interests of local students and the community.
- Despite campuses operating as independent entities, the system provides quality standards and benchmarks that guarantee students a uniform caliber of degree regardless of where they enroll.
- Quality standards also ensure uniformity of faculty scholarly productivity.
- The system CAO has no responsibility for evaluation of faculty across locations. This should make the faculty evaluation process simpler and more straightforward and allows the system CAO to focus on implementation of best practices across the system. In effect the system CAO becomes chief quality control officer.
- The system CEO will often have no campus management responsibilities. This gives the person greater flexibility to pursue systemwide development opportunities.
- This model moves away from the notion of a “mothership” campus with inferior satellites and highlights the impact and quality of each campus location.

#### **Cons of the Local CEO and CAO Model:**

- Collaboration and synergies across campuses is difficult and requires considerable effort. As an example, the University of California has launched a “global food initiative” that is ostensibly a multi-campus collaborative but is primarily a set of working groups staffed by representatives of each campus.

- Students are unable to easily, or perhaps at all, take advantage of expertise at campuses other than their own.
- Campuses can end up in direct competition for students. In some cases this is evident in the advertising materials for regional campuses, which sometimes tout the opportunity to receive a more personalized education than would be received at a larger campus.
- Faculty have no easy way to relocate to another campus within the system. Independence of budgets and differences in performance expectations effectively means that they person is seeking to move to a different institution.
- Overall this model goes against the notion of systemness and, as mentioned earlier, operates as an educational franchise. It thus represents a different philosophy than that which underlies the next two models.

### *Local CEO Model*

**Schools that employ this model:** University of Washington, University of Pittsburgh, Purdue University, Indiana University, University of Oklahoma, University of Minnesota

**Management:** Under the local CEO model regional campuses are considered partially independent. Perhaps the best description of the structure is that used by Indiana, which refers to their regional campuses as operating under a “two-identity” model. The local CEO is empowered to make decisions related to campus development and operations, but the system CAO is ultimately responsible for faculty and academic issues at all locations. The regional campuses are operated as having a stronger emphasis on education and a weaker emphasis on research than the main campus.

**Faculty:** Faculty are members of independent units though those units are often organized as multidisciplinary schools or divisions rather than departments. Faculty participate in both a systemwide Faculty Senate and some form of campus governance. Tenure and promotion standards have some degree of uniformity across the system, but standards for regional faculty are tailored to reflect the regional campus emphasis on education. The system CAO makes the final recommendation on T&P at all schools except Indiana, where each campus has its own decision process.

**Academics:** Regional campuses develop a slate of degrees with the intent of offering educational breadth similar to the main campus. There is, however, an expectation that the regional campus will emphasize degrees that are of especial interest to the local community. Core degree requirements are generally uniform across campuses but each campus has the ability to modify specific requirements. The common core requirements allow students to easily transfer to other campuses in the system. Variability in upper-division requirements requires that diplomas be indicated as having been earned from the regional campus rather than from the system (e.g., a degree will state that the student earned it from Purdue University – Fort Wayne rather than from Purdue). The regional campuses often advertise themselves as a liberal-arts-style institution that offers unusual breadth of academics and opportunity. Student recruitment is handled separately by each campus. In some cases, the regional campuses will have unique nicknames and school colors.

**Budget:** Operational budgets are centralized, with states providing a single operational allocation and the universities then distributing money to the regional campuses using a variety of methods. Each

campus augments its operational budget through its own development office. Research grants are managed locally and F&A fees typically remain with the regional campus. Tuition is typically differential across campuses and financial aid is administered locally.

#### **Pros of the Local CEO Model:**

- The regional campus has the ability to propose programs and initiatives that are tailored to the needs and interests of local students and the community.
- Because the operational budget is centralized and state funds are secured by the system CEO, the local CEO can concentrate on developmental fundraising.
- Regional faculty have the ability to tailor a degree in ways that their facilities can accommodate and that fits the philosophy of the local community. As an example, the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown requires its civil engineering majors to learn surveying, but the main campus does not.
- A tailored approach to tenure and promotion accommodates faculty whose expertise is necessary at a regional campus but whose scholarly work is challenging to conduct at that campus.
- A centralized budget makes faculty migration to another campus easy from the financial standpoint.

