



2014-2015 Post-Secondary Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

College or University Certifications

The signature of college or university President (or equivalent) on the next page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the institution’s eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

- 1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority’s jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university is providing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the college or university concluding that the nominated college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
5. There are no findings by Federal Student Aid of violations in respect to the administration of Title IV student aid funds.
6. The college or university is in good standing with its regional or national accreditor.
7. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2014-2015

Public 4-Year Public 2-Year Private Non-Profit

Name of President/Chancellor: Dr. Lee Rasch (Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official College or University Name: Western Technical College (As it should appear on an award)

College or University Street Mailing Address: 400 7th St. N, PO Box 0908, La Crosse, WI 54602 (If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

County: La Crosse IPEDS Number\*: 240170 Telephone: 608-785-9200 Fax: 608-785-9205 Web site/URL: www.westerntc.edu E-mail: RaschL@westerntc.edu

\*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Signature of Lee Rasch Date: 1/23/2015 (President’s/Chancellor’s Signature)



## Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the college or university's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: University of Wisconsin System

Name of Nominating Authority: Dr. Ray Cross  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.

Date: 1/30/15

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

## SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION OF NOMINEE'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Provide a coherent "snapshot" that describes how your college or university is representative of your jurisdiction's highest achieving green school efforts. Summarize your strengths and accomplishments in all three Pillars and nine Elements. Then, include documentation and concrete examples for work in every Pillar and Element.

## SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications and documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to [green.ribbon.schools@ed.gov](mailto:green.ribbon.schools@ed.gov) according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: February 28, 2015

### Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.



**Wisconsin Post-Secondary Institution Application**

College/University Name: Western Technical College

Street Address: 400 7<sup>th</sup> St. N, PO Box 0908

City: La Crosse State: WI Zip: 54601-0908

Website: [www.westerntc.edu](http://www.westerntc.edu)

President/Chancellor Name: Lee Rasch

President/Chancellor Email Address: [RaschL@westerntc.edu](mailto:RaschL@westerntc.edu) Phone Number: (608) 785-9100

<p>Basic Carnegie Classification</p>	<p>Associate's – Public Rural-Serving Medium</p>	<p>Minority-Serving Institution (check all that apply):  AANAPISI  ANNH  HBCU  HSI  NASNTI  PBI  TCU</p>
<p>Enrollment Profile</p>	<p>Size and setting  Undergraduate Enrollment: <u>6,927</u>  Graduate Enrollment: <u>N/A</u>  Percent of Undergraduates Receiving Pell Grants: <u>43%</u></p>	<p>Graduation rate (150% of normal time): <u>36%</u>  Average Institutional Net Price: <u>\$8,802</u></p>



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### Questions and Narrative

Please discuss your achievements in each of the Pillars given below. Your discussion for each of the Pillars below should not exceed 500 words. Committee members are allowed to deduct points from narratives exceeding 500 words. If an applicant wishes to add photos, a maximum of two photos per Pillar is allowed. Photos can be inserted within narrative or submitted separately. However, all photos must be labeled clearly including the particular Pillar that it is supporting. No other attachments or supporting documents will be read by the committee.

In evaluating the applications, the committee agreed to assign scores as follow:

1. Participation in green school programs or signatory to the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment – 2% weight;
2. Pillar 1: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs – 36 % weight;
3. Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff – 20% weight; and
4. Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education – 42% weight

### **Section I**

1. Is your college or university participating in a local, state or national program which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?  
 Yes ( ) No Program(s) and level(s) achieved:  
Western Technical College is a signatory to the American College and University President's Climate Commitment.
2. Has your college or university received any awards for facilities, health or environment?  
 Yes ( ) No Award(s) and year(s)  
Gold Standard for Well Workplace Award from the YMCA's Pioneering Healthy Communities – 2011, 2012, 2013  
Bronze Award for Bicycle Friendly Business from the League of American Bicyclists – 2011

### **Section II**

#### **Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs**

*Narrative:* Describe how your college or university is reducing environmental impact and costs by reducing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions; improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation; reducing waste production; and using alternative transportation. Identify your institution's energy-efficient facilities and practices, ecologically beneficial uses of grounds, and methods of disposal for solid and hazardous wastes.

