

# Part III. Institutional Context



## ALIGNMENT OF ACTIVITIES WITH THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

It is essential that implementation of our engagement objectives be concordant with established university strategic priorities. In this way, individuals and units can best identify and address their responsibilities in promoting the advances in student learning we all seek. At the same time, we can use this framework to readily incorporate engagement initiatives into *Challenging the Spirit* and other university planning documents. Below we cast our proposed efforts in this light.

### **Strategic Goal 1: Increasing Student Learning**

Academic units clearly have the most direct responsibility for promoting the educational development of our students. Thus, academic units should be expected to focus much of their effort in the area of engaging students in areas complementary to students' academic training (both major/minor as well as general education). Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Promoting active learning in the course setting, especially as it advances development of critical and integrative thought processes and/or advances students' appreciation for a diversity of viewpoints.
2. Cultivating opportunities for academic engagement within the context of students' coursework, especially through independent research, scholarship or creative activity related to the subject discipline, and project-based learning.
3. Developing students' appreciation of the historical context of the discipline and/or the relationship of the subject discipline to modern society.

We propose to implement the following new initiatives in this area:

- a. Create a dynamic, engagement-based University Honors Program experience that will serve as a model of engaged learning and be seen as a destination point for the most outstanding students nationwide.
- b. Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics and ethical aspects of the discipline into major programs of study and/or general education.
- c. Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with the knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.
- d. Ensure availability of experience relevant to students' degree program that includes consideration of the relationship of the discipline and its practitioners to modern society and broader community.
- e. Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience to establish expectations and patterns of engagement by students.
- f. Orient Winter, May and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for experiential learning opportunities to all groups of students.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- g. Increase the extent and diversity of active learning strategies in the curriculum.
- h. Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity that enhances the knowledge/creative base within the discipline or addresses tangible issues in the broader community.
- i. Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-op, KWSP and volunteer opportunities, particularly those in which students engage with communities different from their own and address issues facing those communities.
- j. Re-energize Humanities Semester and develop similar integrated, multidisciplinary learning venues.

- k. Continue to advance the American Democracy Project.
- l. Assist in advancing recommendations of the International Task Force that support continued growth of internationalism and ethnic/cultural awareness and diversity among our students and faculty, including study abroad and regular participation in opportunities such as the Fulbright Program.
- m. Expand opportunities for graduate students to serve as role models/mentors for undergraduates by promoting appropriate use of graduate teaching assistants.
- n. Expect syllabi to appropriately include both strategies for engaging students with the material as well as meta- learning goals for students in the course.

## ***Strategic Goal 2: Developing the Student Body***

We anticipate units within the area of student affairs and student life to be most directly involved in fostering engagement objectives that promote the intellectual and personal growth of our students, as well as in contributing to the evolution of the characteristics of our student population over time. Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Developing programming within residence halls and/or living/learning communities that organize students' thought around common, multidimensional problems and challenge students to become educated and contributing citizens.
2. Implementing strategies to extend learning experiences into the student life experience and allow students to advance their own learning through action.
3. Emphasizing the role of leadership, volunteerism and active commitment to civic and social issues as mechanisms for advancing professional and personal development.
4. Formulating strategies for promoting personal exploration, maturity, responsibility and development among students.

We propose to implement the following new initiatives in this area:

- a. Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to promote, record and document students' participation in experiential and service learning activities, with opportunity for linking to a developmental checklist for students.
- b. Establish comprehensive points of entry for students' involvement in community service, service learning and leadership activities.
  - i. Institutionalize the Alive Center as a vital, long-term link between the university and the community supporting volunteer or civic initiatives.
  - ii. Utilize the Leadership Center as an organizing unit for leadership activities.
  - iii. Utilize capacities of Career Services, Student Life, HRL, and Academic Advising.
- c. Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social or civic issue during their tenure at Western.
- d. Institute or orient first-year activities to initiate students to university opportunities and expectations, and highlight the passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment, with expectations for engagement.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- e. Establish a chapter of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars at Western, linking nomination of outstanding first- and second-year students to both academic excellence and commitment to engaged service.
- f. Increase support for the university Cultural Enhancement Series in order to allow presentation of additional high-profile events per year.
- g. Continue to advance the American Humanics Project.
- h. Develop online career exploration service accessible to different units and programs, including UE 175 and the advising process.
- i. Provide and track use of physical and virtual spaces to house institutional information dissemination systems that help students become aware of engagement-promoting services, programs, civic and cultural events across the university and community.
- j. Encourage regular, university-wide participation in the national Make a Difference Day program to engage the university with our community partners.
- k. Encourage student-run ventures across campus to serve as both gathering places for students as well as opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- l. Commit and create processes to facilitate to increased, regular nomination of outstanding students for national scholarships.
- m. Collaborate with student affairs staff trained through the Office of Diversity Programs to provide diversity awareness experiences on campus.

