

MISSION

Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate research and service through residential, distance education, and international experiences. The university focuses its academic programs, educational outreach, research and creative activities, and cultural opportunities to improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in the region, state, and nation.

CAMPUS DESCRIPTION

The westernmost campus of The University of North Carolina, Western Carolina University is a regional institution providing statewide and national service. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has selected WCU for its “community engagement classification” in recognition of its emphasis on community engagement and engaged teaching, research and service. Founded in 1889, WCU has seen its enrollment grow to nearly 10,000 students, and offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees, as well as doctoral degrees in education and physical therapy. Nestled in a scenic valley between the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge mountains, WCU has a commitment to the rich traditions of the Appalachian and Cherokee cultures. The university doubled the size of its campus in 2005 through the acquisition of 344 acres as part of its Millennial Initiative, which calls for the transformation of the university into knowledge enterprise zones where faculty and students, private industry, and government partners work on scientific and technological innovations that have commercial applications.

VOLUNTARY STANDARDS OF ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (VSA)

<http://www.collegeportraits.org/NC/WCU>

CAMPUS WEB SITE

www.wcu.edu

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNC TOMORROW

Adding a bachelor’s degree in engineering, master’s in environmental science and a doctorate of physical therapy are among ways WCU is responding to the state’s needs as identified in the UNC Tomorrow report. WCU’s strong programs in teacher education, health science and construction management are producing the educators, health-care practitioners and construction industry leaders of tomorrow. WCU’s entrepreneurship program is assisting with the development of one of the state’s high-growth industries – small business. Other proposals include construction of education and health neighborhood components of the Millennial Initiative. Responses fit with an integrative, intentional learning model set out in WCU’s Quality Enhancement Plan, and with WCU’s commitment to serving the region as a steward of place, which guided recent changes to tenure, promotion and reappointment policies.

Link to UNC Tomorrow report: <http://www.wcu.edu/6264.asp>

INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

From John W. Bardo, chancellor since 1995

“At Western Carolina University, all that we do revolves around our brand promise statement: ‘WCU offers

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opportunities for those who aspire to make a difference in their world.' Statewide in our reach, we have a special sense of responsibility to serve the people of the mountains of Western North Carolina. We endeavor to ensure that the region's best and brightest young minds are able to get a first-class university education and to become prosperous participants in the global economy of the 21st century. We emphasize intentional learning where students are engaged by faculty members in projects that help solve real-world problems facing our region and state."