Initiative 2001

Building a Premier Learning Community

Wichita Campus

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The goal of this Building Premier Learning Community task force is to list concrete recommendations for the long-term future of the University of Kansas, specifically the School of Medicine (SOM), Wichita campus. The list is based on interviews and surveys of our students, faculty, staff and community partners. These recommendations include suggestions for building on our strengths, identifying our weaknesses and making appropriate changes to improve our educational environment.

Essential ingredients of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita campus' learning environment:

- Community-based campus
- Majority of faculty are volunteer physicians
- Small physical campus environment; most students are at the community hospitals, clinics or offices for their academic activities
- Small class size allows a closer working relationship with faculty, staff and students
- Strong leadership with team-oriented approach to management
- Committed community partners
- Emphasis on staff and faculty development
- Student-centered education
- Excellent physical facilities

The task force collected observations, opinions and recommendations from a broad constituency as well as various community partners. The entire task force reviewed written compilations of all information collected, meeting periodically to discuss, clarify and summarize the information. This document represents the task force's final summarization of the information collected. For clarity sake, we have organized our report along the themes recommended in our initial charge.

**Executive Summary**

The KU-School of Medicine-Wichita has developed and sustained a successful clinical educational program for medical students and affiliated residency programs through a network of strong partnerships with a variety of health care agencies in the community and state. The future success and growth of the Wichita program will depend on consolidating previous partnerships and developing additional ones.

The student and resident programs have flourished particularly in the primary care disciplines as a result of strong alliances with the local private and federal hospitals and volunteer faculty physicians. The working relationship with faculty colleagues on the Kansas City campus has led to improvements in the curriculum. Additional progress is expected. Closer partnerships with the Sedgwick County Health Department, the School of Allied Health at Wichita State University, and other outpatient facilities will improve the graduates' knowledge and skills in public and population health, interdisciplinary teamwork, continuity of care, and non-traditional medical therapies. Graduates of the future will be more skilled in health promotion and disease prevention as well as excellent diagnosticians and disease interventionists.
Modest research programs have developed but most occur off campus in partnership with local agencies. Additional research is needed in order to improve the population's health. Research programs in health care outcomes, health-care delivery, cost-effective care, clinical trials and traditional biomedical fields should be created through development of additional partnerships with local integrated health systems, KU-School of Medicine-Kansas City faculty, KU-Lawrence faculty, the pharmaceutical industry and other appropriate agencies. If successful, these expanded activities in research will increase the reputation of the faculty, improve faculty and resident recruitment, generate additional financial support for academic programs, enhance student and resident education and, most importantly, improve the health of the public.

KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is a recognized leader in the provision of medical care in Sedgwick County, particularly to the underserved. Partnerships with local hospitals and the health department have been vital in caring for this population. Improved and additional partnerships with local clinics for the underserved, Federally Qualified Health Centers, state government, integrated health systems and philanthropic organizations will be needed to improve health care for these and other populations. Through improved and expanded programs of health care service, our educational programs will be strengthened.

All health care organizations including medical schools will depend on electronic information collection, storage, transmission and manipulation in order to be successful. KU-School of Medicine-Wichita will improve its partnership with Information Technology at the other campuses in order to advance patient care, distance education, and administrative efficiencies.

KU-School of Medicine-Wichita must strengthen its working relationship with city and county government to fully participate in plans that could lead to urban development in the region adjacent to the administrative offices. These efforts will result in improved campus atmosphere, traffic flow, parking and public safety.

Lastly, further improvement in all of our programs will result from continued building on the concepts of teamwork, communication, understanding, acceptance, quality and mission definition that our current leadership has initiated. Improved relationships will occur between faculty, administrators, staff, students and directors as these concepts are extended from the executive staff through all ranks, levels and individuals within our organization. Our organization will be more efficient, effective, respected and successful.

KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is successful because of strong partnerships and relationships locally, regionally, and nationally with various agencies affiliated with health issues. Current partnerships must be strengthened and additional ones developed to achieve our goals in the future.
Physical & Demographic Environment