### ***Strategic Goal 3: Assuring High-Quality Faculty and Staff***

The success of any quality enhancement plan depends on establishing a university climate in which faculty and staff are both committed to and trained in successful implementation of strategic initiatives. To that end, it is incumbent upon all units to think creatively of ways to help current faculty and staff be successful in their professional responsibilities and development, to appropriately expect and reward individuals for their significant accomplishments, and to consider new ways that faculty and staff talents might be brought to bear on the goal of enhancing student success through engaged learning. Such objectives may include but are not limited to:

1. Establishing resources for faculty and staff that facilitate sharing of engagement strategies, resources and data.
2. Implementing procedures that consider potential or tangible contributions to engagement goals as part of hiring, performance review and recognition of faculty and staff.
3. Establishing the expectation that faculty, staff and units will contribute positively to engagement goals.
4. Providing tangible incentives and recognition for individuals and units that successfully enhance the level of student engagement in their area.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Establish reward and recognition system for faculty, staff and units that demonstrate significant accomplishment in engaging students for success.
- b. Incorporate contribution to engagement goals as an evaluative element in performance review, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review processes.
- c. Promote recognition of research on the scholarship of engagement as one element in performance review, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review guidelines.
- d. Consider ability to contribute to unit student engagement goals in the hiring of faculty and staff.
- e. Financially compensate faculty teaching courses through CCSA, KIIS and other study abroad programs.
- f. Increase support for graduate assistants to levels competitive with our benchmark institutions and incorporate expectations for appropriate and meaningful interaction with undergraduates in the classroom, in research/creative activity or in service delivery area.
- g. Strengthen commitment to graduate programs as a means of attracting and retaining high quality faculty and staff.
- h. Encourage innovation in use of technology for engaging students.
- i. Create a faculty instructional technology training program centered on promoting engagement in the classroom through web-based teaching tools, video conferencing, multimedia authoring, etc.
- j. Support continued professional development of faculty and staff in areas related to engaged learning and student success.
- k. Support initiatives that may serve as a teaching resource for faculty and staff interested in applying engagement strategies to advance student learning.
- l. Establish university-wide awards for advancing student learning through engagement.
- m. Provide training to faculty and staff related to promotion, recording and tracking of student experiential learning and engagement activities.
- n. Provide appropriate training for faculty and staff in online career exploration and group self-assessment and counseling processes.

**Strategic Goal 4: Enhancing Responsiveness to Constituents**

The university maintains a diverse manner of relationships with constituencies and individuals outside the local university community; as such, individuals and units from multiple divisions will likely be involved in advancing engagement objectives in this area. Such objectives may include but are not limited to:

1. Involving students in applied research and service activities that address problems relevant to the region, state and nation.
2. Cultivating relationships with alumni and friends of the university that provide additional opportunities for students to participate in meaningful experiences which enhance their professional or personal growth.
3. Fostering civic engagement activities that broaden students' worldview while positively impacting the lives of others.

We propose to support continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Increase use of students in university, civic and social programming as presenters, guest speakers, etc.
- b. Engage members of the Board of Regents as informed advocates and passionate ambassadors for areas related to student engagement.
- c. Work with Alumni Affairs to design and implement specific avenues for alumni to take a leadership and mentoring role with Admissions, Career Services or academic departments.
- d. Target local, regional and selected urban communities for reciprocal relationships as a means of both enhancing those communities as well as strengthening student recruitment, fundraising and career opportunities from within those communities.
- e. Collaborate with Career Services and external constituents to provide career related events and mentoring opportunities for students.
- f. Enhance access of internal and external constituents to physical and virtual campus.
- g. Incorporate QEP themes into centennial celebrations and other university occasions and events.

### ***Strategic Goal 5: Increasing Institutional Effectiveness***

Responsibility for promoting engagement activities that advance the efficiency of and capacity for student learning lies with all the divisions of the university. The support and service units are key contributors to enabling attainment of QEP goals, and their shared responsibility is absolutely essential. By creating an institutional process that promotes advance of specific objectives as well as facilitates the efforts of other units, we can expand the range of meaningful opportunities available to students and increase the likelihood that students will benefit from investing in these opportunities. Such objectives might include but are not limited to:

1. Promoting the continued growth of transdepartmental programs that directly impact student engagement for success while increasing students' appreciation for diversity in all its forms.
2. Coordinating partnerships between the university and outside groups that provide meaningful opportunities for practical and context-driven learning by students.
3. Creating proactive budgeting, purchasing and facilities management systems within the university that seamlessly allow student learning initiatives to move forward.
4. Organizing university planning and assessment documents and procedures within an efficient timeline and around a common language centered on engaged learning and student success.

