Report by the Ad Hoc Senate Committee on WCSU Centers & Institutes

This committee was formed because of the recently distributed BOR resolution regarding the establishment of centers and institutes in the CSCU system.

The charge of the Ad Hoc Committee was the following:

a. Identify and examine the roles that current centers and institutes play in meeting the educational and service missions of WCSU.
b. Examine the roles of current centers in the CSCU system to address any duplication and/or opportunities for collaboration.
c. Develop guidelines for centers and institutes at WCSU going forward given the new BOR resolution regarding their establishment. These guidelines should include funding goals.
d. Submit a final report to the Senate by its April 2018 meeting.

Identify and examine the roles that current centers and institutes play in meeting the educational and service missions of WCSU.

The following is a summary of the information the director/designee of each center/institute provided the committee. The raw information/documentation each director/designee provided is available for examination in a shared folder.

Center for Business Research: This center is no longer functional because it has been deemed as not complying with the BOR resolution.

Center for Compassion Creativity and Innovation: The most recent annual report provided (2015-2016) shows significant activity aligned with the center’s mission.

CELT: This center was most recently reviewed and renewed in 2016. The most recent annual report provided (2016-2017) shows significant activity aligned with the center’s mission.

Center for the Study of Culture and Values: The most recent annual report provided (2016-2017) details multiple activities aligned with the center’s planned goals.

Institute for Holistic Health: The most recent annual report provided (2016-2017) details many activities in line with the institute’s mission.

Jane Goodall Center: This center has been active for 23 years but has been operating without bylaws. The center is currently drafting by-laws and expects to obtain the necessary approvals this semester.

Meteorological Studies and Weather Center: The most recent annual report provided (2016-2017) lists many clients and also outlines the center’s outreach to entities outside the university.

Western International Center: The most recent annual report provided (2015-2016) details many activities in line with the center’s mission. The activities include the International Student Exchange Program.

Westside Nature Preserve: The most recent annual report provided (2016-2017) outlines the maintenance activities performed in and around the nature preserve.
The following table shows how each director sees the activities of their respective center/institute aligns with different parts of WCSU’s mission (indicated by an X in appropriate cells). Centers which did not provide a response are not represented in the table. The detailed responses provided are available for examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center/Institute Name</th>
<th>Foster growth</th>
<th>Instill desire for lifelong learning</th>
<th>Vibrant, inclusive</th>
<th>Co-curricular programs</th>
<th>Cultural events</th>
<th>Serve to community</th>
<th>Establish partnerships</th>
<th>Create internship opportunities</th>
<th>Research and research opportunities</th>
<th>Experiential learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center for Compassion Creativity and Innovation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CELT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for the Study of Culture and Values</td>
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<td>Institute for Holistic Health</td>
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<td>Jane Goodall Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western International Center</td>
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Examine the roles of current centers in the CSCU system to address any duplication and/or opportunities for collaboration.

Shortly after this committee was created, the other colleges/universities in the CSCU system were contacted in an attempt to collaborate on the charges given to this committee. This Excel spreadsheet summarizes the information that was provided to this committee from each university/college in the CSCU system. The data from Central Connecticut State University is from their website since we did not get a reply from them directly. Therefore, it is possible that their list is incomplete and/or outdated. In an effort to "address any duplication" among current centers/institutes, the spreadsheet has been color-coded in an attempt match centers/institutes with a similar theme together. There was no duplication among any of the CSCU Centers/Institutes, but perhaps the color-coded centers/institutes could find some way to collaborate. Further, students across the state may have opportunities to collaborate with other students if centers/institutes did come together for an activity/event.

Develop guidelines for centers and institutes at WCSU going forward given the new BOR resolution regarding their establishment. These guidelines should include funding goals.

The BOR resolution guidelines are consistent with what many current centers and institutes are already doing but may not be codified. This information was gleaned from the review of centers and institutes reports as well as two town hall meetings with the directors of centers/institutes. The town hall meetings allowed leaders from centers/institutes to come together and share some mutual interests, as well as concerns and questions regarding the BOR guidelines. The town hall meetings revealed an energetic group of leaders who care deeply about their centers and institutes. They view the centers/institutes as vital to the fabric of our institution and helpful in recruitment and retention of students. At one town hall
meeting, two current centers/institutes that have different missions discussed the possibility of collaborating on a project next year.

Questions and Concerns: (listed in the order in which they were raised at the town hall meetings)

1. The new BOR document requires directors of centers/institutes to submit a Sunset Report by Sept 1st of the 7th year. The existing process requires such a report to be submitted every 5 years. How will this new timeline (of seven years) be implemented? Would the Provost’s office continue to notify directors when reports are due?

2. Some centers/institutes do not have a standard template for reporting. In some cases, existing bylaws do not reflect the current realities and activities that have evolved over the time.

3. Concern was expressed over the language of the BOR document. The focus seems to be financial impact over education value. Similar financial focus has led to negative outcomes in other state university systems. Even the definition of centers/institutes includes language like "substantial sources of funding." Funding will vary from year to year for centers/institutes and some centers/institutes are better positioned than others to raise revenue. Will this impact whether centers/institutes are renewed? How will financial viability be determined? Will an evaluation be determined based on each individual year's financial report or as an average of multiple years?

4. Discretionary release time to manage centers/institutes is inconsistent across our institution. Some directors of centers/institutes receive release time while others receive none. Leaders of centers/institutes stated they are putting in many hours over and above any release time and many are also making donations to their own centers/institutes from personal funds. Is this considered when viewing financial impact? How can release time be fairly awarded to leadership of the centers/institutes?

5. Who do the centers/institutes report to? There may be a contradiction in the BOR document regarding this issue. Interim Progress Reports are to go to the system provost in the 4th year, but Sunset Reports go to the institution’s President and Provost. They will recommend continuation or discontinuation and pass this along to the system office. The ASA may elect to conduct an additional assessment prior to making its decision. It was suggested that perhaps this process be done by a committee of peers.

6. To meet objectives such as service to community centers/institutes may need to enter into contracts with outside companies or businesses. Who do the centers/institutes report to? Leadership is critical when collaborating with outside organizations.

Respectfully submitted by members of the Ad Hoc Senate Committee on WCSU Centers & Institutes:
Becky Hall (co-chair), Laurel Larsen, Lynne LeBarron, Wenguang (Aaron) Lin, Gabriel Lomas (co-chair), Sean Murthy, Albert Owino