



OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

July 24, 2006

Mr. Erskine Bowles
Office of the President
PO Box 2688
Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

Dear Mr. Bowles:

We appreciate your visit to our campus last month. Your interaction with WCU staff and members of the Board of Trustees demonstrated a new spirit of cooperation between WCU and General Administration which has energized our campus. In fact, at our Board meeting the next day, the Board enthusiastically approved WCU's new mission and strategic plan because it so closely matches your desire to increase the university's role in promoting economic development in North Carolina.

I am submitting this new mission statement on behalf of the Western Carolina Board of Trustees for your approval. Although the UNC system plans to undergo a mission review this next year, I would still like for you to consider approving our mission now. We developed this mission and strategic plan over the last 18 months as part of our SACS accreditation process before we knew anything about a mission review. Because of our SACS timeline (compliance document due to SACS in September; campus visit next April), I believe it is important for us to bring closure to our internal campus review as soon as possible.

The newly revised WCU mission breaks with tradition and expresses the mission in a few concise, unambiguous statements. It declares WCU to be a regional university that is dedicated to improving individual lives and the quality of life of the region through educational programs and engagement:

***Description:** Western Carolina University is a premier regional university with nationally and internationally recognized teacher-scholars dedicated to student learning. A constituent member of the University of North Carolina, the university offers courses in the arts, sciences, technologies, humanities, and professions through degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, education specialist and doctoral levels. Western offers the advantages of a large university while maintaining its small college atmosphere.*

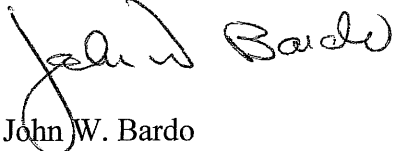
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***Mission:** Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research and service through residential, distance education and international experiences. The university focuses its academic programs, educational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

I am also including WCU's new strategic plan as an information item to illustrate how Western's new mission is linked to strategic directions that serve regional development. We believe our new mission, vision, and strategic plan position us well for the next decade.

I look forward to discussing our strategic plan as well as our revised mission with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John W. Bardo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John W. Bardo
Chancellor

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Enclosures

c: Steve Warren, Chair, WCU Board of Trustees
Kyle R. Carter, Provost