

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES TO THE SRATEGY SURVEY Prioritized by the Average of All Responses

Kentucky Wesleyan Strategy Responses, November 2015				
Question	Responder			Grand Average n=204
	Student Average n=111	Faculty Average n=39	Staff Average n=54	
10. Faculty & staff recruitment team	4.43	4.43	4.60	4.48
1. Freshman Year Experience	4.12	4.42	4.60	4.30
7. Campus communications program	4.22	4.34	4.45	4.30
8. New staff orientation program	4.07	4.35	4.58	4.26
5. Training to support student success	4.05	3.62	4.54	4.10
2. Honors program	4.02	4.39	4.00	4.09
9. Improve marketing & branding	3.93	4.16	4.25	4.06
4. Integrate commuter students	3.95	4.32	4.00	4.04
11. Quality campus visit	3.71	4.08	4.35	3.95
3. New student life leadership model	3.69	3.82	4.15	3.83
6. Alert system that recognizes accomplishments	4.00	3.43	3.72	3.82

Comments/suggestions STUDENTS

Need students to be aware of things that deal with financial issues, getting books, and their refunds.

Better food in the caf

Most effective way is lower tuition. The number is just a price tag, just because its expensive doesn't mean it attracts people. If you lower tuition you gain more students.

The retention problem at KWC is largely the fault of admissions. The admissions staff blatantly lies to prospective students about the Wesleyan experience. As a former Student Ambassador I know this to be true. For example, we are required to say religion and campus ministries is a thriving program and prospective students can "find themselves" at KWC especially in the way of spirituality. This is simply not true. New Wesleyan student who were expecting this feature of campus life are now planning to transfer to seek those services elsewhere, hence a huge retention problem.

Recruitment measures/marketing measures and the formation of an honors program or even a masters program are the most important concepts to focus on for the growth of this college. A suggestion for improvement would be allowing students to take more than one online class. Yes, it is important for students to be on campus as this promotes a positive environment, but there are some courses that would be better suited as online classes. Also, having the option to take more online course would be beneficial for commuter students, and working students in general, as it could free up time wasted by having to be present on campus for a sit in class.

Scholarships are important. For the academic scholarships, it is important that those are maintained throughout the entire four years the student is at KWC, as promised. I know students who have lost their academic scholarships, even though they maintained a high GPA. More scholarship opportunities and maintaining the current ones is one of the biggest concerns for students considering Wesleyan. The financial aid department also needs improvement in their communication skills. When I went to see them, they were very rude and acted like they didn't have time for me. Money is a huge concern for students when choosing a college, and so far, Wesleyan is not competing well with other colleges in this area.

There are several items that need to be addressed at the same time to attract new students.

1. Build new modern facilities that meet today's needs for electronic communications and anticipates the needs of the future. I understand remodeling is cheaper, but you can only remodel so many times before the building becomes obsolete, which I feel many of the buildings on campus are.
2. Goes along with #1 and that is make the computer access easier and more reliable especially in dorms. There should not be a place on campus that has less than 3 bars of reception when everyone is logged in.
3. Go through the course catalog and remove courses that are not taught and have not been taught for years. (I have had one faculty member tell me that he has been here for 9 years and has seen courses listed but they have not even been offered once in that time.)
4. Lower the prices at Jazzman's , Subco, and the cafeteria. These places have a captive captive customer base. Sodexo should not be in the business of making money but providing their customers with quality food.
5. Bring back a physical bookstore. Again they should not be in the business of making money, but providing their customers with quality products.
6. Recruit and hire new faculty to replace the ones that are retiring.
7. Improve facility maintenance responses. (In the Mens restroom in the Library there is a sink that has had a sign posted since the beginning of the semester saying that it needs some attention. Today is the 19th of November and it is still there.)

None of this is important. We pay over \$30,000 a year to attend this school, and have less than schools that students pay way less to go to. More options to eat(or better food in general), better internet, and computers that work over 50% of the time in the library would suffice. Show us that the money we pay isn't a waste.

