

**Fostering a Culture of Learning that Advances Knowledge,
Embraces Diversity, and Promotes Social Justice**

**A Report of the Teacher Education
Recruitment and Retention Task Force**

Woodring College of Education

Western Washington University

March 9, 2010

Executive Summary

Dean Stephanie Salzman established the Woodring College Teacher Education Recruitment and Retention Task Force in September, 2009. She charged the Task Force to:

1. Analyze our current efforts to recruit and retain students from under-represented populations to teacher education (focus specifically upon students of color, men and culturally and linguistically diverse students).
2. Study best practices in Woodring College of Education and beyond.
3. Develop a coherent, comprehensive approach for recruiting and retaining students from under-represented populations to teacher education.

The Woodring College mission charges WCE faculty and staff with “Fostering community relationships and a culture of learning that advance knowledge, embrace diversity, and promote social justice.” Evidence from past and present application and enrollment data indicates that the percentage of students of color among those applying to WCE teacher education programs has ranged from 6%-15% over the past five years. Separate data for culturally and linguistically diverse students are not available. The percentage of men applying to WCE teacher education programs has varied during this time period, with secondary Masters In Teaching (MIT) programs ranging near 36%, but elementary programs falling between 8% and 15%. Admission figures are consistent with or slightly higher than enrollment data. Retention data suggest that we are maintaining this level of underrepresented students through the completion of our programs at present, but the percentages are small and may disguise gaps in support that may become evident if we succeed in increasing enrollment.

During this same time period, the percentage of students of color in Washington State P-12 schools has reached approximately 30% and continues to rise. Similar national figures approach 40%. Clearly, as these data indicate, we are not attracting a sufficient number of applicants from underrepresented populations. We also need to anticipate more comprehensive ways of retaining larger numbers of such students. We have not met the challenge of the mission in connecting to underrepresented communities and in recruiting and retaining these students for WCE teacher education programs.

In this report, we present a rationale for recruiting and retaining underrepresented students in Woodring teacher education programs, we examine issues and challenges associated with recruitment and retention, and the application and selection process for gaining admission to teacher education programs. We draw upon promising ideas and practices within Woodring College, at WWU, and from other programs and scholarly literature. We address the challenge of achieving the kind of cultural change that will be required within the College as we work toward this agenda. We close with principles and recommendations to guide the recruitment and retention initiative.

Teacher Education Recruitment and Retention

Task Force Members

Co-chairs: Marilyn Chu and David Carroll

Elementary Education - David Carroll

Early Childhood Education - Marilyn Chu

TESOL/Bilingual Education - Maria Timmons-Flores

Special Education - Bridget Kelly

Secondary Education - Molly Lawrence and Rosalie Romano

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Human Services - Jane Verner

Diversity Committee Chair - Stan Goto

Center for Education, Equity & Diversity - Kristen French

WWU Admissions Office - Jose Rodriguez & Natalie Washington

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Definitions

Issues and ideas related to recruitment and retention are characterized by multiple overlapping as well as contrasting definitions. We identify the following definitions to clarify what follows:

Principles: Overarching values and beliefs that should guide all recommendations.

Social Justice: Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007) define social justice as both a process and a goal.

The goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society that is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure (p. 3).

Multicultural Education: James Banks defines it as:

an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. (Banks & Banks, 2007, p.1)

Nieto and Bode (2008) add the issue of power (e.g., who has it, how it is used, who benefits from this power) as a primary consideration of multicultural education.

Seven characteristics or attributes of multicultural education are:

antiracist, basic, important for all students, pervasive, education for social justice, a process, and rooted in critical pedagogy (Nieto & Bode, 2008)

Sociocultural Consciousness: Villegas and Lucas (2002) define it as:

awareness that one's worldview is not universal but is profoundly shaped by one's life experiences, as mediated by a variety of factors, chief among them race/ethnicity, social class, and gender (p. 27)

Ambitious Teaching: Carroll (2007) defines it as:

Teaching that strives to be intellectually challenging and socially just for all children....the kinds of challenging and complex teaching needed to do well by all

children.

Dispositions For Ambitious Teaching For All Students – (These ideas are further developed in a later section of this document)

As we considered how to characterize the kinds of teacher candidates we hoped to educate in Woodring teacher education programs, Task Force members sought to expand upon the current understanding of "highly qualified teacher" associated with specific educational credentials. To do so, we built upon ideas developed by David Carroll in his research on Woodring graduates' experience with learning to teach in a professional community of practice whereby candidates are engaged in developing both a repertoire of practice and an identity of practice, reflected in a growing capacity for demonstrating the following kinds of performances of understanding with increasing flexibility and intentionality:

- Engaging with others with an ethic of care;
- Recognizing that the worldview that one grows up with is not universal but is influenced by one's life experiences and aspects of cultural, gender, race, ethnicity, and social class background;
- Being willing to exert effort and work with stamina to solve intellectual and social problems;
- Having a personal vision of exemplary teaching practice that embraces diversity and promotes social justice;
- Being able to reflect with integrity and insight upon one's own decisions and actions;
- Having a commitment toward pursuing academic and professional knowledge to see connections, implications, and relationships among ideas.

Introduction

The Woodring College mission charges WCE faculty and staff with "Fostering community relationships and a culture of learning that advance knowledge, embrace diversity, and promote social justice." Evidence from past and present application and enrollment data indicates that the percentage of students of color among those applying to WCE teacher education programs has ranged from 6%-15% over the past five years. Separate data for culturally and linguistically diverse students are not available. The percentage of men applying to WCE teacher education programs has varied during this time period, with secondary Masters In Teaching (MIT) programs ranging near 36%, but elementary programs falling between 8% and 15%. Admission figures are consistent with or slightly higher than enrollment data. Retention data suggest that we are maintaining this level of underrepresented students through the

completion of our programs at present, but the percentages are small and may disguise gaps in support that may become evident if we succeed in increasing enrollment.

During this same time period, the percentage of students of color in Washington State P-12 schools has reached approximately 35% and continues to rise. Similar national figures approach 40%. Clearly, as these data indicate, we are not attracting a sufficient number of applicants from underrepresented populations. We also need to anticipate more comprehensive ways of retaining larger numbers of such students. We have not met the challenge of the mission in connecting to underrepresented communities and in recruiting and retaining these students for WCE teacher education programs.