We propose to achieve continued growth of existing activities in this area as follows:

- a. Establish the Leadership Team to spearhead implementation of engagement programs.
- b. Ensure policies for purchasing are streamlined and facilitate acquisition of materials, supplies and products that support engaged student learning.
- c. Consolidate budgetary resources and processes to create more effective mechanisms for supporting and implementing engagement recommendations.
- d. Align university strategic planning, performance evaluation, continuance, tenure, promotion and PTR criteria documents with emerging engagement initiatives.
- e. Establish a dynamic process of review and realignment of QEP objectives, activities, priorities and funding associated as part of the implementation process.
- f. Restructure unit reporting expectations and timelines to increase efficiency of information flow.
- g. Adopt a common language for individual and unit assessment documents.
- h. Strengthen relationship between proactive, integrative advising practices and salary/merit increases, continuance, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review.
- i. Assure effectiveness and efficiency of library information delivery to faculty and students.
- j. Advance ways to use the Laptop/PDA University concept to support QEP goals.
- k. Incorporate designs for participatory learning classrooms or technology in plans for new or renovated academic and student life spaces.
- l. Establish a mechanism by which well-conceived student/faculty/staff-generated initiatives for advancing QERP goals can be incorporated into university planning, process and policy.
- m. Establish a comprehensive campus recycling program that can serve as a model of good citizenship as well as a tool to promote student learning.
- n. Integrate QEP themes into next capital campaign.

## STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

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### 2004-2005 Academic Year

The 2004-2005 will serve as a pre-implementation year for the QEP. Our primary areas of emphasis will be to organize and prepare for full implementation beginning in 2005-2006. Specifically, we will (1) align existing policies, procedures, plans and priorities to include QEP goals, (2) educate the university community about the QEP and its priorities, and (3) establish the necessary leadership infrastructure to facilitate implementation of programmatic recommendations.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Establish the Leadership Team to oversee implementation.	Office of the Provost	5a
Develop budgetary and human resource needs for 2005-2006 implementation.	Leadership Team	5e
Finalize implementation schedule for 2005-2006 implementation.	Leadership Team	5e
Work with units to embed QEP activities in current reporting and planning documents.	Leadership Team; All units	5d
Incorporate into 2005-2006 strategic plans activities designed to advance the goal of Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society.	All units	Multiple
Develop assessment protocol and collect baseline data.	Leadership Team; Assessment Office; Office of Institutional Research	5e
Establish guidelines for soliciting and funding research studies on the relationship between engagement and student learning at Western.	Leadership Team; Deans; Department Heads; Faculty Research Council	3k
Provide engagement best practices workshops and support prototype engagement events.	Leadership Team; Office of the Provost; FaCET	3j

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 2005-2006 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the first year of implementation will be to establish university-wide systems to facilitate implementation of student learning initiatives. Specifically, we will (1) ensure administrative policies and procedures complement achievement of QEP goals, (2) incorporate QEP priorities into individual and unit evaluation procedures, and (3) expand support for transdepartmental/departmental initiatives that engage students for success.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Incorporate QEP themes into next capital campaign.	VP for Institutional Advancement	5n
Consolidate budgetary resources and processes to create more effective mechanisms for supporting implementation.	Office of the Provost	5c
Ensure purchasing policies are streamlined and facilitate implementation of recommendations.	Chief Financial Officer	5b
Institutionalize the Alive Center as an organizing link between the university and the community.	Office of the Provost	2b
Restructure unit reporting expectations and timelines to increase efficiency of information flow.	All units; Planning Office	5f
Align university strategic planning, performance evaluation, continuance, promotion, tenure, and PTR criteria with emerging QEP initiatives.	All units	5d
Establish a dynamic process for regular and systematic review of QEP objectives, activities, priorities, funding and progress assessment.	Leadership Team	5e

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 2005-2006 Academic Year continued
 