Requirements are the quickest way not to get people to enjoy something- no matter how fun it fulfilling it actually is.

there focus needs to be on living conditions and food options. The food here is gross and the same thing day to day. no new options no healthy options. no real food. The living conditions are gross, mold in the rooms they have is staying in all year. heaters don't work it's cold in the buildings, the floors are old, the walls are covered in sticky residue left from who knows how many decades. The walls have boards covering them from open wholes in the wall that you can hear creatures crawling behind during the night. you wouldn't want your kid living in these conditions bother would you yourself. the bathrooms and sinks are broken down, dirty water. y'all should fix the health issues and food choices here instead of trying to do other things to cover that up so the people coming to visit don't notice until they get here and then hate it because they feel they have been set up because you have them living like homeless people in the broken down rooms and we have nothing to eat that's good. also flex doesn't help with only 2 options either pizza and subco, we don't want to eat pizza every night and subco has health issues they need to get forget her too. I wonder if the health department knew about all this stuff if it would be allowed. we need to focus on these things instead of new distractions for these new students coming in. these are what matter to students coming here!

Listen. If you want more people here at KWC you have to show other students what we are doing here that they are not doing anywhere else. What puts our school at a different level than the larger schools. Also campus lifestyle is a low here. Students have to live here so it would help if we did things that are appealing to those who live here as well as those commuters.

Get better food and more places to use your flex

Need more stuff to do around here, it is very boring.

With all due respect, I can already imply through the questions being asked that no significant changes will be made to the potential student's perspective of the college. The best way I can describe my opinion in so few words is the phrase "Don't judge a book by its cover." Whereas, KWC is the book. Most people who have graduated the program view KWC very highly. KWC needs to change its cover. I personally would prefer a more old fashioned approach to college, which is the prestige of attending one, and becoming excited and educated in the field I'm interested in. I didn't, and don't choose colleges based off of how many student-led activities there are, and I most certainly didn't want to feel like I was back in high school by attending a pep rally encouraging me to be a good student, and ways I, as a freshman, could succeed. I made the choice to attend college, and picked KWC. Bring back the prestige of being a college student, and let us learn the hard way from our mistakes. Most students don't want a babysitter administration.

If KWC truly wants to become a better institution, think of ways to become a graduate school. The Bachelor's degree is the new high school diploma. There is a strong demand for affordable graduate programs to those who truly want to succeed in their respective fields.

Lower tuition. If you lower tuition you bring many more students. This includes athletes and non athletes. If tuition is lower coaches have less problems with scholarship money and you can get more non athletes to support the athletes.

Drop tuition rate

More Greek involvement in activities and offering more insight into Greek life unbiasedly to prospective and current students

Make campus life better for the students who are already here and you may be surprised to see that they may talk positively about Wesleyan, which will help with recruitment. Wesleyan is so small that you should focus on making the enrolled students happier and make sure their concerns are listened to, not just heard. A lot of the recruitment of students is local so the focus should be on making sure that the enrolled students who will be talking to prospective students actually enjoy their time at KWC.

Greek life is a very influential part of campus, I think we need to recognize that and have the whole Greek community more involved in all aspects of campus life.

no comments thanks.

I think when students come for a campus visit it would be nice to introduce them to Greek life. Possibly show them around different Greek organizations chapter rooms, halls, current activities, etc.

As a commuter, I find it very important to find a way to make commuters more comfortable spending extra time on campus. Residents feel at home on campus since it is their home. Commuters almost feel like outsiders. This is important for student retaining, since commuters find it easier to switch education facilities during their educational career.

I also find it important to integrate commuters and non-traditional students into a campus group. Most Traditional and residential students have their group to which they belong, but non-trad and commuters tend to not belong to a group. This makes us feel even less welcome to join in team competition events held on campus.

having a place where commuters to hang out through out the day.

I think that improving the living facilities and other buildings would help retain students. Things like the heat not coming on when it's cold, or there being no cold water in the bathrooms on the upper floors of the administration building, makes the students feel like they're money isn't being spent on facilities they're using. The SAPB should also be more about making events for the whole college, not just what they want. Multiple times the midnight movie has been clearly rigged for what the SABP wanted to watch, which is discouraging for students here.

I definitely think the school needs to do more for commuters. Being from Owensboro myself, I have a lot of friends here who commute and they all tell me they feel like they don't have any friends here or any way to actually make friends. I'm actually planning on being a commuter next year and I would love if there was a place other than that little area near Jazzman's for me to hang out with my other commuter friends.

Events being held earlier in the day is the only way to get commuter students involved on campus.