In fact, most teacher education programs nationwide have not met this challenge. Enrollment of Hispanic, Asian, and Black students in teacher education is decreasing while their enrollment in business education is increasing (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 5). Demographic information about the nation's teaching force, despite some improvements in recent years, shows that it is becoming increasingly European American. White teachers make up about 86% of the teaching force while the percentage of teachers of color is at about 14% (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 5). In Washington State, 93% of current teachers are White (Elfers & Plecki, 2009). Information on teacher education enrollment suggests that this trend is continuing. Between 80-93% of students enrolled in collegiate teacher education programs are White, depending upon the institution and location (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 5).

There are significant differences in the background and experiences of most White European American teachers from middle class backgrounds who speak only English, in contrast with the increasing proportion of students who are people of color and/or live in poverty, and/or speak a first language other than English. Thus, the vast majority of teachers tend not to have the same cultural frames of reference and points of view as their students (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 6).

In examining this issue of the demographics of the teaching force in our local region, we also met with members of the WCE Educational Administration Professional Educator Advisory Board (PEAB) to invite their perspectives on the availability of prospective teachers from underrepresented populations during the course of their hiring experiences. There was widespread agreement that there were very few candidates available for consideration when positions became open. One veteran administrator commented that in 12 years in Whatcom County he has encountered only one candidate of color in the hiring process. These educational leaders also added that in the search for administrators, most candidates emerge from among the ranks of teachers. With so few teachers from underrepresented populations, the challenge of recruiting administrators from those populations is even greater.

Woodring College has a long-standing tradition of offering high quality programs and producing prospective teachers who are among the best of those prepared in the state and nation. Each of our teacher education programs has attempted to develop teacher candidates' capacities to connect with and support the success of all P-12 learners. In the face of the rapidly changing demographics of U.S. schools, WCE's commitment to prepare high-quality teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students must be at the forefront of our collective efforts.

Given the growing disparity between the racial/ethnic, social class, and language background of teachers and that of their students, aspiring teachers need to expand the horizons of their perceptions of the world if they are to learn to see life from the perspectives of their future students – that is, they need to become socioculturally conscious. (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 27)

Currently, with percentages of White European American candidates enrolled in WCE teacher education programs typically ranging from 84-93% we have been operating, in effect, under a paradigm by which we enroll highly academically qualified candidates and then attempt to provide them with “sociocultural consciousness” through the experiences, curricula, pedagogy, and research associated with our programs. It is time to challenge that paradigm by exerting deliberate effort to recruit and retain candidates from underrepresented populations who have both academic and cultural capital that may better equip them with the depth of understanding and a critical consciousness needed to expand the knowledge base of their future students.

While all aspiring teachers need to heighten their degree of sociocultural consciousness, candidates of color are apt to enter teacher education better prepared for this challenge than most of their White counterparts. Prospective teachers of color know from personal experience what it is like to be a member of a racial/ethnic minority group in the United States. Many come from economically poor backgrounds; if they are not poor themselves, they are likely to have close relatives and friends who are. They also know from first hand experience that schools and society are not neutral and that to do well in school and in life, they cannot afford to ignore the perspectives and norms of the dominant group. In fact, to have reached this far academically, prospective teachers of color must already have a high degree of facility at crossing sociocultural boundaries. If properly tapped by teacher educators, these experiences and insights will serve as resources for the further expansion of their own sociocultural consciousness. (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 34)

By creating communities of prospective teachers within Woodring College that more closely resemble the multicultural complexity of public schools, we will be able to offer a learning context that can draw upon the lived experience of diverse individuals while joining

them in a collective effort to embrace and enact schooling that lives up to the Woodring mission. All students benefit when their multiple identities are affirmed, when they participate in the construction of community, and when they have opportunities to develop leadership through engaging in the joint pursuit of becoming teachers (Tatum, 2007, pp. 114-118).

This paradigm shift toward recruiting students with strong capacities for sociocultural consciousness and experience in culturally and linguistically diverse settings needs to be coupled with a systematic effort to support all students in developing the academic understandings, skills, and dispositions needed for ambitious teaching (Carroll, 2007). It also needs to be accompanied by a shift in faculty and staff perceptions of the mission of the college to move beyond heartfelt commitments about diversity-related issues toward engagement in policy initiatives and actions that will enact real change in this area.

A key element of the recommendations that we outline later in this document addresses this need to move beyond general endorsements to undertake viable action steps that will have positive outcomes. As we considered the issues, reviewed literature, listened to students, faculty from other Woodring programs and across campus, and university admissions advisors, we came to believe that we must move beyond good intentions and aim for specific goals with accountability measures. We propose the combined actions of setting clear and measurable goals for recruitment and retention targets and becoming accountable to evidence in evaluating those goals. Fairhaven College holds itself accountable in a similar fashion and has demonstrated notable success in recruiting and retaining underrepresented students at Western Washington University. Of the 425 students admitted to Fairhaven College in 2007-2008, 17% of the students and 36% of the faculty are people of color.

Consistent with this recommendation, Kristen French of the Western Washington University Center for Education, Equity and Diversity identified the *Woodring Multicultural Faculty Fellows'* professional development work as one of engaging in *a new multicultural education* that moves beyond rhetoric and engages with the many challenging realities of marginalized students (Nieto & Bode, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2003; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002).

