



Exhibit 6.4.a.1

NEASC Standard III Organization and Governance

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Description

Higher Education in Connecticut

The State of Connecticut has eighteen public institutions of higher education: the University of Connecticut, including its branches; the Connecticut State Universities (CSU), which include Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western Connecticut State Universities (Western); twelve Community Colleges; and Charter Oak College.

Until recently, a Board of Trustees (BOT) governed Western and its sister CSU campuses. In 2010, the Connecticut Legislature established a Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to replace the BOT, effective July 1, 2011 (see Appendix: Standard III: 1). The BOR formally replaced the BOT in January 2012 (see Appendix: Standard III: 2).

Board of Regents

The BOR governs seventeen Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU): Charter Oak State College (an on-line college), twelve Community Colleges, and the four CSUs (including Western). The powers and duties of the BOR are prescribed by statutes and further delineated in policies adopted by the BOR. The fifteen voting members of the BOR include nine gubernatorial appointees, four appointed by legislative leadership, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) to the BOR. The four non-voting BOR members are Commissioners of State agencies. BOR members and their competencies can be found on the BOR website (see Appendix: Standard III: 3). BOR members are required to adhere to the State of Connecticut's Code of Ethics for Public Officials.

The official duties of the BOR include establishing tuition costs, student fees, and financial aid policies. The BOR reviews and approves new programs and, in conjunction with representatives from the ConnSCU campuses, conducts searches for Presidents of the individual campuses. In addition, the BOR is active in developing and coordinating policies for higher education in the State of Connecticut. The BOR is charged with reviewing, approving and maintaining the individual missions of the ConnSCU campuses. The BOR requested Vision and Mission statements from all ConnSCU campuses to use when writing their own mission statement.

The BOR meets regularly in accordance with a schedule established and published on their website. Minutes of past meetings and additional information can also be found on the BOR website. The BOR has a SAC and a Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) (1). One student from each of the ConnSCU campuses serves on the SAC (elected by their respective student government associations (SGA)). The FAC consists of seven faculty members elected by their respective Senates: three from the CSUs (with one alternate), three from the Community Colleges (with one alternate), and one from Charter Oak College (with one alternate).

The first President of the BOR, Dr. Robert A. Kennedy, resigned in October, 2012; Dr. Philip E. Austin, former President of the University of Connecticut, is currently serving as the interim BOR President. A

BOR Search Committee is in the process of conducting a search for a new BOR President; a System-wide Advisory Committee consisting of thirty- six ConnSCU representatives is assisting in the search. Since the BOR is so new, development and insurance of its own effectiveness has not been established.

Western Connecticut State University

Dr. James W. Schmotter has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of Western since August 1, 2004. He is the official spokesperson for the University on policy and other University matters and reports directly to the President of the BOR. Seven people report directly to the University President: the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, The Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, the Chief Information Officer (Information Technology & Innovation), and the Chief Diversity Officer in charge of Multicultural Affairs and Affirmative Action. The Faculty Handbook, revised annually, clearly describes the authority, responsibilities and relationships of the BOR and the administration, faculty and staff at Western (see Appendix: Standard III: 3). A Risk Management Committee and Campus Emergency Team also report to the President to ensure that the institution's fiduciary responsibility is met.

New administrative hires include an Associate Vice Provost, four new permanent rather than interim Deans and a Director of Grants and Research.

Evaluating and monitoring Western's effectiveness is a charge given to the BOR in the Connecticut General Statutes. A yearly evaluation of Western's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was conducted by the BOT in the past. Part of this evaluation included an annual survey given to faculty and staff and Western that dealt with organizational and presidential effectiveness. It is expected that the BOR will continue this practice.

President (Chief Executive Officer): The President meets weekly with the Vice Presidents and the Associate Vice Presidents during the academic year. The President's Cabinet (composed of the Vice Presidents, the Academic Deans, the Dean of Students, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of Admissions, the Police Chief, the Director of Athletics, the Director of Affirmative Action and Multicultural Affairs, the Controller and the Director of Development) meets monthly. In addition, the President annually attends at least one faculty meeting of each School within the University, and he meets on an as-needed basis with the leadership of the Collective Bargaining Units within the University. The President also regularly seeks advice through attendance and engagement at many of the University Planning and Budget Committee (UPBC) and University Senate meetings.

The President interacts with students at club events, student performances and athletic events. He meets with the leadership of the SGA, the Pan Hellenic Council and the President's Athletic Advisory Council, which he established in 2005. All students are invited to attend monthly "Pizza with the President" focus group sessions; between twenty and sixty students usually attend each of these events.