I believe if an issue with recruiting prospective students and maintaining enrolled students currently exists, infrastructure remains the top issue. Infrastructure meaning that the faculty and staff as well as students do not show interest with all that Kentucky Wesleyan offers such as campus activities, concerts, and guest speakers. By increasing the interest of the staff, faculty, and students, each of the categories can explain "first-hand" why Kentucky Wesleyan is a great campus, given that students discuss topics of such nature with prospective students. This concept may loosely describe another "motto" our school received last year. THE WESLEYAN WAY!

Work on plumbing issues! I laughed when I was receiving emails about water outages in the dorms before I actually attended Wesleyan. Then I almost cried when I saw the lack of water pressure to wash my hands in the bathrooms. Then I laughed some more at the hand washing instructions on the mirror by the sink with NO HOT WATER FAUCET!!!!

My professors are excellent! They are helpful and available when I need help.

Trading good plumbing for great professors seems reasonable...but I don't live on campus.

Also, I have heard some major complaints and issues among the student leadership. Faculty should have very little involvement in these affairs but seem to be overstepping their position. These students will not learn unless they are given the opportunity to succeed or fail. Continuing to hold their hands will do nothing for them.

Improve your retention rate before you worry about recruiting fresh meat.

COMMENTS?SUGGESTIONS --- STAFF

Anything that gets prospective students on campus. Science camps, music camps, etc

I feel we are all recruiters for KWC. Sometimes the most insignificant things can make a big impact on a prospective student. Also the culture at KWC has to change and ALL work together for a positive end result.

Many small colleges have benefited from increasing international students. The Davis international student program out of Vermont is good. The information has been given to Admissions.

Faculty and staff should be made aware of admissions open houses, college fairs, etc. prior to admitted students day. Believe in what you are selling which is the entire student experience. If you find that a majority of the students from the high school (per guidance counselor) are looking into business, take our business chair to recruit. Same as with Chemistry, English, etc. Our people make Kentucky Wesleyan the great place it is. Engage them to be more involved. In the same sense, invite all to a "meet your fellow Wesleyan" for faculty and staff to mix and engage.

Get more students involved in recruitment activities, i.e. student ambassadors or students accompanying admissions staff to local events like college fairs or the high school they went with To get more students involved, come up with new incentives for participation. Lack of pay causing students to not participate.

We do some of these things well, but not all. The Wesleyan Way has gotten most peoples attention, now it time to do something about it. Talk is cheap.

There is a need for a Graduate Program in 2 or 3 areas of study (Education, Business and Sports Administration would be a good start. Class availability between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. that would allow student-athletes earlier practice time so that they can spend more time in the evening studying and getting rest so that they can do well in the classroom and athletic endeavors. Options now have practices not getting over until 11 p.m. frequently.

Based on the information contained in the board report, it is obvious to me that the financial health of the institution is related to the ability to recruit non-athlete students. While the athletic program is a credible draw for students, it seems to be the majority draw which is unfortunate because of the quality academic program at Wesleyan. Recruiting students who simply want to be students and in involved in campus life voluntarily will bolster the entire college experience and The Wesleyan Way - allowing unaffiliated students to support athletes, and athletes to support unaffiliated students in academic/extra/co-curricular endeavors. All of these are important things the College should undertake, so while I do not feel neutral about any of them, to emphasize the most important in my opinion, some had to be lower.

There need to be set goals, expectations and pathways for timely inter and intra-office communication.

I think the students do a good job of providing leadership in student life activities. I also believe we have good communication of events that are currently going on.

I suggest decreasing travel by Admissions Counselors to far-flung areas when we have surrounding outlying county areas that would make more sense economically, at least until we are more financially sound. In these areas heavy recruiting could bring those top students to the "big city" of Owensboro for a residential college experience that is still near home. Those students would likely appreciate the size of Owensboro, compared to their smaller towns, and also the charm of a small campus community.