She noted that the WCE faculty:

have the responsibility of preparing professionals to effectively work with individuals of all backgrounds....and, as a community of educators committed to strength based, humanizing pedagogy...are responsible for engaging pre-service and human services educators in building on students' and community members' *funds of knowledge*. (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005)

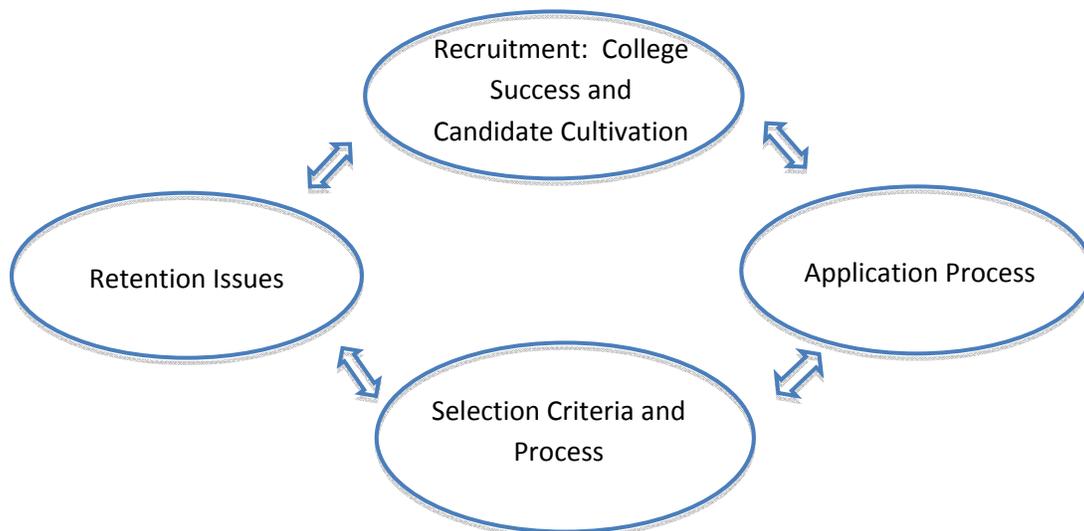
In the context of these broad goals of multicultural education, the *Woodring College of Education Teacher Education Recruitment and Retention Task Force* considered the issue of

how to increase participation from under-represented populations in WCE teacher education programs. Dean Stephanie Salzman gave the Task Force the following assignments:

Task

1. Analyze our current efforts to recruit and retain students from under-represented populations to teacher education (our charge was to focus specifically upon students of color, men and culturally and linguistically diverse students).
2. Study best practices in Woodring College of Education and beyond.
3. Develop a coherent, comprehensive approach for recruiting and retaining students from under-represented populations to teacher education.

The Task Force members wondered: *How does the system function now? Where does it break down? Where is it effective in recruiting and retaining a diversity of students to WCE?* From October 2009 to early March 2010, the goal of the Task Force was to gather perspectives from all departments in WCE. Members took on individual responsibilities to collect and analyze data and identify missing information, perspectives and key issues. Additionally we identified strategies that connect recruitment plans and help sustain students from admission to WWU, through admission to WCE, and through the completion of WCE teacher education programs. As potentially effective strategies were described for parts of the process of recruitment and retention, successful efforts in any one area of the process seemed to be contingent upon changes in other areas, as the chart below illustrates.



In subsequent sections of this report, we present a rationale for recruiting and retaining underrepresented students in Woodring teacher education programs, we examine issues and challenges associated with recruitment and retention, and the application and selection process for gaining admission to teacher education programs. We draw upon promising ideas and practices within Woodring College, at WWU, and from other programs and scholarly literature. We address the challenge of achieving the kind of cultural change that will be required within the College as we work toward this agenda. We close with principles and recommendations to guide the recruitment and retention initiative.

The Need And The Rationale

Rationale #1: Demographic and Social Justice Imperatives

- Washington State's schools are becoming more diverse, making it important to also increase the diversity of our teachers - from early childhood to secondary education. The pathways to teaching need to be attractive and understandable to all future teachers, especially underrepresented populations of students who reflect the current diversity of P - 12 classrooms.
- A more diverse teaching force has the potential to bring more positive images and varied perspectives to our schools (Uhlenberg & Brown, 2002).
- Concerns with fostering a fair and more democratic society require teacher education programs to educate more teachers who come with a commitment, beliefs, and experiences supporting their desire to teach in diverse settings, including locations that may be rural and remote, in small cities, or large urban areas.

Washington's assessment data reveals a large and relatively unchanged achievement gap for some minority students (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, [OSPI], 2002e). The *Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee* was created during the 2009 Washington State legislature to address the achievement gap in Washington State and synthesize the recommendations into priority areas. The committee was charged with recommending policies and strategies to Governor Christine Gregoire, the State Legislature, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Professional Educator Standards Board, and the State Board of Education. *Expanding pathways and strategies to prepare and recruit diverse teachers and administrators* was identified as the fourth of ten high priority recommendations to reduce the differential achievement of Asian-American, Pacific-Islander, African-American, Native American and Latino P-12 students (Bertschi, 2010).

Rationale #2: Excellence in Teacher Preparation Requires Fostering Culturally Responsive Practices and Ambitious Teaching for All Students

What teachers need to know and be able to do includes effective pedagogical knowledge and abilities to understand how language, culture and other aspects of diversity affect learning and the learning context. Recruitment and retention of a more diverse group of future teachers combined with preparation in the content and pedagogy required for ambitious teaching, increase the possibility that WCE will produce more excellent teachers.

- Our goal must be to prepare future teachers to teach all students to high standards. This requires teacher candidates with a range of experiences, skills, and knowledge and with the high potential to relate well to students and families in diverse settings (Haberman & Post, 1998).
- More than half of teacher candidates felt unprepared to teach children coming from a diversity of backgrounds (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality and Public Agenda, 2007). Data from Woodring graduates in the annual EBI survey indicate that they feel least qualified with respect to Standard 3: Diverse Learners.
- Teacher beliefs and expectations are associated with student outcomes. Research suggests teacher expectations have a powerful impact on student achievement (Good, 1981; Madom, Jussin, & Eccles, 1997).

The Task Force identified that a primary goal for all graduates of WCE is to increase and continuously work toward cultural competence. Task force member, Maria Timmons-Flores, developed and summarized the characteristics of a culturally competent educator as having:

- Awareness of cultural identity and how it influences beliefs and action
- Cultural historical understanding of the role of language and culture in learning
- Critical understanding of how poverty and linguistic and cultural differences affect student achievement via mechanisms at interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels
- General knowledge of cultural processes, language, and cultural groups
- Desire and ability to learn from students, understanding them in the constructed context of their lives
- Ability to translate knowledge of cultural groups and individual students into curricular and instructional strategies (including features of ethnic identity development, discourse, pedagogy, and curriculum)
- Ability to advocate for and work collaboratively with professionals, families, and communities to share knowledge, resources, and support for the student and the
- Ability to critically reflect and rethink attitudes, beliefs, and actions. (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000; Larkin & Sleeter, 1995; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1995).

