University of Kansas

NCA Visit

Briefing Document

According to the chair of the NCA site visit team, the essential questions the team will seek to answer during their visit to KU are:

■ What is the evidence that KU is achieving its mission?
■ Where does KU fit on the continuum of strong, vibrant research institutions?

This document provides highlights and brief summaries from the NCA Self-Study report as well as information regarding the NCA accreditation visit. The entire KU Self-Study is available online through the following website: http://www.ku.edu/~oirp/NCA/ReportTOC.shtml

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I. Common Questions and Answers about Accreditation

Q. What is accreditation?
A. KU voluntarily commits to accreditation. The purpose of accreditation is to ensure quality and to provide the impetus for continuing evaluation and improvement. Not only is the entire university accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), each of the professional schools and many of the academic programs in the College are accredited by their own disciplinary accrediting bodies.

Q. Why is accreditation important?
A. Without accreditation, the diploma that students receive at graduation is merely a piece of paper, KU student are not eligible for federal financial aid, and KU faculty and staff are not eligible for grants from federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), or the U.S. departments of Defense, Education, or Energy.

Q. Who is our accrediting body?
A. The Higher Learning Commission, a branch of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The commission is commonly referred to as NCA or North Central.

Q. What is a Self-Study?
A. A document that summarizes and critiques the processes, structures, and programs of the University over the past 10 years. The report responds to five Criteria for Accreditation as required by the Higher Learning Commission. KU’s Self-Study report is organized into two volumes:

Volume 1
- University Overview
  - Introduction to KU
  - Structure of KU
  - Significant Changes 1994-2004
  - Response to 1994 Concerns
  - Future Directions
- Executive Summary of the Five Criteria
- Criteria for Accreditation
  - Criterion 1: Mission and Integrity
  - Criterion 2: Preparing for the Future
  - Criterion 3: Student Learning and Effective Teaching
  - Criterion 4: Application, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
  - Criterion 5: Engagement and Service

Volume 2
- Academic Profiles
- Supplemental Materials
Q. Who wrote the Self-Study?
A. Two years ago, the Provost invited 21 representatives from across the University to serve as members of the NCA Steering Committee, to guide the Self-Study process, and to oversee the development of the Self-Study document. The NCA Steering Committee included representatives from the Lawrence campus, KUMC, Edwards Campus, and KUMC-Wichita. The committee was comprised of faculty, administrators, and students. The chair of the steering committee is Barbara Romzek, Associate Dean of the College and Professor of Public Administration.

In Spring 2004, the steering committee chair and support staff held focused meetings with key individuals and engaged in conversations with various internal constituency groups to reflect on KU as a distinctive organization and to identify future opportunities and challenges. In late summer and early fall of 2004, the preliminary report was widely vetted by faculty, student, and administrative groups that included the steering committee, faculty and student governance, academic deans, research directors, and senior administrators. Finally, the Self-Study was distributed broadly across the University to give the entire community an opportunity for review and input.

Q. What is a comprehensive visit?
A. The NCA consultant-evaluators will visit KU to confirm that what we stated in the Self-Study is accurate. The consultant-evaluators will be looking for evidence that KU is fulfilling its mission as a public research university. The underlying question is where does KU fall on the continuum of strong, vibrant research institutions? They will be checking patterns of evidence, interviewing various members of the campus community, and confirming our processes and infrastructure.

Q. Who are the consultant-evaluators?
A. There are 12 consultant-evaluators coming from research universities in the Midwest, which are similar to KU. They are faculty members, deans, administrators, and university presidents.

Q. When is the comprehensive visit?
A. The consultant-evaluators will be on campus Sunday, January 30, 2005 until noon on Wednesday, February 2, 2005.

Q. Where will the consultant-evaluators be?
A. The consultant-evaluators will visit many locations across campus. They will have meeting rooms and a resource room in Strong Hall. They will meet with senior administrators, deans, faculty, staff, and student governance members, among others.

Q. Will the consultant-evaluators meet with other faculty and students?
A. There will be several open forums for faculty, staff, and students to speak with the consultant-evaluators. Schedules and locations will be distributed prior to the visit. The consultant-evaluators might also stop individuals on campus for a brief chat.
Q. What types of questions will the consultant-evaluators ask?

A. The site visit is not a test! The consultant-evaluators will gather a broad array of perspectives regarding KU from students, faculty, staff, and administrators. They may ask members of the university community to describe KU based on their own experiences and ask questions about an individual’s own area of expertise.
II. Thumbnail Sketch of Self-Study

Overarching Themes
Following are brief descriptions of the themes that are woven throughout the entire Self-Study report as integral to University decisions and actions.

University Mission
• The mission statement of the University of Kansas encompasses teaching, research, and service, as well as an international dimension and humanitarian values.
• Research and teaching are mutually reinforcing at KU with scholarly inquiry underlying and informing the educational experience at the undergraduate, professional, and graduate levels.
(Institutional and campus mission statements approved by the Kansas Board of Regents can be found starting on p.10 of this document.)