- Wichita is located in the area of Kansas that is based economically on agriculture, petroleum, and industry. The present economy is very strong.
- The Wichita community has a diverse population that provides an excellent educational environment.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita's campus:
  --is centrally located in Kansas with excellent access via major highways.
  --is well maintained and attractive.
  --is strategically located between the local private hospitals.
  --is valued and well supported by the local hospitals.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is ideally located geographically for Continuing Medical Education activity in clinical skills update and assessment.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita's proximity to:
  --the Wichita Sedgwick County Health Department is a major asset encouraging collaboration.
  --the Sedgwick County Forensic Science Center is a major advantage and provides educational opportunities for students.
  --K.C. Estates (AIDS Patient Hostel) is a unique advantage.
  --Wichita State University (WSU) encourages the sharing of resources.
    --WSU has the only physicians assistant program in Kansas and a strong allied health program.
    --WSU's leaders are open to collaboration.
    --WSU has a well-developed distance education infrastructure.
- City and County community leaders are extremely supportive of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
  --the city of Wichita is considering a renovation along 9th Street from Hillside to I-135 consisting of medical facilities. They desire KU-School of Medicine-Wichita to be a major participant in this discussion.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is the only KU campus south and west of Lawrence.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is geographically centered in the state.
- KU and the Jayhawk are popular in Wichita.
- Wichita has a strong educational environment.
  --there are a number of small private colleges and junior colleges in south central Kansas, many of which have strong pre-medical programs and a service orientation.
  --there are several high schools with a strong science and health career curriculum that desire access to resources on the campus.
  --organizations such as the Urban League sponsor programs with the KU-School of Medicine-Wichita to encourage racial and ethnic minorities to consider a career in the health professions.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is located in an area of the medically underserved in Wichita. 
  --many of this clinics for the underserved in proximity to KU-School of Medicine-Wichita desire closer affiliation.
• The Wichita Veteran's Administration (VA) has been assigned by the VISN to develop community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC) throughout Kansas and desires to collaborate with KU-School of Medicine-Wichita to provide student and resident education at these sites.
• KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is located in an area some consider unsafe.
• KU-School of Medicine-Wichita's traffic pattern is confusing and parking is problematic.
• Community/general public awareness of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita is minimal.
• KU-School of Medicine-Wichita's distance from the other campuses creates communication barriers.
  --because of the geographic distance, communication between KU-School of Medicine-Wichita and the other KU campuses may be less effective.
  --few KU faculty from the other three KU campuses have visited or are minimally aware of the resources on the Wichita Campus and in the city of Wichita.
• The clinical facilities at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita are too small to meet the outpatient training needs.
• Access to Wichita via commercial air is relatively expensive.

Recommendations – Physical & Demographic Environment

• Discuss with the City of Wichita and/or Sedgwick County:
  --merging health activities with the health department.
  --9th Street medical corridor development.
  -the reengineering of the street access to the KU-School of Medicine-Wichita and the health department to create a more customer-friendly environment.
  --ways to reduce perception of high crime and violence in this area.
• Work with appropriate entities to acquire surrounding property to create a "campus" environment.
• Pursue stronger working relationships with WSU.
• Develop KU-School of Medicine-Wichita into a recognized resource for health education and service for Sedgwick county and south central Kansas.
• Conduct health care symposia, debates, forums, and hearings under out sponsorship in order to increase community/general public awareness of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
• Encourage collaborative health care programs between KU-School of Medicine-Wichita, Wichita State University and community colleges and four-year private colleges in south central Kansas.
• Develop programs to address the health care needs of the underprivileged in the neighborhoods surrounding KU-School of Medicine-Wichita in collaboration with other clinics in the vicinity.
• Develop programs with local schools, the Urban League and other community organizations to encourage interest in health care professions, particularly in the underprivileged population, to develop increased ethnic and racial diversity in the health care professions.
• Improve road signs identifying KU-School of Medicine-Wichita location.
• Ensure the Wichita campus is on the Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce (WACC) and the Southwestern Bell Yellow Pages' (SWBYP) maps.
• Explore with the Wichita VA the educational opportunities in CBOC's.
Faculty Knowledge and Talents

