

October 2009

Academic & ideas

issues *ideas*

*Notes from the Wichita State University
Office of Academic Affairs and Research*



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For the latest information and
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www.wichita.edu/provost



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WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY

RESHAPING *Wichita State for the future*

The economic turbulence of our time, shifting public attitudes on higher education, increasing competition and the opportunities presented by new and emerging partnerships have created a pressing need for us to freshly consider the academic programs at Wichita State, the state's only urban serving research university. This fall, the Division of Academic Affairs and Research has undertaken the process of *Reshaping for the Future*. I want to tell you about the steps underway and enlist your assistance in this important process.

Why now?

State general fund support of WSU was cut 12.1% for this school year. Our situation – moving from reducing, to reshaping, to rebuilding, is described in the “Bottleneck” diagram on page 2. Because we anticipated the economic downturn, we suspended hiring early last year and, thus, were able to meet the budget reductions by not filling vacant faculty and staff lines and by internal reallocations.

We worked hard to minimize the impact on students and employees. But we must now prepare ourselves to continue operating at a high level through the downturn and to rebuild when the economy improves.

In the reshaping process we are examining the way we deliver academic programs, the way we interact with students, and the way in which we organize our time for the three important activities of research university faculty work: teaching, research and service.

We are also examining the mix academic

programs we offer and how the colleges within the university can collaborate to offer even better programs in an era when all public universities are challenged both by the economy and public perception issues.

Enlisting campus participation

Transparency is an important feature of the reshaping process. Since August, President Beggs and I have made some twenty presentations to faculty and staff about the budget situation and about how we will reshape for the future. The three senates representing the faculty, the unclassified professionals and the classified professionals are involved in developing and analyzing ideas to make Wichita State University even better. Last year, the entire university engaged in the Foundations of Excellence® initiative to study how we can improve the prospects of students staying with us to finish their degrees. The recommendations of that study form the basis for many of the reshaping changes

Visit <http://www.wichita.edu/reshaping> to learn more about the Reshape, Rebuild process and to submit your own ideas.



Rick LeCompte (left) and Jeremy Hill are the Provost's guests on the next edition of *Wichita State & the World*. The program focuses on the local and national economies.

WSU experts discuss the economy on WSU-TV, Channel 13 on Cox Cable

October broadcasts of the program, *Wichita State & the World* feature a conversation about the economy with two Barton School of Business experts, Professor Rick LeCompte, H. Dene Heskett Chair in Finance, and Jeremy Hill, director of the WSU Center for Economic Development and Business Research.

The half-hour program, hosted by Provost Gary L. Miller, will air on the following dates and times:

Thursday, Oct. 8, 8 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 11, 7 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 12, 9 a.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 13, 3 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 15, 8 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 16, 1 a.m.
Sunday, Oct. 18, 7 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 20, 3 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 22, 8 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 23, 1 a.m.
Sunday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 26, 9 a.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 27, 3 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 29, 8 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 30, 1 a.m.

under consideration.

We have established a web page to track the activities of the reshaping process (www.wichita.edu/reshaping) and we have invited all members of the university community to provide suggestions for the future.

Our reshaping activities are informed by national and local discussions of higher education. In Kansas, the Governor has called for a renewed emphasis on retention and graduation rates and a consideration of appropriate admissions requirements for state universities. This past year, the Legislature commissioned Legislative Post Audit of Kansas universities. The results of that report are part of our consideration of how we will grow in the future.

Our strengths

Imagining the Wichita State University of the future requires us to consider many changes in the way we conduct our business. But it also requires that we affirm our commitment to those features of the university that provide the basis for our great success. As the President and I have visited with groups about the challenges of reshaping WSU for the future, we have emphasized the need to hold fast to a number of important strengths of the university. These form the framework for our future success:

- Holding ourselves accountable to those we serve, especially in emphasizing student access and success.
- Retaining our position as a Carnegie high research university.
- Building our teaching and research programs on strong liberal arts and sciences core programs.
- Expanding strong professional programs in business, engineering,

health sciences, communication, fine arts and education.

- Fostering entrepreneurial partnerships, such as those based in the National Institute of Aviation Research; the Cisco Technical Research Center in the Advanced Networking Research Center; and the new Center of Innovation for Biomaterials in Orthopaedic Research, with Via Christi.
- Continuing community outreach, such as our strong support of teaching programs in USD 259.

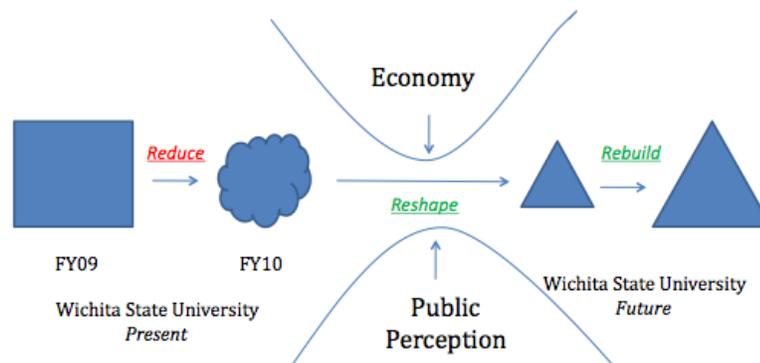
The future

While the current economic situation presents us with unprecedented challenges, there are also great opportunities. I hope you will join us in *Reshaping for the Future* by sharing your best ideas for increasing revenue, reducing costs and otherwise improving Wichita State University's academic programs. Please send your ideas to reshaping@wichita.edu.

Gary L. Miller

Reduce, Reshape and Rebuild:

The Higher Education "Bottleneck"



Learn more on the web

RESHAPING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<http://webs.wichita.edu/?u=RESHAPING&p=/FAQ/>