Planning
Planning is pervasive at KU – from institution-wide strategic plans to departmental enrollment plans. Major planning initiatives include: Initiative 2001, the Tuition Enhancement Plan, the Lawrence Campus Master Plan (1997), the Medical Center Campus Master Plan (2000, 2003), and Performance Indicators (2001-present). (Additional details can be found on page 8.)

Learning Centered
KU places a high priority on student learning and effective teaching and views research and teaching as equally critical to the overall learning environment. The past 10 years have seen major coordinated and strategic investments in the teaching and learning environment, improving on a strong tradition of interdisciplinary learning and scholarship such as: Global Awareness Program (GAP), Thematic Learning Communities (TLCs), as well as expanded opportunities for service learning, undergraduate research, and participation in Study Abroad.

Research Focus
KU continues to emphasize scholarly research as a cornerstone of academic endeavors. The breadth and depth of faculty research are evidence of this. Research meets crucial educational goals by enhancing the ability of KU faculty to teach at the frontiers of their fields and by providing students with research experiences. Institutional structures (e.g., KUCR, multidisciplinary research centers) are organized to support and encourage research. Total annual research expenditures have risen more than 120 percent over the past ten years – from $115 million in 1994 to $258 million in 2003.

Service and Engagement
The self-study process demonstrated, to the surprise of many, that service and engagement are an integral part of KU activities. Every unit on campus engages its constituencies in ways that stem directly from its teaching and research capacity and expertise. The KU community does an incredible amount of service that is not formally recognized or acknowledged by either internal or external constituency groups.
International Emphasis

KU continues to expand its emphasis on international experiences to prepare students for citizenship in an increasingly diverse and global community. The University of Kansas has been noteworthy in its commitment to international studies since the 1960s. Language and area studies programs are supported by extensive opportunities to study abroad.

Diversity

KU values a diverse student body, faculty, and staff, and strives to create a campus climate that enhances and supports diversity through both curricular and co-curricular activities. (The policy statement on diversity, approved by the Chancellor in Spring 2004 can be found on page 8.)

Assessment

In its report from the last accreditation visit, the NCA visiting team concluded that “In all, the University of Kansas has an extremely sophisticated system of assessment and it is one that is not inexpensive.” KU’s current assessment program consists of: general education, the academic major, graduate programs, and program review. Graduate program assessment will be updated Spring 2005. (Additional details can be found on page 9.)

Report Overview

Below are brief statements that capture the overall intent of the four major sections of the NCA report: the criteria for accreditation, significant changes at KU, responses to concerns from the previous accreditation visit, and future directions for KU.

Significant Changes at KU (1994-2004)

Over the past decade significant changes have taken place at KU including the following. (For additional details see the executive summary, page 13.)

- New strategic plan – Initiative 2001
- Qualified admissions policy
- Increase in undergraduate retention and graduation rates
- Student learning initiatives (TLCs, GAP, undergraduate research, service learning)
- Administrative reorganizations (creation of provost position, KUCR, office of student success, information services, and separation of KU Hospital)
- Funding mechanisms changed to block grants and tuition ownership
- $455 million in new building projects
- New information systems (PeopleSoft, DEMIS, library systems, online enrollment, Blackboard)

Response to Concerns from 1994 Self Study

KU has systematically and satisfactorily responded to the concerns cited in the 1994 report. (For additional details see the executive summary, page 17.)
**Future Directions at KU**

KU will continue to enhance the educational experience of students, expand its research profile, and increase the quality and diversity of the student body. To better address the needs of staff, support will be provided through tuition assistance, Coca-Cola Scholarships, and moving classified staff out of the state civil service system.

**Criteria for Accreditation**

- **Criterion 1: Mission and Integrity.** KU’s mission continues to emphasize high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction, high levels of research productivity, and valuable service to the community. Institutional activities are congruent with the University’s mission and are conducted with integrity and sensitivity.

- **Criterion 2: Planning for the Future.** Planning at KU is pervasive, inclusive, and evaluative. Quantitative and qualitative data are used on a systematic basis to inform decisions, evaluate programs and processes, make improvements, and prepare for the future.

- **Criterion 3: Student Learning and Effective Teaching.** KU is a major research university that excels at student learning and effective teaching – viewing research and teaching as equally critical to the overall learning environment. KU has made major investments in the teaching and learning environment that have led to increased retention rates and recognition from external groups.

- **Criterion 4: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge.** KU’s sustained research activity and scholarly productivity, the emphasis on student research experiences, the systematic evaluation of academic programs and curriculum, and the significant growth in research expenditures over the past decade indicate the high value KU places on a life of learning. KU’s research and scholarly endeavors benefit the citizens of Kansas, the nation, and the world.