Rationale #3: School Districts And P-12 Educational Programs Identify The Need For A More Diverse Teaching Force

- School districts and other educational program employers are increasingly wanting to “grow their own” future teachers from their local communities. The education of future teachers should be connected to diverse communities through community partnerships and field based experiences. Responding to the identified needs of employers means producing a more diverse teaching force.
- School districts nationally and in the state of Washington continue to experience a shortage of teachers in the areas special education, bilingual and ESL teachers, and math and science teachers (Haselkorn, 2002).

Recruitment

Issues related to teacher education recruitment can usefully be analyzed in two phases: recruitment of underrepresented students to WWU and recruitment within WWU to WCE. We will propose strategies for improving both phases; however, we believe that short-term priority should be assigned to the latter. This second phase of recruitment within WWU might better be called “candidate cultivation.” That is the time when we must compete successfully with other colleges and departments at WWU to attract strong candidates from underrepresented populations to WCE.

Recruitment to WWU

Drawing upon the experiences of Marilyn Chu, in her former role as Department Chair of Early Childhood Education, Skagit Valley College, where she was able to increase the enrollment of Latino students from less than 5% to one third of the program enrollment (2001-2008), we identify the following recommendations as guiding perspectives for the first phase of recruitment: getting underrepresented students to apply to WWU.

- We must establish professional and community relationships with schools in underrepresented communities that link possible candidates and their advisors from high school to WWU or a community college. These relationships must be characterized by transparency about WWU and WCE admissions processes, and the identification of college success skills and supports.
- The outcome of these relationships will be bidirectional, benefiting both the candidate and WCE. The candidate will become more prepared to succeed academically and the institution will experience increased awareness of how to respond to the life situations, needs and strengths of students of color, men and culturally and linguistically diverse

students.

Current efforts toward recruiting underrepresented students to WWU are largely sponsored by the WWU Admissions Office and its outreach counselors. WWU enrollment of Students of Color (SoC) is up over 62% in the past ten years (African Americans: 100%; Hispanics: 96%; Native American: 43%). Total SoC Fall 2009 enrollment reached 18.6% (27% applicants were from underrepresented student populations). The proportion of incoming Freshmen SoC for Fall 09 was 21.7 %.

Looking to future enrollments, the director of WWU admissions, Karen Copetas (2009), cites data projecting a significant overall decrease in the number of Washington state White students going to college (down over 20% in the next 20 years) and a significant increase in the enrollment of Hispanic/Latino students (up over 130%).

In addition to the targeted recruitment efforts toward underrepresented students sponsored at the WWU institutional level, Jennifer McCleery, WCE Teacher Education Admissions Director, and her staff, take part in a variety of recruitment efforts in conjunction with WWU events including Summer Start and Transitions, where they make connections with prospective WCE students and provide a variety of information about programs and application procedures. The WCE admissions staff also attend Transfer Day and Transfer Advisors Day (quarterly events offering WWU and WCE information to community college students and advisors, respectively). Three other major recruiting events are the WWU Fall Experience, (university departments and student clubs meet with prospective students in Carver Gym), Discovery Days (monthly parent and student question and answer sessions for prospective students) and Western Preview (approximately 2000 WWU admitted students attend).

Jennifer is new in this aspect of her position as of fall 2009 and understands that the new direction for her office's efforts will require her to go to where students are, rather than only inviting them to come to WWU or WCE sponsored events. She has begun by attending college clubs and listening to students' perceptions of WCE. During February 2010 she attended three Associated Students sponsored club meetings. At one club meeting where thirty-five African American students were in attendance, students shared with Jennifer their perceptions of WCE. One third of the group had begun WWU with the intention of becoming teachers. Among the barriers they cited, which dissuaded them from applying to WCE, were the low pay of K-12 teachers, the application process that does not reflect their experiences or background, the likelihood of lengthy time to degree, and the mostly white faculty, staff and students.

There have also been a number of heroic individual efforts in the past to recruit and retain underrepresented students at WCE, but such efforts have characteristically been disconnected, fragmented and not institutionalized sufficiently around stable staffing and resources.

Currently, a number of WCE faculty and students, along with Skagit Valley College, the Mount Vernon School District and many local nonprofit groups have invested time and commitment toward developing the “Skagit Connector: A Publicly Purposed Community Educational Center connecting Skagit Valley College, P-12 Schools, and the Woodring College of Education at Western Washington University”. The Skagit Connector, located in the Kulshan Creek Community of Mount Vernon, Washington, has as its goals to:

1. Provide instruction, mentoring and classroom support for transitional bi-lingual students and their families living in Skagit County. Western Washington University faculty and students will work closely with classroom teachers and administration to buttress and augment existing efforts within Skagit County school districts.
2. Provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to work in a transitional bi-lingual classroom setting and participate in culturally responsive pedagogical practices and experiences.
3. Create a partnership between Western Washington University, Skagit Valley College, and the school districts of Skagit County to identify and support Latino/a students with an interest in the teaching profession. With the development of a seamless and complementary program among the partnering institutions, today’s students will return to the Skagit Valley for their professional careers, ultimately working toward a community vision of supporting the language and academic literacy development of all residents in both Spanish and English.

Efforts like this have, in the past, failed to continue when key faculty leave or are unable to sustain them. The need for institutionalized structure and long-term support, rather than a continuation of initiatives depending largely upon the personal commitment and professional relationships of particular WCE faculty should be encouraged. Such connections are doomed to failure without more systematic and deliberate institutional underwriting (Chu, Martinez-Griego, & Cronin, in press).

Candidate Cultivation

Since we are currently failing to attract proportionate numbers of underrepresented students to WCE in comparison to their proportion within WWU, “Candidate Cultivation” should be the primary target for initial recruitment activities. Focusing on candidate cultivation among current freshmen and sophomores at WWU will also engage WCE faculty in initiating the cultural transformation necessary for success in the larger effort of attracting and retaining candidates from underrepresented populations.