Additionally, the President meets regularly with the Foundation Board, its Budget and Investment Committee, and the Alumni Association Board. He is readily accessible to all campus constituents via email or personal appointments.

Upon arriving at Western, President Schmotter initiated steps that led to the formation of a Strategic Plan, the basis of planning at our University. In 2004-2005, the Values and Visions process (a series of interviews with representative constituents of the university) was accomplished; results were shared with the University community and analyzed by an Extended President's Advisory Committee and the UPBC. In 2005, five action teams were formed to focus on strategic enrollment management, student success, comparative advantage, summer and intersession activities, and community partnerships, respectively. In 2006, a Strategic Planning Steering Committee (consisting of the co-chairs of the Action Teams) was

formed to draft a Strategic Plan. After input from the university community, including discussions at the Student Government Association and the University Senate meetings, the Strategic Plan draft was revised and, on March 28, 2007, was unanimously endorsed by the University Senate. Major university decisions, including budget decisions and university hiring, are guided by the Strategic Plan.

A Faculty-Staff survey was given in Spring 2012 to assess the perceptions of faculty and staff in a number of areas. A majority of faculty and staff believe that Western's vision and mission statements and strategic plan are used as a basis for priorities in staffing (74.5% and 64.2%, respectively), enrollment goals (79.6% and 73.3%), and planning for the future (89.8% and 83.1%, respectively) (see Appendix: Standard III: 4).

Division of Academic Affairs: The Division of Academic Affairs is headed by a Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) who serves as the Chief Academic and Executive Officer for the University. The Provost/VPAA integrates and coordinates the academic activities of the schools and departments and makes recommendations to the President. She is responsible for academic assessment, coordinating the academic activities of departments and schools within the university, supervising academic personnel, allocating resources, executing Western's strategic plan, implementing both quality assurance and university policies, serving as a student advocate, and promoting the university to the public. The Provost/VPAA is responsible for overseeing Media Services, Library Services, Institutional Research and Assessment, International Services, Sponsored Research and Administrative Services, the Advisement Center, Enrollment Management (Admissions, Registrar's Office, Student Financial Services), and External Programs; the latter two (Enrollment Management and External Programs) are under the purview of the Associate VPAA who reports directly to the Provost/VPAA.

The University is divided into four schools and one Division: the Ansell School of Business, the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Professional Studies, the School of Visual and Performing Arts, and the Division of Graduate and External Programs. Each school has its own Dean.

Through the Graduate Division, the University is authorized to award Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Business Administration, Master of Health Education, and two Doctorate in Education degrees. All graduate programs have a Coordinator who reports to their respective School Dean.

Western has three external programs: two undergraduate degree-completing programs (Management and Nursing) and one master's degree (Health Administration) program offered in Waterbury, CT. The Associate VPAA oversees these programs.

Shared Governance: Western operates under an effective system of shared governance. Students, faculty, staff and administrators have multiple opportunities to express their opinions and contribute to decisions being made at the University through participation in or by attendance at committees, the University Senate and the SGA. Participation is possible at the BOR level through the SAC, FAC and attendance at BOR meetings.

The faculty at Western are represented by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The faculty contract guarantees academic freedom and outlines the faculty's professional rights and responsibilities. The other campus bargaining units include State University Organization of Administrative Faculty, Administrative and Residual, Protective Services, Maintenance and Service Unit, and the Administrative Clerical Bargaining Unit.

Western has a University Senate (as opposed to a Faculty Senate). The University Senate represents all professional employees (except the President); it was established in 1968 and last reorganized in 1991. Senators include one faculty member from each academic department, one librarian, one counselor, two administrators (level I - VII), two representatives from the Deans and Vice Presidents (only one of whom

is a voting member), and one representative of the SGA. All senators serve a two-year term and are either elected by their departments or serve on a rotational basis. Changes in policies at the university level are required to go through the Senate. In addition, the Senate serves as a forum for discussion of issues relating to the university. All Senate meetings are open meetings, and all professional employees at Western can raise issues or express concerns and opinions at the Senate. Senate resolutions that are passed are forwarded to the President of the University for approval. The Senate has two procedural committees (the Agenda and the Nominations and Election Committees) and seventeen standing committees. Committee membership is mixed (administrators, faculty and students), and most people serving on committees are elected to their positions. Through many of these committees (such as the Academic Leave Committee, the Assessment Committee, the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUCAS), the Graduate Council, the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Terminations and Appeals Committee, and the UPBC), faculty, staff and students participate in shared governance (see Appendix: Standard III: 5).