- Full-time faculty have excellent knowledge and skills in patient care and medical education.
- Volunteer and part-time faculty play a vital role in medical student and resident education by providing patients and clinical teaching. (See below**)
- The support and loyalty of volunteer faculty throughout Kansas is quite strong.
- In general, KU-School of Medicine-Wichita faculty are pleased with their employment situation and resources. (See recent faculty survey in the Appendix.)
- Faculty in the primary care disciplines have cooperated with and participated in the educational programs at WSU in the School of Allied Health.
- Full-time faculty at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita are participating fully in School of Medicine faculty governance, as seen with the curricular reform efforts over the last four years.
- Full-time faculty at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita were and remain integrally and fully involved in the preparation and implementation of the Primary Care Physician Education grant.
- The primary care based departments have the knowledge and skill sets necessary to collaborate with WSU's Allied Health Schools for curriculum development and delivery.
- Some KU-School of Medicine-Wichita full-time faculty have interest in developing Web-based distance education programs.
- Full-time faculty numbers are relatively small compared to the duties required of full-time faculty.
- Recruitment of full-time faculty to Wichita has been difficult due to geographic location, public school systems, perceptions about the city and salary differentials with private practice.
- Full-time faculty productivity in research is relatively low.
- Full-time faculty feel their clinical demands and lack of research support staff and facilities undermines their scholarly productivity.
- Department chairs feel they must require considerable clinical activity from faculty in order to recruit and pay competitive salaries.
- Volunteer and part-time faculty find the increasingly harsh and oppressive insurance and federal record-keeping requirements, along with reduced reimbursements, as impediments to increased teaching activities.
- Volunteer and part-time faculty are at a disadvantage in teaching the more basic clinical skills to students in the 3rd year (see above**).
- Volunteer and part-time faculty provide little administrative support (e.g. curriculum development, planning, faculty governance, etc.) to KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
- Salaries that must be paid to recruit and retain high quality faculty, particularly in primary care disciplines, have increased significantly in the last three years.
- There are few racial and ethnic minority faculty at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
- Many full-time faculty have well-recognized areas of expertise, but often their faculty position is not adequately acknowledged in the media.
- The media does not often acknowledge part-time and volunteer faculty relationships to KU.
- There is continued confusion and frustration with the faculty appointment process, particularly with the affiliate category.
Recommendations – Faculty Knowledge and Talents

- Recruit faculty with excellent track records in clinical research.
- Develop programs to enhance scholarly activities of current faculty.
- Require chairs to develop incentives for faculty to pursue scholarly work.
- Enhance appropriate research support functions at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
- Identify seed money to sustain young investigators for 2-3 years.
- Explore collaborative teaching programs with WSU's School of Allied Health.
- Recruit additional full-time faculty who can assist in administrative activities at KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
- Develop creative methods to recruit full-time faculty from a diverse applicant pool.
- Add full-time faculty for core teaching activities. Funding will come from diverse sources necessitating a review of the affiliate status faculty appointment process.
- Develop initiatives to improve relationships between faculty on all KU campuses.
- Develop programs to train "residents as teachers."
- Strengthen the reward system for volunteer faculty.
- Identify community volunteer teaching sites as "KU" affiliates.
- Create a system to receive feedback from volunteer faculty.
- Require chairs to give guidance and feedback on a regular basis to faculty on their performance.
- Create a professional development plan for each faculty member.

Student Aptitudes and Attitudes

- Students' inherent skills and aptitudes are quite good.
- Students are increasingly comfortable with distance learning technologies.
- Students overall are pleased with their educational experiences in Wichita.
- Students highly value role models within both the volunteer and full-time clinical faculty.
- Students feel strongly that frequent face-to-face contact between faculty and students is essential.
- The utility of distance education has been proven and demonstrated by the School of Nursing.
- The joint KU/WSU MPH program has been a success.
- Methods to develop and evaluate students’ clinical skills are not optimal.
- Patient resources in the Wichita community are quite adequate.
- The graduation competencies of SOM graduates are still inadequately defined and measured.
- The concepts inherent to professionalism need to be emphasized throughout the curriculum.
- Faculty feel there should be better definition and adherence to student academic quality at various advancement thresholds throughout the curriculum.
- Students value a variety of learning programs in addition to the traditional lecture format.
- Students value clinical exposure to patients throughout their four years of education.
- Students desire more clinical contact, mentoring and career counseling particularly in the first two years of the curriculum.
• Didactic education and assessment is quite portable with current technology but clinical skill learning is dependent on and demands local patient/faculty resources.
• Students continue to note intra-campus rivalry.
• Students would benefit from collaborative learning experiences with other health care professions.
• Students desire more recognition of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita in the community.
• Students desire increased research opportunities in Wichita.
• As long as it does not distract full-time faculty from their teaching mission, students desire more research activities by faculty on the KU-School of Medicine-Wichita campus.
• Increasingly, practicing physicians desire education in medical administration, policy making, health care delivery, and business.
• Students from other health-related schools of KU and other regent’s institutions undertake clinical learning experiences in Sedgwick County but have little interaction with KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.
• “Non-traditional” students may comprise a larger portion of the medical school class in the future and may need alternative learning tracks to accommodate their special needs.