Recruiting students that have the means and resources to pay is vital to their future and ours. A financial literacy class to educate students on student loans and their financial responsibility is being done by other colleges as part of their required classes as a freshman and would be an asset to our students. Additional comment to previous submission: As long as this is anonymous.....The Wesleyan Way sounds great in theory, but our administrators at the very top, even those who developed it and consistently tout it, should consider the way they treat staff and faculty is not The Wesleyan Way. When faculty and staff are treated with little respect and even animosity, they become unhappy people, even if they have otherwise healthy self-confidence. THIS has a negative impact on our campus, and therefore, our students as well. Some might consider it a miracle to see this change actually happen, but I believe in miracles! I hope this suggestion will be heeded by those who operate in what is easily identifiable as high school behavior among their campus family--especially their employees.

I think the most important concern at the present time should be increasing communication between departments. It is essential to the campus community that all departments be on the same page. I think allowing students to have leadership and responsibility in planning activities on campus is important, but there should still be an "adult" to help with the planning process. I do not know how important commuter only spaces are--we need to take a look at other small schools to see if they have these kind of designated spaces. I, also, do not think they should be called "commuter spaces." They should be places that all students have access to throughout the day to get work done without having to go the library. As for "praising" faculty on facebook, I think this idea is slightly dated. The student population really no longer recognizes facebook as "cool"--they use other social media sources. An Honors College might be nice, but when you think of a private school you sometimes just assume that all classes are honors. It has potential, but really needs to be thought through.

Having a time frame during the day where students can have,an opportunity to be apart of campus life. Current model IN NO WAY allows students to this. Our current class model does nothing to enhance the college experience.

I feel these are important points for the next 1.5 years, and, furthermore, I feel these points should incorporated into a 5-year plan. I Believe we are just coming to the realization that to become viable and grow, we must change our business model. These focus groups are a great way to encourage campus involvement. Not only is this needed, but a question I have is: Have we analyzed or bench-marked successful endeavors at other similar institutions?

I think one of our biggest faults in the past 20 years is not knowing who we really are, what direction we want to go and what "we want to be when we grow up". For long time employees, "the Wesleyan Way" meant lots of negative or poor choices KWC has made. The new Wesleyan Way idea is where we need to be in terms of who we are. It should be a part of our mission statement, branding, marketing and admissions strategy. The "Find Yourself" should be dropped. Two "tag lines" makes us look unsure of our message. We also seem to struggle offering competitive degrees or degrees in areas of need. This may not be true but it is a feeling that many have. Staff especially, need to be more aware of our academic strengths and successful programs. Also, having faculty and staff more involved in recruiting and student involvement is most valuable. Those who have families or just starting families do not have the time or maybe energy to commit to after hours events and gatherings. There should be opportunities for them during work hours to contribute but what those would be I don't know. They shouldn't be looked down upon (or overlooked for their hard work during work hours) if their family comes first.

Comments/suggestions FACULTY

Move away from an enrollment model so dependent on athletics. We've created an incredibly lopsided student population. Hire one or two faculty with primary responsibility to recruit. Steve is great but he is primarily going for musicians. Hire a STEM recruiter and one for social sciences. Business would sell itself if we actually marketed the program. Existing teaching faculty is already spread too thin. Asking them to add off campus recruiting responsibilities is not going to be effective.

Until we market ourselves, we are not going to succeed. News and Information and Admissions offices have to work harder and do much more marketing of the college.

Resources must be devoted to building Methodist church relationships, and with other churches as well.

Additionally, I believe it is important to have someone in the religion department/campus ministries on the Care Team to provide for the spiritual wellbeing of our students. This needs to be highlighted - that we spiritually care for our students as well, respecting their individual faith experience.

Lastly, events must be planned and coordinated. An email the day of an event or a day before the event is not sufficient. I like the newsletter in the bathrooms - it is a communication tool. If used consistently, it could be a vital communication piece.

This survey is far too general to be useful. Concrete proposals are needed.

Academic areas that have low numbers of faculty need to be upgraded with more faculty so the program appeals to the non-athletic, non-musical students whose parents graduated from college. These students can pay more but also will expect more. Creative academic combinations of programs involving new faculty with appropriate expertise could enhance our academic attractiveness. Examples would be business or criminal justice or education and Spanish. Collaboration has always been limited because of concern over the majors headcount in an area. This issue has to be resolved to move ahead with more collaboration. You could say that the numbers game enhances silos. This rule also applies to many administrative efforts.

I marked some questions above as neutral because they are already in progress. Your initial statement should differentiate between ongoing efforts and new ones such as the honors program.

Wonderful, wonderful and powerful programs. All of them are incredible.