#### **Cons of the Local CEO Model:**

- Campuses can end up competing for the same students and the same development dollars.
- There is the potential for conflict between the local CEO and system CAO over the need for a degree at a particular location. The local CEO may see immediate local demand for the degree while the system CAO may feel the degree does not fit into the system's overall educational philosophy.
- There can be unnecessary duplication of administrative processes that are easily centralized. Some institutions have addressed this by developing a separate, overarching strategic plan for their regional campuses as a whole which delineates processes that are shared across campuses and processes that are executed at each campus (e.g., Indiana's "Blueprint" plan).
- Differing degree requirements means that each campus needs a unique IPEDS number.
- Faculty, especially those eligible for promotion, can face conflicts between meeting system-level needs and campus-level needs. A side effect of this conflict is a potential dampening effect on the scholarly productivity of regional campus faculty.
- Regional campuses having academic units that are independent of the main-campus unit can pose a barrier to faculty relocation. The unit at the new location will likely need to evaluate the person's fit and ability to meet the locally-modified performance standards.

#### *Director Model*

**Schools that employ this model:** Ohio State University, Texas A&M University, Penn State University, University of Connecticut

**Management:** Under the director model regional campuses are considered mostly or entirely extensions of the main campus. Ohio State and Penn State have executive directors who oversee all regional campuses, report to the system CAO, and appoint regional directors who handle daily operations at the campuses. Texas A&M and Connecticut do not employ an executive director and instead have the regional campus directors report directly to the system CAO.

**Faculty:** Faculty are members of a single Faculty Senate and usually have some degree of connection to their academic department on the main campus. Texas A&M does maintain fully independent departments at each of their two regional campuses, but this is necessitated by one of their campuses being located overseas. Tenure and promotion standards are uniform across locations.

**Academics:** Degrees are offered through the regional campuses that cater to local need and demand, and Ohio State and Penn State partner with local community colleges to also offer AA degrees. Curricula and degree requirements are uniform across locations. Student recruitment is centralized and student movement between all locations is easy. Indeed, students who enroll at one campus and find it to not meet their needs are encouraged to simply move to a different campus within the system. The movement is automatic if the student wishes to migrate from the main campus to a regional campus. Students who would like to go from a regional campus to the main campus may be required to meet an academic performance criterion in order to do so, but this criterion is often nothing more than to be in good academic standing after earning a certain number of credit hours.

**Budget:** Regional campuses request operating money from central administration and have local finance officers who administer the money. Policy is generally to fully fund regional campus requests. The main campus receives all tuition as well as all F&A generated by regional campus faculty, and in this way makes up for any shortfall that results from full funding of the regional campuses. Tuition is often differential between the campuses with the regional campuses charging less than the main campus. Student financial aid and scholarships are managed centrally, though some systems do also provide competitive local scholarships that have been endowed by regional supporters.

#### **Pros of the Director Model:**

- It highlights the system-ness of the institution and emphasizes its role in meeting the needs of the state. As an example, Penn State refers to all its campuses, including the main campus, as “commonwealth campuses.”
- Because students are enrolled into the system, not to a specific campus, they are afforded maximum flexibility to take advantage of the benefits of each location. Not only can students easily migrate to the campus that best meets their academic and personal needs, they can move back and forth between locations, taking courses at any location at any time.
- Similarly, faculty can easily migrate between campuses and locate at the campus that best suits their needs.
- The nature of the regional campuses is such that they provide a gentle onramp for students who desire the full range of opportunities offered by the institution but for whatever reason are not prepared to immediately matriculate to a large campus.
- Faculty are not confronted with conflicting demands between the system and the location. Because the regional campuses are not independently managed, there is no need for regional directors to engage their faculty in activities that impact only that campus.

- Assuming good financial planning, regional campuses have annual budget certainty.

#### **Cons of the Director Model:**

- Regional campuses have little flexibility to react quickly to an immediate local educational need.
- Faculty at regional campuses work under the same scholarly expectations as faculty at the main campus but may not have access to the resources needed to perform at that level. This could be a particular issue for laboratory-based faculty who need access to specialized equipment and technical staff. Some institutions address this by providing dedicated lab space on the main campus to regional faculty, but this is practical only when travel from the regional to main campus is easy.
- A uniform set of degree requirements means that students need to have the same experience in a class regardless of at what location it occurs. However, regional campuses may not always have the facilities or technology to provide an experience that compares to that provided by the main campus.

#### **Application to WSU**

The reader will have realized that WSU's management structure does not emulate any of these models. It is perhaps best described as fitting between the Director model and Local CEO model. This section presents scenarios that would likely result from WSU moving fully to each of the models described previously.

