

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH THE INSTITUTE FOR FINANCIAL LITERACY

Western Connecticut State University proposes to establish an Institute for Financial Literacy. The Institute will provide opportunities for the WCSU students to learn, acquire, and practice the skills and knowledge that are essential for the successful management of their financial resources. The Institute will be housed in the Ansell School of Business.

Numerous surveys and studies demonstrate that college students know very little about managing their money or about the consequences of their financial decisions. On average, students score between 50% and 60% on tests of general financial knowledge. Additionally, a recent study at the University of Arizona illustrates that students who engage in unsound financial decision making practices are less likely to return to college or to graduate than students who engage in sound decision making practices. These trends, as well as the fact that the average college student graduates with \$20,000 in debt in an increasingly uncertain economy, clearly illustrate the need to provide our students with the ability to make sound financial decisions.

Through the generosity of Union Savings Bank the University will have an initial gift of \$90,000 to establish the Institute. Major programs supported by this gift include the following:

- The creation of a financial counseling and learning center where students can seek help with their financial questions in a private and supporting environment
- The sponsorship of modules and workshops devoted to the major areas of financial decision making
- The sponsorship of a lecture series which will bring leaders in the financial services industry to WCSU

The Institute will firmly establish WCSU as a leader in the field of financial literacy education and greatly contribute to our students' well being and their ability to plan for and achieve important financial milestones in their lives. It will expose them to the best practices in the field of personal finance.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Institute for Financial Literacy at Western Connecticut State University

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

1. To provide WCSU students with the general knowledge and practical experience in the effective management of personal finances by providing skills needed to cope with the financial challenges of today's rapidly changing world.
2. Offer workshops and modules that provide exposure and training in the subject matter and behaviors that lead to financial well being.
3. Offer peer to peer workshops in which students are trained to help their fellow students make responsible financial decisions.
4. Sponsor a financial speaker lecture series in which students and the WCSU community meet with and learn from leaders in the financial services industry.
5. Establish a financial counseling and learning center where students can ask questions about finance, seek counseling, and learn how to plan for their financial futures.
6. Establish a website that provides linkages to resources that will enable users to expand and supplement their knowledge of sound financial management principles.

ARTICLE III - OPERATIONS

1. The Institute for Financial Literacy may solicit and receive grants and accept contracts, donations, and endowments from the public and private sectors consistent with its objectives and with state and university policies and procedures.
2. Funds received from grants, donations and/or endowments will be deposited in an account administered by the university and its Foundation. Expenditure of such funds will be at the discretion of the Director upon approval by the Advisory Committee and the Dean.
3. Expenditures may include payment to the Director and student employees and others delivering services to the Institute and/or its clients.

ARTICLE IV – GOVERNANCE AND RULES OF ORDER

1. The Institute shall be administered by a Director, who shall report to the Dean of the Ansell School of Business and work under the guidance of an Advisory Committee.
2. The Committee shall consist of eleven (11) voting members:
 - a. The Director
 - b. The Dean of the Ansell School of Business
 - c. A Representative from the Ansell School of Business, appointed by the Dean of the Ansell School of Business
 - d. A Representative from the School of Arts and Sciences, appointed by the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

- e. A Representative from the School of Professional Studies, appointed by the Dean of the School of Professional Studies
 - f. A Representative from the School of Visual and Performing Arts, appointed by the Dean of the School of Visual and Performing Arts
 - g. A Representative from the Division of Student Affairs, appointed by the Vice President of Student Affairs
 - h. Two (2) students, appointed by the SGA
 - i. Two (2) representatives from the external community appointed by the President
3. The term of office of each elected or appointed member shall be two years, with overlapping terms. Members may serve a maximum of two terms.
 4. As appropriate, the Director may invite persons from outside the university to participate in Committee meetings on a non-voting basis.
 5. The Board shall be regulated in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, and all other proceedings shall be governed by the bylaws.

ARTICLE V – QUORUM

1. At meetings of the Advisory Committee, a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. Unfilled positions shall not count toward quorum.
2. A majority vote of those present and voting, provided a quorum is present, shall be necessary to carry any motion made.

ARTICLE VI – THE DIRECTOR

1. The Director shall have professional credentials appropriate for administrative leadership in the field of financial literacy and will be hired from the external community.
2. The Director shall be appointed by the Dean of the Ansell School of Business for a minimum term of one year upon recommendation of the Advisory Committee.
3. The Director shall be responsible for the administration of the Institute. He/she shall work with participating academic departments and other university and community constituencies to plan and implement programs appropriate to the Institute's mission and purpose.
4. The Director shall prepare a budget for the Institute and shall present it to the Advisory Committee at the annual meeting. Said budget will include the estimated costs of operating and administering each Institute program and estimated revenue from endowment and all other sources in support of the Institute and its programs.
5. The Director shall be fiscal agent for the Institute. With the approval of the Advisory Committee and the Dean, he/she shall be authorized to sign for disbursement of funds from Institute accounts.

6. The Director shall prepare for presentation to the Advisory Committee at its annual meeting a report of the programs, events, and services provided by the Institute during the previous year. A copy of this report shall be sent to the university Senate.
7. Clerical support for the Director will be provided by the office of the Dean of the Ansell School of Business.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

1. The Advisory Committee shall meet at least twice annually, with the Annual Meeting to be held in May.
2. Special meetings may be held at the request of the Director, the Dean, or any six (6) voting members of the Committee, provided that all members receive a notice at least 72 hours prior to such a meeting and the agenda is announced in the meeting call.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

1. Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of Advisory Committee members present at any meeting, provided that members were notified of the proposed amendment at the previous meeting.
2. Amended bylaws must be approved by the University Senate.