Jane Verner, who has long been the individual responsible for recruitment and advising for the WCE Human Services Program, advises that we must establish regular connections with future teacher candidates that guide students from one stage of the process to another, and that are timely and offer students a sense of belonging, respect and value. This advice echoes the work of Feistritzer, (2008), who advocates for long term strategies that are based on "thoughtful

and timely interactions with candidates that emphasize their importance as individuals and make them feel valued” (p. 21). These practices may seem obvious but they take time, energy and institutional commitment to implement systemically and with sensitivity to the diversity of students WCE wants to attract. Over two years of contact with a potential WWU or college transfer student may occur from their initial college-age investigation of a potential teaching career to their final completed application. The degree to which WCE retains contact information on candidates, includes them in notifications of pre-application workshops or other sorts of prescreening activities, as well as offers mentoring, volunteer opportunities, and academic advising may be among the most important factors in a candidate's choice to follow through on a WCE application for admission. Feistritzer (2008) suggests institutions should track conversion rates of the percentage of interested candidates who submit a completed application and are invited to interview for admission (p. 25).

The Woodring Future Scholars Program currently represents the primary strategy addressed at cultivating incoming WWU students toward interests in teacher education. This program serves only 25-30 students each year, however, and the kinds of recruitment targets needed to make significant progress toward increasing the enrollment of underrepresented students in WCE teacher education programs will require us to generate a larger pool of applicants from those populations.

The only other systematic or institutionalized efforts to identify and support potential teacher candidates from among students already enrolled at WWU are two courses, EDUC 109 and EDUC 197. These courses, which are offered in two-three sections quarterly, are designed to meet students where their passions are and support them in exploring careers in education. These classes are visited quarterly by Woodring Department Chairs who explain their programs and offer follow-up information and opportunities for advising. Sustaining connections to faculty beyond these periodic visits, or providing any consistent WCE academic advising have not occurred.

In considering other aspects of “candidate cultivation,” the Task Force also investigated what happens to students who express interest in careers in teaching but later end up elsewhere within the university. To determine where those students ended up, Task Force member Maria Timmons-Flores examined data from both WCE and WWU Admissions. These data proved difficult to interpret for a variety of reasons. First of all, it is not clear how strong students’ initial stated preferences for education are as they complete WWU admissions materials at the end of high school. Secondly, the only current procedure for determining whether they change that preference occurs at the time when they actually declare a major. Increasingly, students are making that decision at later and later points in their college careers. Many students in this group of “missing” underrepresented students are still in the WCE pipeline but have not yet declared a major. Taking account of these issues and the data for students who have declared majors in the past five years, Maria found no predictable patterns.

Maria also conducted a variety of interviews and focus group sessions with students to learn more about the reasons for the attrition of underrepresented students away from initial interest in WCE teacher education programs. One recurrent theme was the lack of ongoing contact or mentoring beyond the initial information at admission or after participation in the

Future Woodring Scholars program as freshmen. Maria also heard numerous comments about the complexity and difficulty of the admissions process and the reputation of Woodring as "elitist" and difficult to gain entry to.

One critical theme that Maria's research revealed is that many students from underrepresented populations migrate toward faculty who inspire them, often faculty of color. They have very little contact with WCE faculty prior to admission to WCE programs. These students also gravitate to programs / majors in which they see their cultural history represented accurately and critically and toward careers that allow them to return to their communities to make a difference. This is an especially dominant theme for Latino / immigrant students. Teacher education definitely could be one of these programs / careers but without exposure to faculty advocates or a curricular commitment to social justice students do not recognize Woodring as representing them or their communities.

Gracielle Loree, WCE graduate student and Student Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator, after analyzing past efforts, has developed a new peer mentoring program (2010-2011) which pairs a current WCE student with a WWU freshman or sophomore interested in a career in teaching. The WCE student mentors attend mentoring training to increase skills in listening to and assisting peers in their first years of college. Data are not yet available, yet this initial effort to make personal connections and help students navigate Woodring and WWU systems seems very promising. Mentors are offered a way to learn valuable mentoring skills (e.g., guiding, listening, building rapport) and an undergraduate leadership opportunity. A combination of informal meetings and scheduled peer mentoring events is designed for peer mentors to assist mentees.

Retention

In considering retention, we focus upon the strategies, institutional scaffolding, and monitoring practices that support prospective and current WWU and WCE students to sustain successful careers as students. Additionally we examine strategies that students need in order to be admitted to WCE and to complete WCE teacher education programs. Retention also has two phases – retention within WWU prior to application to WCE, and retention within WCE. There is great concern around this first phase of retention with respect to the Future Woodring Scholars program, as is documented in the Appendices. Almost half of each cohort in that program has experienced trouble maintaining an adequate GPA. A variety of factors seem to contribute to this pattern.

Certain classes taken by large numbers of freshmen and sophomores (Psych 101; Math 112) serve as ad hoc gate-keepers when they result in low grades or course failure. Bill Lay, who has for many years been one of the WCE faculty most closely in touch with freshmen and sophomores, told us of the devastating effect many students experience when they take on an inappropriate mix of courses early in their WWU career, end up failing or receiving poor grades

in one or more courses, and, as a result, end up with a low GPA. This then jeopardizes their admission to WCE teacher education programs.

Admissions office advisors told us that many students from underrepresented populations come to WWU from high schools that have lost funding in recent years for guidance and student support services. When these students arrive at WWU, many must work long hours in addition to attending WWU, and may have little familiarity with the academic culture and procedures of university work. Their initial encounter with these gate-keeping classes can easily become a serious threat to their survival at WWU. Bill Lay notes that such course selection issues are largely the result of a lack of consistent advising. This set of circumstances points to the need, addressed in our recommendations later in this report, for more widespread and systematic academic support and advising for our prospective and current students. One possibility for addressing this need could be to recruit more WCE faculty to serve as Summer Start advisors for incoming freshmen.

It does not appear, based upon comparing percentages of underrepresented students admitted to WCE with those of students completing TE programs, that we have a significant current issue with retention within WCE, although with such low numbers of students in that category, statistics can be misleading, and that might change if we increase the number of underrepresented students enrolled.

Application & Selection Process

Current practices at WCE typically involve candidates in completing lengthy applications that feature a combination of information about experiences with children/youth, experiences with diversity/diverse settings, leadership/responsibility, and GPA. Some programs feature interviews of various sorts. A current review of application processes is underway under the leadership of Jennifer McCleery. Among other things, this review will include input from representatives from the Ethnic Student Center regarding the wording of application questions that have often in the past been perceived as Eurocentric. There are also concerns about the reliability and validity of the selection process.