##### *Local CEO and CAO Model at WSU*

Adoption of the Local CEO and CAO model would require a fundamental shift in WSU's philosophy away from the "one university geographically dispersed" approach and toward a franchise-style approach under which the WSU brand on a campus conveys a particular level of quality, but the campus is completely free to develop as it sees fit, so long as it meets those quality standards. There would be significant transition costs as campuses create academic units to organize faculty and coordinate degree offerings and hire leaders to manage those units. Each campus would require separate accreditation and there would be costs associated with that process. Faculty would need to create degree requirements, tenure and promotion standards, and establish a shared governance structure, though at least initially these could simply be mimicked from the Pullman campus. There is also the considerable issue of how to accommodate faculty who would wish to remain affiliated with their Pullman-based academic unit.

On the positive side, the local CEO/CAO model would give locations maximum flexibility to respond quickly to emerging local demand for educational opportunities, and they would be able to tailor degrees to meet the needs of their local constituencies. Indeed, campuses could more easily develop their own unique identities that would facilitate statewide and regional recruitment. This would replace the idea that a Washingtonian can earn the same WSU degree from any one of many locations with the idea that the person can earn a WSU-caliber degree that has unique features depending on where it is offered. Regarding faculty, under this model they would not have to deal with potential conflicts between campus and unit needs and junior faculty would have their unit leaders daily present to help mentor them.

Under this model, the campus CEOs would likely report to the WSU president. This is not a uniform approach but seems a clear best practice.

#### *Local CEO Model at WSU*

A few elements of this model are already in place at WSU, most notably that our chancellors work in concert with the provost to offer degrees and that the provost has responsibility for all faculty in the system. Also, faculty at Vancouver and Tri-Cities have local governance bodies that serve as a conduit to campus leadership. Migration to this model would present some of the same hurdles that were identified for the Local CEO/CAO model, though overall this would be an easier model to implement. Strictly speaking this model would also require us to move away from the “one university geographically dispersed” concept. However, because campuses would only be able to make small modifications to degree requirements, the core idea of this concept, namely that the content of the degree is the same regardless of from where it is earned, would remain.

The most major change would be centralization of budgets. Campuses would have some ability to generate discretionary funds but operational budgets would be administered through a central office. This is necessary to allow for easy movement of students and personnel to different locations but would be a marked shift from current practice for the Vancouver and Tri-Cities campuses. Centralization would, however, eliminate duplicative functions at the regional campuses, and the money currently allocated to those endeavors could instead be applied to campus development projects. A centralized budget also simplifies the process by which faculty can relocate to the campus that best meets their scholarly needs.

Whether the campus CEOs would report to the WSU president or provost is an open question. Of the six schools that employ this model, there is no obvious distinction between those that have the campus CEOs report to the system CEO (Minnesota, Purdue, Oklahoma) and those that make the reporting line to the CAO (Washington, Pittsburgh, Indiana).

#### *Local Director Model at WSU*

This model is the most similar to how WSU currently conceives of its campuses, though there are important differences. In particular, the Director model conceives of regional campuses as feeders for the main campus as well as degree-conferring locations. Under the Director model, students would apply to WSU as a system and the institution would help them determine at which location they should initially enroll. Students would then be able to move freely among locations as their interests evolve and needs change. As faculty are members of system-wide academic units, the student’s experience is the same regardless of where it occurs. This model offers us the ability to quickly relocate students who feel out of place at their current campus and to be able to advise students of unique opportunities available through other campuses.

As with the Local CEO model, budgets would be centralized under the Director model. This would free up significant resources for Vancouver and Tri-Cities, but unlike under the Local CEO model, those campuses would be less free to invest those resources in novel ways. This model would likely necessitate forging closer, more formal relationships with local community colleges. It is also the case that more direct care would need to be devoted to faculty at regional campuses. They would be held to the same standards for tenure and promotion as faculty at the main campus, but in many cases would

be working with less resources. In theory this extra care should be present under our current structure, but it is inconsistent in practice.

Under the Director model, the campus directors would report to the WSU provost.

### **Conclusion**

WSU's approach to multi-campus management can best be described as a coincidental hybrid of other models being employed at top-25 universities. WSU could thus consider fully adopting the principles of any one of these models. Regardless of which was chosen, some areas of the institution would experience a profound change in operations, while others would likely notice little disruption. It is nonetheless suggested that WSU would benefit from migrating to one of these models in order to adopt a best-practice approach to multi-campus governance.