The University President, Provost/VPAA, and other Vice Presidents attend Senate on a regular basis. These administrative personnel provide information for and/or engage in discussion with Senators on activities and issues important to our University. They also use Senate to provide input and direction on like issues. The administration has sought Senate's help and guidance in forming key committees such as search committees, a Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) initiated by the BOR, and Distance Learning.

Western's representatives to the BOR's FAC and SAC are either Western Senators or they attend the University Senate meetings on a regular basis. These representatives inform Senate of activities and issues occurring at the level of the BOR. They also serve as Western's voice to the BOR.

In February 1988, the University Senate established the position of Ombudsman in response to a recommendation of then President Dr. Roach. The Ombudsman is an AAUP member who is elected for a two-year term and can represent AAUP faculty, Administrative Faculty, and/or students. Students participate in shared governance through the SGA, their representative on the University Senate, service on eleven of the standing committees of the Senate, participation on some departmental committees, and their representative on the SAC. Students residing on campus also express their needs and concerns through the Residence Hall Council. A Vice President for Student Affairs and a Dean of Student Affairs are available to assist and guide students.

Curriculum and Programs: The CSU-AAUP (Connecticut State University - American Association of University Professors) Collective Bargaining Agreement stipulates that the faculty within a department control the courses and curriculum of that department. Each school has its own curriculum committee, and there are two University-wide curriculum committees: CUCAS for undergraduate curriculum and the Graduate Council for graduate curriculum. At the May 2012 University Senate meeting, a resolution was passed making it easier for departments to make minor curriculum changes. For example, a change in the title of the course will now go directly from the department to the Provost/VPAA, thus bypassing the UPBC, the School Program Review Committee and the UPBC (see Appendix: Standard III: 6). Many departments at Western offer distance education courses. Currently, a policy statement for such courses does not exist, but the Distance Education Committee is developing a statement for submission to the University Senate for discussion.

The program review process is detailed in the Faculty Handbook. In 2007, it was established that all academic programs were to be reviewed every ten years. In Spring 2012, the time period of ten years was shortened to seven years; this change has been approved by CUCAS, the Graduate Council, the UPBC, the University Senate, and the President of Western (see Appendix: Standard III: 7). The President or a designee of the President can award reassigned time to faculty for activities related to program review.

By May 1 of each year, the Provost/VPAA will announce which programs will be evaluated the following year. Departments that are undergoing program review meet with the Provost/VPAA to discuss the review process and then elect a Departmental Program Review Committee (DPRC); the DPRC can be composed of all faculty members or a subset of faculty in the department. The DPRC conducts and writes an internal review, including an action plan, based on the criteria listed in the Faculty Handbook. The DPRC recommends appropriate people to serve as external evaluators. The respective Dean, in consultation with the Provost/VPAA, selects a maximum of two external evaluators who read the self-study, conduct an on-site visit (if so requested), and write a report which is submitted to the respective Dean and the DPRC. If necessary, the DPRC revises their action plan based on the comments of the external evaluators and submits the revised plan to the Dean. After writing a summary statement, the Dean submits the self-study to the Provost/VPAA who reviews the material and forwards it to CUCAS (undergraduate programs) or the Graduate Council (graduate programs). These committees review the document and make recommendations to the Provost/VPAA who, in turn, makes recommendations to the DPRC and, if necessary, to the university community.

Program discontinuance can be initiated by a department (or departments if the program is interdisciplinary), CUCAS (undergraduate programs), the Graduate Council (graduate programs), the University Senate or the University President. If initiated by the department(s) or the President, the request for discontinuance must be submitted in writing to CUCAS or the Graduate Council. CUCAS or the Graduate Council review the request and assess the effect of program discontinuance in terms of student impact, accreditation, certification, licensure, faculty positions, budget issues, and other programs. CUCAS or the Graduate Council sends its recommendation to the University Senate which, in turn, considers the issue. Within sixty days of the submission of the written request for program discontinuance, the University Senate sends its recommendation to the University President who, in turn, informs the University Senate and the BOR of his decision (see Appendix: Standard III: 8).

Programs that trend toward lowering enrollments can be evaluated according to procedures outlined in section 5.18 (Programmatic Adjustment and Redeployment) of the CSU-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement. This evaluation can be initiated by the President alone or by the President and the Curriculum Committee.