While these issues are somewhat beyond the scope of responsibilities assigned to this Task Force, there are questions to be addressed in the context of recruitment and retention about the pre-requisite qualities we identify as advantageous for teacher candidates, about how those qualities can be communicated transparently to applicants, be reflected fairly in the application and selection process, and be sustained in the curriculum and pedagogy of the teacher education programs. Promising practices in this area (Darling-Hammond, 2006) suggest that some of the most highly regarded teacher education programs have been successful in the recruitment, retention and graduation of high quality candidates from underrepresented populations by

insuring this kind of continuity of ideas and values across the trajectory of recruitment, application, and teacher education curriculum. In thinking about how to begin the process of identifying desired prerequisite qualities of candidates, we have developed the ideas introduced below. The outline is drawn from a variety of research on multicultural teacher education and dispositions for ambitious teaching (Carroll, 2005; 2007). This draft is intended as a starting point to promote further thinking and discussion among colleagues in Woodring College of Education.

Dispositional Indicators of Highly Capable Teacher Candidates

The Woodring College mission charges faculty and staff with *fostering community relationships and a culture of learning that advance knowledge, embrace diversity, and promote social justice*. This mission statement establishes the educational values that guide the College and is the appropriate underpinning for considering the pre-requisite qualities of teacher education candidates. Woodring College has also had a long-standing commitment, not just to preparing teachers, but to producing highly capable, effective educators who strive for ambitious goals in teaching. Teaching that is ambitious both in its intellectual goals and in its concern for the learning and well-being of all children requires a sophisticated approach to professional knowledge and practice. This is what our programs aim to provide.

What are the dispositional indicators that should be evident in candidates applying to our programs that will prepare them to take on this challenge successfully? We propose the following qualities as starting points for designing admissions processes that should provide an opportunity to assess candidates' ability to:

- Engage with others (children and adults) with an ethic of care, sensitivity and responsiveness (Noddings, 1984)

Have a regard for others' perspectives and a willingness to seek them out and learn from them

Work collaboratively with others from diverse backgrounds (Woodring IDES Standards, Standard 9.2)

Demonstrate the ability to listen, learn, observe, and form partnerships with others to understand what one does not know. Act with humility, showing a willingness to be uncomfortable, being willing to take risks in order to learn and acknowledge gaps in your own knowledge and experiences

Develop relationships characterized by receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness (Noddings, 1984)

Take a positive, strength-based view of persons; avoiding a deficit approach

- Recognize that the worldview that one grows up with is not universal but is influenced by life experiences and aspects of cultural, gender, race, ethnicity, and social class background (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Darder & Torres, 2002)

Be willing and able to interrogate one's own perspective in light of those personal background circumstances

Demonstrate a willingness to share one's own experiences, funds of knowledge, and personal ways of making sense of the world with others (Gonzalez et. al., 2005; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004; Gay, 2000, 2003; Zeichner, 2003; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994)

Recognize and be willing to explore how power differences affect contexts of learning and development (Freire, 1985)

- Have a commitment toward a personal vision of a world/sense of exemplary teaching practice that embraces diversity and promotes social justice. (Woodring Mission)

Value human diversity as an enriching resource for social contexts (Vavrus, 2002)

Foster community relationships and a culture of learning (Woodring Mission)

- Reflect with integrity and insight on one's own decisions and actions (Woodring IDES, Standard 9.2)
- Have a commitment toward pursuing academic and professional knowledge in order to see connections, implications, and relationships among ideas. (Woodring IDES Standards 1.1, 3.1)

In the current legal and political context, which severely restricts affirmative action options related to increasing the proportion of underrepresented students as teacher candidates, a promising strategy (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) involves deliberately identifying and broadcasting program values and practices associated with culturally responsive teaching and commitments to underrepresented communities, aligning curriculum and pedagogy with those aims, and thus encouraging teacher candidates to "select in" to such purposes, rather than attempting to screen individuals out who may not subscribe to those ideals. Establishing a set of commitments like the

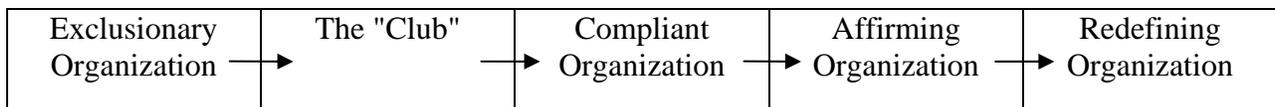
ones above and publicizing them as foundational to the aims of the program would send an important message about the kinds of teachers we hope to educate, and thus help us attract candidates who share those aims.

Preparing for Cultural Change

The final section of this report will outline a series of recommendations for action to address the challenge of recruiting and retaining underrepresented students at Woodring College. In the process of developing those recommendations, however, Task Force members were constantly aware of the inescapable reality that the directions we are exploring will both foster and require considerable change in the structure and culture of the College. Because of that, and with the help of Pat Fabiano and Molly Lawrence, the Task Force also considered ideas about institutional change. We recognized that institutions like Woodring College do not change easily. If we are to be successful in achieving the kinds of changes suggested here, we will need to understand the forces that resist or impede change.

Cultural activities are highly stable over time, and they are not easily changed. This is true for two reasons: cultural activities are systems, and systems - especially complex ones, such as teaching - can be very difficult to change. The second reason is that cultural activities are embedded in a wider culture. Teaching systems, like other complex systems, are composed of elements that interact and reinforce one another...an immediate implication of this fact is that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to improve teaching by changing individual elements or features. In a system, all the features reinforce each other. If one feature is changed, the system will rush to 'repair the damage,' perhaps by modifying the new feature so it functions the way the old one did. (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999, p. 97)

Pat Fabiano introduced a model (Jackson & Holvino, 1988) of multicultural organization change that proposes a progression of stages through which organizations typically move in striving toward the kinds of changes we are seeking:



According to our investigation, where Woodring College is in the change process depends upon who you are. Jennifer McCleery heard from Black members of an Associated Students club, many of whom felt Woodring and its programs are currently near the “Exclusionary Organization” or “Club” end of Jackson’s spectrum, feeling that WCE is missing the broad “culture of education” and that the perspective is White American. Other students and faculty would cite the promising recent efforts such as the WCE peer mentoring program, the “Skagit Connector” project, and the service learning activities underway at Shuksan Middle School as

promising indicators of organizational change. Clearly, different students, faculty, and staff have different experiences at Woodring College and would place us at different points on this multicultural organization change continuum.