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Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Incorporate designs for participatory learning classrooms in plans for new or renovated academic or student life spaces, including creating a Student Success Center in DUC.	Office of the Provost; Facilities Management; VP for IT; Relevant units	5k, 2b
Utilize the Leadership Center as an organizing unit for leadership studies, programs, certificate courses and activities.	Office of the Provost; Leadership Center	2b
Continue to advance the American Humanics Project.	Office of the Provost; Dean of CEBS	2g
Continue to advance the American Democracy Project.	Office of the Provost; FaCET	1k
Utilize Freshman Assembly to highlight passage of first-year students from high school to the university environment.	Director of University Experience	2d
Increase support for the university Cultural Enhancement Series.	Office of the Provost; Cultural Enhancement Committee	2f
Financially compensate faculty teaching courses through CCSA, KIIS and other study abroad programs.	Office of the Provost	3e
Incorporate contribution to engagement goals into performance review, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR processes.	All units	3b
Solicit and fund research studies by faculty and staff on the relationship between engagement and student learning at Western.	Leadership Team	3k

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## 2005-2006 Academic Year continued

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Engage members of the Board of Regents as informed advocates and passionate ambassadors for engagement activities.	Office of the President	4b
Integrate QEP themes into university centennial celebrations and other university occasions and events.	Chair of Centennial Committee	4g
Increase the extent and diversity of active learning strategies in the curriculum.	All units	1g
Establish McLean Hall as new honors residence.	Office of the President; Office of the Provost; HRL; University Honors Program	1a
Hire a full-time Honors Director.	Search Committee; Office of the Provost	1a
Re-energize Humanities Semester and develop similar integrated, multidisciplinary programs.	Office of the Provost; Dean of PCAHSS	1j
Launch a fully developed chapter of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars.	Office of the Provost; Director of Freshman Experience	2e
Assist in advancing recommendations of the International Task Force to expand opportunities for internationalism and ethnic/cultural awareness.	Office of the Provost; VP for SA&CS; Office of International Programs; All units	1l
Foster expanding involvement of undergraduates in meaningful independent research and scholarly activity.	Office of the Provost; Deans; Departments Heads; Faculty	1h

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 2006-2007 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the second year of implementation will be to establish the link between infrastructure and human capacity for engagement. Specifically, we will (1) incorporate engagement priorities in processes of faculty, staff and unit evaluation and reward, (2) enhance our commitment and capacity to assist faculty and staff in fostering engaged learning, and (3) launch programmatic initiatives designed to foster an increased culture of curricular and co-curricular engagement on the part of students.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Dedicate resources necessary for programmatic initiatives related to creation of an engagement-based Honors learning model.	Office of the Provost; Honors Director	1a
Begin implementation of an engagement-based Honors learning model.	University Honors Program	1a
Develop online career exploration service accessible to different units and processes, including UE 175 and the advising process.	VP for SA&CS; Career Services	2h
Increase support for graduate assistants to levels competitive with benchmark institutions and incorporate expectations for appropriate and meaningful interactions with undergraduates.	Office of the Provost; Dean of Graduate Studies	3f
Collaborate with Career Services and external constituents to provide career related events and mentoring opportunities.	Alumni Affairs; All units	4e
Enhance access of internal and external constituents to physical and virtual campus.	VP for SA&CS; VP for IT; Transportation Committee, ODL; DELO	4f
Advance ways to use the Laptop/PDA University concept to support QEP goals.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT	5j
Increase use of students as presenters in university, civic and social programming.	All units	4a

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 2006-2007 Academic Year continued
 

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Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Strengthen commitment to graduate programs as a means of recruiting and retaining high quality faculty and staff.	Office of the Provost; Dean of Graduate Studies	3g
Provide physical and virtual spaces to house information dissemination systems related to engagement.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT; FaCET; University Libraries	2i
Encourage innovation in use of technology for engaging students.	Office of the Provost; VP for IT; ODL; FaCET	3h
Establish reward and recognition system for faculty, staff and units that demonstrate significant accomplishment in engaging students.	Office of the President; Office of the Provost; Administrative Council; Budget Council	3a
Support continued professional development of faculty and staff in areas related to engaged learning and student success.	All units	3j
Orient Winter, May and/or Summer Term offerings to provide diverse opportunities for experiential learning opportunities.	DELO; All academic units	1f
Initiate civic or social involvement, discussions of social responsibility and personal autonomy as elements of the Freshman Experience.	Director of Freshman Experience; Associate VP for Enrollment Management	1e