Western Technical College has implemented numerous strategies to reduce environmental impact and costs. In 2007, Western signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment and is working toward fulfilling all of the seven tangible actions associated with the commitment. Greenhouse Gas Inventories from 2005-2012 have been completed and show an almost 30% reduction in gross emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e.



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In 2010, an Energy Conservation Management Program (ECMP) started, and in 2011, Western's Sustainable Culture Policy was approved. Through ECMP, Western encourages all staff and students to do what they can to reduce energy usage such as turning off lights and equipment when not in use. ECMP practices have resulted in \$786,000 in utility savings and an energy reduction impact of 4,447 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The ECMP monitors water usage and focuses on operational water use. Western grounds have rain gardens to contain water run-off from buildings and parking lots. Permeable pavers were used in the central courtyard to promote the infiltration of storm water through the surface of the pavers into the ground, cleansing and cooling the water while promoting the recharge of the aquifers. The facility in Sparta, WI uses a locally manufactured geo-thermal water pump to heat and cool the building. A reuse system through the pump provides water for toilets, landscape irrigation, and fire-fighting tanker truck refilling.

The Union Market, Western's food service entity, uses reusable food containers, offers reusable cups for water, ceramic plates, and silverware. Staff weigh and track pre-consumer food waste using a LeanPath system and donate leftover food at the end of the week to local shelters.

For alternative transportation, Western offers bicycle facilities along with access to showers. All staff and students can ride the regional public transportation bus systems free of charge as part of their enrollment and/or employment at Western. In 2013, Western paid for a total of 67,574 rides. Western also looks at program consolidation and course scheduling in order to eliminate the need for added trips to additional locations.

All new construction on all campuses must be designed and constructed to meet or exceed the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver Certification standard. Three of Western's buildings are LEED certified Silver, two are certified Gold, and one is a certified Passive House. Two buildings currently under construction are anticipated to meet the Silver certification standard, and a third is expected to meet Platinum standards. Western's Hydro Power Station produces energy through a water turbine, creating a renewal energy source that generates energy credits for the college and in the future will offset usage at Western's regional locations. Western installed a Konvekta heat recovery system in the kitchen facilities that has reduced natural gas consumption by 68%.

Western contracts with vendors to remove bio-hazard wastes twice a year and hazardous waste as needed. The college takes fluorescent bulbs, ballasts, and e-waste to a local hazardous materials facility. A local supplier picks up used batteries at no charge. Waste Management is contracted to remove regular waste and recyclables.

### **Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff**

*Narrative:* Describe how your college or university improves the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff by integrating a campus-wide environmental health program and promoting sound health and wellness practices. You should discuss integrated pest management, contaminant controls and ventilation, asthma controls, indoor air quality, moisture control, and chemical management. Address the amount and type of outdoor time that your students and staff have, as well as the types of fresh, local, and organic food that they eat. Other components you may want to include are: health education, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, staff health promotion and family and community involvement.

Western encourages the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff through our Live Well committees as well as a variety of health related programs. The committees are a network of employees and students who work to increase student



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success by creating a campus culture that supports and encourages healthy lifestyle choices through policy change, implementation of proven programs, and promotion of personal responsibility. Employees and students have access to resources on physical activity, healthy eating, emotional wellness, spiritual opportunities, healthcare, environmental wellness, and counseling services. Students also have access to programs to assist with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs cessation, and relationship violence prevention. Western's main campus offers a Wellness Center for staff and students which offers group fitness classes, personal training, intramural sports, massage therapy, and access to work out equipment and facilities. The Student Health Center provides comprehensive primary care services for Western students with a valid student ID.

Western contracts with a 3rd party vendor, Plunkett's Pest Control, to handle integrated pest control. Plunkett's uses the principles of Integrated Pest Management, relying more on inspection and monitoring than on "preventive applications" of pesticide, and they use sanitation and exclusion to deny pests the things they need to survive. The use of pesticides is minimized within schools by establishing lines of defense that enable them to intercept pests before they become a problem inside.

