

**Western Rising**  
**A New Direction for the Future**  
**Strategic Plan 2024 – 2030**

Dear DEI and Belonging Subcommittee members:

The strategic planning process is moving to Phase II- Envisioning Our Future. During this phase the various subcommittees will meet with university and community stakeholders to develop the critical goals and objectives that stem from the strategic priorities identified through community participation during Phase I.

From the recently completed activities of Phase I- mission/vision/values survey, the strategic planning launch session led by the president, and the open forums, the following have emerged as the six key strategic priority areas: **a) Reframing of the mission, vision, and values; b) Continuous pursuit of academic excellence and student support services; c) Advancing institutional culture that reflects transparency and collaborative decision making; d) Securing sustainable and thriving financial vitality; e) Promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and f) Contributing to local and regional community building by strengthening partnerships.**

Please find below information pertaining to your subcommittee and assigned tasks for Phase II of the process.

**Strategic Priority area(s): DEI and Belonging**

As Western Connecticut State University embarks on its Strategic Planning Exercise, the role of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI), and Belonging Subcommittee is more critical than ever. Our institution stands at a pivotal juncture, where our actions and decisions can significantly influence our community's fabric, ensuring it is reflective of our shared values of inclusivity, respect, and equity.

**Charge:**

The DEI and Belonging Subcommittee charge, as a vital component of this strategic planning process, is to lead with vision and commitment toward embedding DEI and belonging into every aspect of our university's culture and operations. This mission is not only about meeting benchmarks but fostering a genuine culture where every member feels valued, understood, and included.

Specifically, the subcommittee will help develop a strategic framework that outlines a clear vision, and actionable goals and initiatives designed to foster a more inclusive and equitable campus environment. This framework should address recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students, inclusive curriculum development, and the promotion of an inclusive campus culture.

Create a blueprint for the implementation of the DEI framework, including timelines, responsible parties, and metrics for success. This plan should also consider sustainable practices that ensure the long-term incorporation of DEI principles in university operations.

Recommend strategies to enhance engagement with diverse communities within and surrounding our university.

Identify mechanisms for regularly monitoring and evaluating the progress of DEI initiatives.

**Deliverables:** A draft document at the end of this phase that covers the following:

- a. A draft DEI and Belonging vision for the university
- b. Goals based on the draft vision
- c. Objectives for each of the goals identified
- d. Key activities and tactical strategies to achieve the objectives and goals
- e. Identify organizational units responsible for implementation of the key tactical strategies

**Key expected steps:** To complete its work, the subcommittee will undertake the following activities:

- a. Hold timely subcommittee meetings for discussions and ideation
- b. Conduct two open forums to seek stakeholders' input and guidance on the assigned strategic priority areas
- c. Launch a survey to seek stakeholders' input
- d. Consult the office of Institutional Research and Assessment for institutional data needs that will inform the work of the subcommittee
- e. Prepare a draft summary document outlining the findings from the forums, surveys, and discussions

Your work will lay the foundation for a more inclusive, equitable, and vibrant university community. It is an opportunity to lead with empathy, courage, and innovation, making lasting changes that will impact our university for generations to come.

I trust your dedication and expertise to guide Western Connecticut State University toward a future where diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are not just goals but realities that define our identity and strength.

Thank you for your commitment to this crucial endeavor.

Warm Regards,  
Manohar Singh