A few thoughts/suggestions - which may not have been mentioned before:

For #5 to work, we need to be able to state - in just a few words - honestly: what makes us different/better than all the rest? (Our new motto was evidently developed with no faculty/staff input - that would have made a "buy-in" much easier to sell! Do we have a defined mission statement - otherwise?)

Are we recruiting students first - then athletes (student "first"-athlete "second" concept)?

In terms of retention, we need students who see college as a privilege - and not a "right" ... Even poor, first-generation students exist who feel this way - they do exist! Retention is a two-way street: Teachers teach - students study and come to class. Again, we need students who want to be in college for the right reasons. (We need to be clear about what we want and why.)

The appropriate infrastructure must exist to support the weak students we do accept...we need tutors, etc. (To me, it's a fraud to accept these students - who are weak academically/no study habits - without having adequate tutoring/basic skills assistance, etc. What happens when they flunk out, can't get a job, and have student debt to worry about too?)

Some facilities should be improved immediately - 2nd floor/admin classrooms (high school look and feel) - also: restrooms/locker rooms for some teams are nonexistent!

Some schools let students craft their own degree - mix and match interests. Have we considered that possibility?

Have we asked graduates what they think/want - the very ones who have been through our system?

Thank you...

I support all suggestions!

I trust the staff that is in place to implement the direction for the best results for the students and for our local college. KWC has earned respect within the community and the state.

I do not find the HR department very warm or welcoming. After I completed my new employee paperwork, I never heard from HR again. No Welcome to Wesleyan, no How are you settling in?, no "Let me introduce you to some colleagues." Faculty and Staff need to be noticed and appreciated and getting off to this type of start didn't make me feel like I was wanted here.

I would like to see less focus on athletics. I understand that athletes are necessary for this college to function, but I feel like an inordinate amount of focus goes on athletics and less on the academic side of the college experience. I truly get tired of the press release emails that come out by the dozen that celebrate athletes. I feel that as a student, that sends a pretty clear message about what Wesleyan "cares" about. We need to find a way to celebrate the successes of our students in their academic pursuits as well. I'm not irritated that my email gets clogged up; I'm irritated that it is constantly clogged up with athletic achievement only. What about the student in my class who just got a prestigious internship? Or the student who was accepted to graduate school? Or nursing school? I love my students equally and will bend over backwards to help them be successful. They should feel that the college will do the same... and not just if they are an athlete. In another area, I would love to see some kind of program implemented that helps at risk students succeed. I know we have the PLUS center and student instructors, etc, but I would love to see a mentoring program where academically successful students can be paired up with at risk students to help them develop study habits, help with papers, give advice, etc.

On question 4 I believe that there needs to be more places for all students to "hang out". Not just commuter students. For example, if we allow students to continue using a building (that is normally closed around 6 pm) until around 10 pm that would be great! However, it would also be important to work with security to make sure there is no misbehavior and students are safe. ie... security makes sure lights are out and students are out after 10 pm...

Most of these ideas have been tried before but died for lack of support both in terms of personnel and money. Creative use of the Title III money may result in some progress in some areas. One example would be funding release time for a couple of faculty to develop an honors program. A previous effort failed because of incompatible expectations and faculty weariness. A major issue which is not being addressed is the decrease in faculty and increase in administrative staff. Until that situation is improved, our gains will be limited.

ALL eleven statements could and should be TOPS. But, to me #1, 9, and 11 are TOP PRIORITY. These statements say it best... To expand on recruitment - through my experience, KWC should have a "behind the scene" team to recruit ALL young students who perform at a high level of success - as early as MIDDLE SCHOOL age/years. The team should review newspapers, community documents etc... Cut out pictures, articles etc... (build a paper file) about a student. An initial congratulatory letter should introduce KWC to a young student (academic, sports, community activity etc...) - a "job well done" note. KWC now has a potential student in our recruitment database. Students should have a KWC document to "read and touch" at least every six months. By the time a "KWC database potential student" is a high school sophomore - they should have multiple letters, to include emails from the KWC team, and at least one or two phone calls. We should have a "verbal or written commitment" from the future KWC student before he/she enters their senior year of high school. My experience reflect a student makes a decision to and where they will continue their education as early as summer before junior year of high school. Transfer students should have an early track also.