The ventilation of occupied spaces throughout district facilities ranges from a minimum of building code requirements to 100% outdoor air makeup. Varied air handling systems are customized to the usage of each space. Air filtration takes place at outdoor air and return air locations. MERV 8 pleated pre-filters are standard and many systems have an additional final filter of MERV 13. Indoor air quality is maintained by the filtration process along with the building automation controls system and CO2 monitoring. Moisture control is generally handled by removing humidity during the cooling season with mechanical means or chilled water coils. Typically, a set point of 50% relative humidity is maintained during the heating season through the use of outdoor air, relief air and return air damper control points.

All chemicals are listed in MSDS Online and each department has a copy of its chemical inventory. Each program is responsible to order its own products and then provide the safety data sheet for new products so that the online system can be updated regularly.

Students and staff both have regular time outside to get to class, meetings, and to take advantage of Western's many outdoor gathering spaces. Students have additional opportunities to go outside through their classes, either by attending field trips or attending a class outside when the weather permits.

Western's Union Market purchases from a local food supplier that provides locally grown food. Additionally, Western is located 5 blocks from the local food co-op which offers staff and students an avenue for locally grown and organic foods.

### **Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**

*Narrative:* Describe how your college or university provides effective environmental and sustainability education by incorporating STEM, civic skills, and green career pathways. Provide examples of interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems. Demonstrate how your institution uses the environment and sustainability to develop STEM content, knowledge, and thinking skills. You should also discuss how your institution develops and applies civic knowledge and skills to environmental and sustainability education.

Curriculum programming at Western is driven by seven Core Abilities with the seventh being: "Make decisions that incorporate the importance of sustainability." Currently, 35%-40% of all existing courses have incorporated this Core Ability, and Western is on track to incorporate the remaining courses by 2018.



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Two programs in particular provide effective environmental and sustainability education. The Building Systems Technology program prepares individuals for work in the growing clean energy, energy efficiency, and building systems industry with a focus on: green building design and construction, energy auditing, systems commissioning, systems control, and retrofit techniques. Landscape Horticulture students will gain hands-on learning in the new Horticulture Education Center and greenhouse starting in the fall of 2015. Classes will grow herbs for the Union Market and 6,000 plant starts for a local community garden. Western is working to create a sustainable food production degree combining classes from horticulture, agriculture, and culinary.

Recently, students in three STEM programs worked together to create a computer dashboard program that tracks energy usage of a campus building in real time. Architectural Design students created 3D renderings of the building, Building Systems Technology students created the written content for what viewers see and what it means, and Web and Software Developer students created the computer software program that brings it to life.

Living laboratories are used to educate students and the community in green career pathways by incorporating STEM and civic skills. One of Western's living labs is La Crosse's first Passive House. The Passive House design and construction model focuses on sustainability and energy efficiency. Utilizing the sun, energy efficient building materials and techniques, and a quality ventilation system, homeowners can realize a 90 percent cost savings in their utilities. The first home was completed with student assistance and will be used as an instructional facility for Building Systems Technology, HVAC, Landscape Horticulture, and Architectural Technology students. Students and instructors offer free tours of the house during La Crosse's annual Earth Fair and educational seminars for realtors and builders on "green" financing, facilities, and construction practices.

Another living lab is Western's Hydro Power Station which provides learning opportunities for students while simultaneously reducing the College's own carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels. There are an estimated 600 dams in Wisconsin, but no formal training program exists in the state for those who run and maintain the dams. Western plans to offer a certificate in hydro technology.

Western's recently created Community Engagement program allows students to apply sustainability and environmental education in a civic manner with opportunities to conduct Passive House tours, sustainable living presentations for the community, and assist with environmental research.

In 2011, Western spearheaded the creation of the Sustainability Institute (SI) which brings together businesses to share best sustainability practices with the goal of educating the community at large. SI is implementing the MPower Program, a nationally recognized one-year program for businesses and organizations that want to reduce their environmental impact while saving costs and creating a healthier and more engaging workplace and community.