If we are to achieve the goals laid out in this document, it is clear that we will also need to engage in fundamental cultural change to address the compelling perceptions of many students from underrepresented populations who question their welcome in the College. As Fullan (2001) argues, we will truly need to become a learning organization.

Recommendations for Action

The Task Force considered ways to align, strengthen, and institutionalize practices at Woodring College of Education in order to increase our effectiveness in supporting the recruitment and retention of underrepresented populations (especially students of color, men, and culturally and linguistically diverse students) to teacher education. In addressing our task, we concluded that it requires thinking in several different directions simultaneously:

- Given the fact that Woodring College has been committed to addressing issues of diversity and social justice for some time, we believe some successes may be realized by maintaining a steady movement along pathways strongly in place. Other recommendations point toward doing some things very differently.
- Given the current fiscal situation, and the need to both establish and maintain momentum for this kind of institutional change initiative, it seems appropriate to identify both short term and long-term priorities.
- Given the urgency of the need to change the current profile of our teacher education students to more closely match the profile of their prospective students, it seems appropriate to identify both immediate courageous and bold initiatives as well as more incremental changes.

Principles and Recommendations

We propose the following framework of principles and related recommendations for addressing the challenge of recruiting and retaining underrepresented students to teacher education programs at Woodring College. Such a vision will help guide WCE administrators, faculty, staff, and students in moving forward together, while also providing a framework for holding ourselves accountable to our identified goals.

...for recruiting,

...for developing and cultivating candidates,

...for the application and admissions process and

...for retention of students of color, men, and culturally and linguistically diverse students.

The bold numbered statements outline guiding principles, each with bulleted recommendations.

1 . Establish Diversity Recruitment and Retention Goals

- Work in concert with recruitment and retention efforts by the WWU admissions office to increase the proportion of applicants to WWU from underrepresented communities
- Establish the short-term goal of having the recruitment, application, and retention of students in WCE teacher education programs reflect the diversity of incoming students at WWU
- Establish the long-term goal of recruiting and retaining underrepresented students for WCE teacher education programs in proportion to the demographic characteristics of the P-12 population in the region

2. Be Accountable to Evidence on an Annual Basis for Evaluating Progress Toward Recruitment and Retention Goals

- Analyze evidence from recruitment activities to identify opportunities and barriers to recruitment goals (e.g., draw upon data/experience from WWU Admissions Outreach staff; other WCE outreach activities)
- Analyze the ongoing diversity of the applicant pool for WCE teacher education programs as an indicator of progress in recruitment efforts. A relatively homogeneous applicant pool will be a primary indication of lack of progress toward achieving recruitment goals
- Analyze evidence to assess the success of retention efforts within WCE for underrepresented students
- Disseminate recruitment and retention data to faculty, students, and staff on a regular basis to keep them informed on progress toward meeting goals

3. Value Multicultural / Socio-Cultural Competence in the Recruitment, Application, Admissions, and Retention Processes

- Emphasize the multicultural and social justice vision of the college and its programs in recruitment practices and branding efforts

- Exert deliberate effort to recruit and retain candidates from underrepresented populations whose cultural perspectives, funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005), and lived experiences may already better equip them with many of the understandings and sensitivities associated with “sociocultural consciousness”
- Review admissions processes for increasing opportunities for students to demonstrate dispositions for multicultural/sociocultural competence through such things as letters of reference, written profiles, oral interviews, or other ways to demonstrate competence and understanding
- Establish a WCE faculty, staff, and student advisory committee to support efforts by the WCE Teacher Education Admissions Office to review and upgrade admissions practices with respect to recruiting and retaining underrepresented students
- Review concerns about the Eurocentric character of WCE application questions
- Expand the definition of underrepresented students considered in this report to include “first generation” college students and other dimensions of student diversity consistent with Woodring the College Diversity Action Plan:

Woodring College of Education strives to be inclusive of all individuals from diverse populations including, but not limited to, those who have experienced systemic social injustices based on their ethnicity, race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, language, socio-economic status, or religion.

- Intensify the existing effort to support all students in developing the academic understandings and skills needed for culturally responsive and ambitious teaching

4. Increase Faculty, Staff and Institutional Capacity to Attract and Retain Diverse Populations of Students

- Increase efforts to recruit and retain faculty/staff from underrepresented populations
- Continue to invest in faculty/staff professional development (e.g., Multicultural Faculty Fellows; Diversity Committee) and initiate avenues for increasing acceptance of diverse approaches to scholarship, pedagogy, and collaboration across disciplines
- Continue efforts to develop the multicultural vision of the college and its programs and to make space for and draw upon the funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) of enrolled WCE students from underrepresented populations (e.g., invest in CEED as a safe space for WCE students to engage in conversations about social justice and equity).

- Continue to work to align programs, curricula, and field experiences with developing and extending multicultural/socio-cultural competence of faculty and students
- Assess multicultural climate and attitudes for students, staff, and faculty regularly
- Establish a holistic approach to serving underrepresented students. Address the political, social, familial, as well as the intellectual dimensions of students.
- Examine how we might achieve better continuity across the trajectory of recruitment, application, selection, curriculum/pedagogy, and mentoring/student support services related to achieving ambitious teaching for everyone’s children (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

5. Recognize CEED as the Centralized Institutional Home for Welcoming and Connecting to Prospective WCE Students, Including Those from Underrepresented Populations

- Partner with existing student support services
- Emphasize the function of welcoming, establishing, and sustaining relationships with prospective WCE students
- Draw upon the resources of CEED for supporting faculty, staff, and administration in hearing the voices of underrepresented students
- Strengthen this existing CEED resource by appointing an ongoing staff coordinator (not a graduate student) with responsibility for maintaining this essential welcoming and connecting role over time
- Locate and expand mentoring activities for prospective and current WCE students under the umbrella of this center which will provide a safe space to honor different ways of knowing and being, as well as provide workshops for test preparation and academic support
- Connect all prospective and current WCE students and faculty/staff with opportunities to explore issues of social justice and equity
- Raise the profile of careers in education in the course of recruitment and candidate cultivation as a way to “give back” to one’s community