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 2007-2008 Academic Year

Our primary emphasis in the third year of implementation will be to broaden and deepen the capacity of faculty and staff to promote engaged learning. Specifically, we will (1) provide outlets for faculty and staff professional development related to engagement, (2) more fully integrate engagement opportunities into the curriculum, and (3) establish venues and systems that promote academic excellence, social responsibility and global awareness as critical elements of student success.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Expand opportunities for graduate students to serve as role models/mentors for undergraduates by promoting appropriate use of graduate teaching assistants.	Dean of Graduate Studies	1m
Create processes leading to regular nomination of students for national scholarships.	University Honors Program	2l
Establish a mechanism by which well-conceived student/faculty/staff-generated initiatives can be incorporated in university planning and processes.	Administrative Council; Planning Office	5l
Adopt a common language for individual and unit assessment documents.	All units	5g
Assure effectiveness and efficiency of library information delivery to faculty and students.	Dean of Libraries	5i
Collaborate with student affairs staff trained through Office of Diversity Programs to provide diversity awareness experiences.	VP for SA&CS; Office of Diversity Programs; AAEEEO Office	2m
Create a faculty instructional technology training program centered on promoting engagement in courses.	VP for IT; FaCET; DELO	3i

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 2007-2008 Academic Year continued
 

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Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Consider ability to contribute to student engagement goals in the hiring of faculty and staff.	All units	3d
Provide training to faculty and staff related to promotion, recording and documenting student experiential learning and engagement.	Office of the Provost; VP for SA&CS; Office of the Registrar; Assessment Office	3m
Provide appropriate training to faculty and staff in online career exploration and group self-assessment and counseling processes.	Career Services	3n
Strengthen relationship between proactive, integrative advising and salary/merit increases, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR.	All units	5h
Incorporate consideration of professionalism, professional ethics and ethical aspects of the discipline into courses and programs.	All academic units	1b
Align the outcomes of service learning in the discipline with knowledge and skills developed through the curriculum.	Academic units	1c
Expand opportunities for experiential learning through internships, co-ops, Kentucky Work Study Program and volunteer opportunities.	Academic units; Alive Center; Student Affairs units	1i
Encourage regular, university-wide participation in national "Make a Difference Day."	VP for SA&CS; Student Affairs units	2j

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 2008-2009 Academic Year

Our primary area of emphasis in the fourth year of implementation will be to deepen our commitment to engaged learning in all its forms. Specifically, we will (1) establish mechanisms to quantify students' involvement in experiential opportunities as part of their university record, (2) develop an explicit focus on value-added aspects of courses and curricula, and (3) institute university-wide exemplars of socially-responsible, integrative learning opportunities.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Expect syllabi to appropriately include both strategies for engaging students with the material as well as meta-learning goals for students in the course.	All academic units	1n
Develop a co-curricular resume/passport system to document students' participation in experiential learning opportunities and growth as intentional learners.	VP for SA&CS; Student Affairs units; Office of the Registrar	2a
Encourage student-run ventures across campus to serve as gathering places as well as opportunities for entrepreneurial training.	VP for SA&CS; Center for Entrepreneurship and Global Business	2k
Establish a comprehensive campus recycling program to serve as a model of good citizenship as well as tool for student learning.	Campus Services	5m
Promote recognition of the scholarship of engagement as a recognizable element in performance review, continuance, promotion, tenure and PTR.	All academic units	3c
Establish a Class Legacy Program whereby each student cohort adopts and addresses one significant university, social or civic issue.	Student Government Association	2c

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 2009-2010 Academic Year

Our primary area of emphasis in the fifth year of implementation will be to fully embed our efforts to promote engaged learning and global citizenship within the fabric of the university and the community. Specifically, we will (1) reach out to our constituents in ways that contribute to engaged learning of our students, (2) recognize and celebrate individual and unit successes at translating QEP themes into increased student learning, and (3) formalize our commitment to engaging students with communities other than their own as part of their *Western Experience*.

Activity	Responsibility	Strategic Goal Addressed
Target local, regional and selected urban communities for reciprocal relationships.	Associate VP for Enrollment Management; Career Services	4d
Develop assessment report for 5-year implementation plan, and deliver this assessment to SACS.	Leadership Team	5e
Evaluate progress and develop a strategy for continued improvement over the subsequent five years.	Leadership Team; Office of the Provost; Planning and Assessment Office	5e
Design and implement specific avenues for alumni to take a leadership and mentoring role with Admissions, Career Services and academic departments.	Alumni Affairs; All units	4c
Establish university-wide awards for advancing student learning through engagement.	Leadership Team; Office of the President; Office of the Provost; Council of Deans	3l
Ensure availability of experience relevant to students' degree program that considers relationship of the discipline to modern society.	All academic units	1d

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