### Section III

**Summary Narrative:** Provide an executive summary of 500 - 750 words describing your institution's efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Focus on unique and innovative, yet replicable, practices and partnerships. Be sure to cover every USDE Pillar.



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As evidenced in the responses to the three Pillars above, Western Technical College is doing a number of things to reduce its impact on the environment. Much of what Western is doing revolves around creating a culture of sustainability. The college community needs to be invested in order to turn off lights when leaving a room, to unplug appliances over long weekends and breaks, and keep doors shut to allow the HVAC systems to work more efficiently. These are some of the actions taken under Pillar One initiatives that have shown significant costs savings and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing CO2 emissions by 4,447 metric tons, or the equivalent of taking 926 cars off the road for one year, is significant. While turning off the lights may not be innovative, it is easy and highly replicable. Tracking and showing the impact of those actions is innovative, highly replicable, and very effective. Western created a marketing campaign around sustainability at the college with the slogan of “It’s Easy Being Green” with a frog logo. Using the frog logo, the Neon Leon program rewards participants for their involvement. This energy efficient tree frog audits the entire campus and collects data that in turn gets shared college-wide in order to improve conservation efforts and change habits.

Working to improve student and staff health and wellness is made easier by being in a community that promotes healthy living. Western works with the La Crosse community to ensure staff, students, and faculty know and take opportunities made available to them. Western regularly emails updates on upcoming activities such as 5K and half-marathon runs and campus fitness challenges. The area features hundreds of miles for bike riding, and Western does its part to promote cycling as alternative form of transportation by making bike racks available and offering use of the showers for free for those who ride their bikes to work. Western partners with Viterbo University, a local private university, to offer an Intramural/Recreational Sports program that gives any student, faculty and staff member the opportunity to participate and compete regardless of skill level or experience, free of charge.

The adoption of the Sustainable Culture Policy was instrumental in effecting change within course curriculum at Western. With the integration of the 7th Core Ability defined under Pillar 3, progress has been made to map sustainability practices into curriculum and the Quality Review process each program is evaluated with. Currently, about 40% of course listings include sustainability. Western’s Sustainability Coordinator is working on an updated Sustainability Plan with an action plan to ensure the incorporation of the 7th Core Ability into the remaining courses and to develop new courses that cover sustainability where gaps exist.

Western’s creation of living laboratories has been a unique opportunity for students across multiple disciplines to gain experiential learning. The living labs provide real world access to environmental practices while simultaneously providing benefits to the community at large. The Passive House is the first of its kind in La Crosse, providing local builders the chance to build to Passive House standards. It’s the first of a planned three to be built and purchased by residents. The hope is more homeowners and builders will look to build to Passive House standards in the future. The Hydro Power Station provides energy for our regional campuses. The Horticulture Learning Center, once complete, will provide greenhouse space for a local urban agricultural center, plant starts for local community gardens, and produce for local food pantries.

Western recently created a Community Engagement program which focuses on service learning and community service. The program works to connect the college and community for the purpose of fulfilling a community need, developing a deeper sense of civic engagement, and academic learning within students. The Community Engagement Coordinator works with students, faculty, and community organizations to identify opportunities for partnership. By working together, Western can fulfill community needs, provide personal enrichment education, and give students a deeper academic experience.



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“It’s easy being green” is not just a slogan for Western’s sustainability efforts; it’s a rallying cry for every administrator, employee, and student to reduce their impact on the environment. It is a teaching style, work style, and a lifestyle change. It’s the right thing to do to improve quality of life whether as an individual or as a member of the campus community and the communities around us.

## Pillar One Photos



Photo of Cleary Courtyard which has permeable pavers to promote the infiltration of stormwater. The Lunda Center is in the left foreground and is a LEED Silver Certified building.



Photo of the Public Safety Training Center in Sparta, WI which features a geo-thermal water pump for heating and cooling.

## Pillar Two Photos



Students taking advantage of the fitness facility in the Wellness Center.



Studio in the Wellness Center where fitness classes are taught.

## Pillar 3 Photos



Students inspect the Hydro Power Station water turbine while electronics instructor Jon Burman explains the facility.



Building Systems Technology students test the Passive House construction for air tightness.