6. Identify Promising Practices in Recruitment and Retention and Extend them to All Students

- Use the analysis of evidence related to recruitment and retention efforts for underrepresented students at WCE to identify effective practices

- Insure that there is a hospitable and inviting orientation throughout the steps to recruitment, application, and admission. Survey students for their perception of the recruitment, application, and admissions process.
- Apply effective recruitment and retention practices for underrepresented students to all WCE students.
- Continue current efforts to examine, analyze and improve the reliability and validity of departmental selection and admissions processes
- Investigate the transcript and GPA review process used by WWU admissions as a potentially more nuanced process for assessing applicants' competencies which may allow for consideration of previously rejected candidates

7. Value, Recognize, and Support Faculty in the Tenure and Promotion Process for Contributing to Recruiting and Retaining Underrepresented Students

- Strengthen WCE institutional support of and recognition for scholarship, teaching, and service related to the recruitment and retention of underrepresented populations in teacher education.
- Make specific adjustments in the Unit Plan to recognize such efforts in the tenure and promotion process, as evidence of scholarship, teaching, or service

8. Develop and Retain Interest in Careers in Teacher Education in the First Two Years at WWU

- Strengthen and expand *Future Woodring Scholars* or similar WWU "feeder" programs by establishing program learning outcomes, and connecting students to faculty and peer mentors before the fall quarter of freshman year begins. Continue mentoring during the sophomore year.
- Focus immediately on candidate cultivation among current freshmen and sophomores at WWU. WCE faculty will then be engaged in initiating the cultural transformation necessary for success in the larger effort of attracting and retaining candidates from underrepresented populations.
- Create integrated and linked GUR courses for prospective teacher education students which incorporate field experiences or service learning in educational settings
- Review data on "gate keeping courses" (e.g., Math 112, Psychology 101) that have a high proportion of low grades/course failures preventing successful application and admission to WCE. Explore solutions to address this issue with relevant departments.

9. Invest in Candidate Cultivation Pipelines

- Align and strengthen WCE recruitment efforts with existing pipeline connections to high schools and community colleges that are already investing in the recruitment, support, and preparation of underrepresented populations for college admission (e.g., the “Skagit Connector”).
- Establish new recruiting partnerships with specific communities, high schools, and community colleges to attract and retain groups of underrepresented students for specific WCE departments annually
- Institutionalize relationships with WWU Admissions Outreach staff to align and strengthen WCE recruitment efforts with WWU recruitment initiatives toward underrepresented students and communities

10. Anticipate and Prepare for Cultural Change Within the College

- Recognize that the kind of restructuring proposed here involves a “reculturing” process (Fullan, 2001) that will necessitate more culturally responsive teaching, different pedagogical approaches, and more inclusive course content
- Support faculty and staff in increasing their capacity for understanding barriers to access for underrepresented populations of students
 - By increasing their capacity for helping underrepresented students in navigating institutional culture and academic language and literacy,
 - By increasing their capacity for recognizing and responding to students’ feelings of isolation and concerns about economic pressures
- Anticipate that the current need for academic support for students will grow and necessitate a paradigm shift involving expanded commitments by faculty and student support services (e.g., partnerships with WCE Writing Center, workshops, new designs for GUR linked education-oriented courses.)
- Anticipate that retaining increased numbers of underrepresented students will challenge faculty to create more inclusive environments which build community across various dimensions of difference
- Anticipate that retaining increased numbers of underrepresented students will challenge staff to recognize their essential role in maintaining a culture of caring and facilitating a sense of belonging for an increasingly diverse student body

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Appendices

Applications & Enrollment data: 2004 Applicants

	% Students of Color Applying (not including unknowns)	%Students of Color Enrolled (not including unknowns)
Elementary	11% (n= 283)	14% (n=126)
Secondary	7% (n= 201)	9% (n=119)
SPED	10% (n=101)	7% (n=72)
MIT	6% (n= 70)	6% (n=35)

Applications & Enrollment Data: 2008-09

	% Students of Color Applying (not including unknowns)	%Students of Color Enrolled (not including unknowns)
Elementary	6% (n= 236)	13% (n= 100)
Secondary	14% (n= 164)	7% (n= 100)
SPED	22%	22%

Dual Endorsement (Fall 2009)	(n= 84)	(n= 59) 14.4% (n=114)
MIT	11% (n=67)	16% (n= 40)

Data indicate that we are not receiving a sufficient number of applications from students of color (SoC). SoC are being admitted at or above the proportion of applicants.

Men in Elementary Education: Application & Enrollment Data

	% Male Candidates Applying	% Male Candidates Enrolling
2004-05	15% (n= 283)	15% (n=126)
2008-09	12% (n= 236)	8% (n= 100)

Total percentage of male candidates enrolled as of Fall 2009 was 17%. Data indicate that we are not receiving a sufficient number of applications from male candidates. There has also been some decline in the proportion of male applicants who are admitted.

Future Woodring Scholars

Stephanie Zee's (2009) analysis

FSW participants valued the connections they were afforded to faculty and other students through mentoring relationships available through FWS. They also valued FWS courses and said that they helped them make connection to WCE departments, and access campus resources. They advised expanded mentoring relationships, expanded connection to school experience opportunities, and expanded connection to all Woodring programs/departments.

Jennifer McCleery completed an analysis of GPAs for Future Woodring Scholar cohorts:

Year	N	<u># Admitted WCE</u>	<u>#ST Low GPA Q1 or 2 <2.75>2.0</u>	<u>#ST Low GPA Q1 or 2 <2.00</u>	<u>#ST Low GPA <2.75 for all of first 3 quarters QTs</u>	<u>#ST Low GPA over all QTs <2.75</u>
06	29	<u>14</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>19</u>
07	27	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>16</u>
08	26	<u>2</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>

Analysis: Almost half of each cohort had trouble maintaining their GPA, sometimes for just one quarter, sometimes for multiple quarters.