Recommendations – Student Attitudes and Aptitudes

• Utilize the expertise and experience of KU-School of Medicine-Wichita to develop community-based education throughout the state.
• Develop joint degree programs between SOM, KU-Lawrence and/or WSU in medical administration, health policy, business administration and other related degrees for students (all health fields), residents and practicing health care providers.
• Enhance student programs in health promotion and disease prevention.
• Explore collaboration between student programs in the SOM and WSU’s School of Allied Health.
• Develop curriculum that includes society’s perception of medicine’s role, including the history of medicine, medical sociology, and “alternative medicine.”
• Use informatics and communication technology for didactic sessions and small group study.
• Provide programs for the students to develop and exercise their leadership skills in the community.
• Improve career development programs.
• Develop professional patient base (standardized patients and OSCE programs).
• Work towards recruiting students from underrepresented and underserved communities.
• Develop programs to meet the unique needs of “non-traditional” students.

Research Environment

• Opportunities for community-based outcomes research are readily available in Wichita.
• Residents, students and faculty desire more opportunities for scholarly activities, specifically research.
Opportunities are available for industrial, agricultural, environmental and rural medicine teaching and research.

Properly appropriated, research overhead income could supplement and substitute for shrinking clinical income.

Clinical research programs are vital to improve the health of patients throughout Kansas.

Research opportunities for faculty, students, and residents have been limited in Wichita because of limited resources and inadequate support systems.

Exploration of research opportunities in Wichita by the other KU campuses is needed.

Little collaborative research has occurred between KU-Lawrence, KU-School of Medicine-Kansas City, KU-School of Medicine-Wichita and WSU.

Wichita faculty need increased formal training in research methods.

**Recommendations – Research Environment**

- Develop initiatives to augment the research potential in Wichita through research partnerships with industry, neighborhood agencies, schools and colleges, health agencies, and the corrections system.
- Promote collaboration between KU-School of Medicine-Wichita, KU-School of Medicine-Kansas City, KU-Lawrence, other universities located in Wichita, and the Wichita health care community.
- Identify adequate resources and incentives to promote research in Wichita.
- Address policy issues regarding research monies in a way that promotes research.
- Train current faculty in research methods and recruit properly trained additional faculty.
- Develop infrastructure support needed by faculty to conduct research.
- Encourage collaboration and the sharing of resources between Wichita residency programs for research.

**Information Technology**

- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita has a quality, comprehensive IT foundation and adequately trained, committed staff.
- IT in Kansas City has been helpful and collaborative with Wichita IT staff.
- KU-School of Medicine-Wichita technological connection to the local hospitals is still inadequate.
- Student learning in a distributed, community-based setting such as KU-School of Medicine-Wichita and throughout the state requires different hardware, software and support personnel resources than on a traditional campus.
- Identifying resources for IT enhancement in Wichita has been problematic, often requiring utilization of private dollars.
- One time or short-term “soft” sources of money recently have funded much of the enhancement of IT.
- Student curricular programs will increasingly require more sophisticated IT systems for basic learning and assessment.
• Distance education will require more IT investments.
• Clinical medicine will become increasingly dependent on sophisticated electronic data systems.
• Few clinical departments have the resources necessary for the initial costs of these clinical information systems.
• Volunteer and part-time faculty are not adequately connected to KU-School of Medicine-Wichita.

Recommendations – Information Technology

• Accommodate campus specific IT enhancements in the budget process.
• Identify resources to advance and maintain IT needs at the KU-School of Medicine-Wichita campus.
• Recognize and acknowledge the unique IT needs of a distributed education in a community setting.
• Develop a faculty-training plan for application of technology in the delivery of course content.
• Identify resources and encourage students to obtain adequate electronic technology access.
• Expand videoconference resources in order to share resources, bring campuses together and provide access to faculty without duplicating expertise.
• Identify resources to allow volunteer, part-time faculty and other community partners connection to KU-School of Medicine-Wichita

International Opportunities

• A strong program to identify International elective sites for the SOM is in place.
• The population of U.S., Kansas and Wichita is becoming increasingly diverse.
• Limited resources for International electives are available to students.
• A minority of students takes advantage of these international elective opportunities.
• Few didactic or organized on-campus programs address international health issues.
• Students have little exposure to alternative models of health care delivery systems as is present in many other countries.
• No organized program exists in the SOM to educate students about the alternative models of health systems in other cultures/countries.

Recommendations – International Opportunities

• Develop formal programs in alternative health care delivery systems.
• Develop formal programs to educate students about the attitudes and expectations of different ethnic and cultural groups towards health and disease.
• Improve marketing of international electives.
• Improve diversity training programs.
• Develop more international opportunities for medical students.
• Seek endowed funds or contributions for students who need financial assistance for international elective.