- **Criterion 5: Engagement and Service.** Service and engagement are woven into the fabric of KU activities. Every unit engages its constituencies in ways that stem directly from its teaching and research capacity and expertise. The number of service activities, the breadth of those activities, and the depth of KU’s engagement exemplify the engagement of the KU community with the citizens of the state and the world.

*(For additional details see the executive summary, page 21)*
III. Details on KU Statements, Policies, and Processes

This section provides details on important KU policies and processes that may be of interest to consultant-evaluators.

Policy on Diversity of the Student Body

The University of Kansas values diversity in its student body and believes that the intentional creation of a diverse learning environment is essential to achieving the University's educational mission. The University fosters a multicultural environment in which the dignity and rights of the individual are respected.

To build a diverse community, the University considers, in addition to academic credentials, the following criteria for student admission decisions, scholarship recognition, and program participation. While each factor is significant, no one factor will be considered determinative in the decision process:

- Bilingual or multilingual abilities
- Cultural background
- Ethnicity
- Evidence of commitment to diversity
- Evidence of leadership skills
- First generation college student
- Geographic diversity
- Financial, social, family, physical, or educational hardships
- Previous career before pursuing higher education
- Race
- Service to community
- Socio-economic status
- Urban/rural background
- Other unique contributions

Planning Examples

- Initiative 2001. One of the most visible, inclusive, and enduring of KU’s planning efforts is the campus-wide strategic plan – Initiative 2001. Initiative 2001’s major priorities are: Build Premier Learning Communities, Serve Kansans, Act as One University, and Be the Research University for the Greater Kansas City area.

- Tuition Enhancement Plan. With extensive input from the campus community, the University created a five-year tuition enhancement plan to maintain and improve the quality of the educational experience for students. The resulting plan proposed by the ad hoc committee included a tuition increase of $43 million, plus 20 percent for financial aid, to be phased in over five years. A committee of students, faculty, and staff from both Lawrence and the Medical Center developed the plan, working in tandem with senior administration and based on feedback from the University community through open campus meetings.
• **Campus Master Plan, Lawrence Campus (1997).** The master plan was developed within a framework of existing patterns of land use, provision for access to campus, and maintenance of KU’s image and environment. Implementation of the initiatives may require years, decades, or in some cases, generations. The process of projecting future needs, implementing projects, and evaluating results is ongoing. An inventory of work identified in the Master Plan was developed and reviewed in Fall 2004.

• **Campus Master Plan, Medical Center (2000, 2003).** The Medical Center, in cooperation with the Kansas University Hospital, completed a campus Master Plan in 2000. The Master Plan provides a guide for the zoning of teaching, research, and patient care functions for improved efficiency; campus expansion; locations for new buildings; and the removal of existing buildings that have exceeded their useful life. This Master Plan was updated in 2003 and now includes standards for architectural materials, building style and appearance, and landscaping for the campus.

• **Performance Indicators (2001-present).** The Quality Performance Indicators/Institutional Improvement Plan is the latest institutional improvement process implemented by the Kansas Board of Regents. Grounded in state statute, the process requires state-funded higher education institutions to make progress in core goals identified by the Kansas Board of Regents. Six goals were identified by the Regents such as increased system efficiency, effectiveness, and seamlessness; improved learner outcomes; improved workforce development; and increased external resources. KU’s specific responses to these goals were developed with input from a committee of faculty and staff. In June 2004, the Kansas Board of Regents approved the Lawrence campus and Medical Center performance agreement contracts required by Senate Bill 647 for FY 2006 incremental funding.

### Examples of Assessment at KU

• **General Education Assessment:** Assessment of general education is an annual activity that is driven by six university-wide goals. In order to assess the degree to which students achieve the goals, a sample of fourth-year KU students is invited annually to participate in the assessment process. The centerpiece of the portfolio-driven process is individual, structured interviews with students by teams of three faculty members who provide independent assessments of the level of student learning across the curriculum. For additional information go to: [http://www.ku.edu/~oirp/Assess/index.shtml](http://www.ku.edu/~oirp/Assess/index.shtml)

• **Assessment in the Major.** Assessment in the major is required of all undergraduate academic programs, and each undergraduate degree program has a plan on file with the Provost’s Office that specifies program goals. Each program identifies and collects data on one internal measure of goal attainment (e.g., capstone course, departmental self-study committees, exit surveys) and one external measure (e.g., alumni survey, advisory board review). The specific types of tools used to assess learning vary widely depending on the discipline and assessment measure chosen. Units report on these assessment activities periodically.

• **Graduate Program Assessment.** The graduate assessment process is an evolving one, and is less mature than the processes for evaluating undergraduate programs. In 1994, each graduate program on the Lawrence campus developed a statement of goals, a plan for assessing student outcomes, and submitted an annual report summarizing activities and results. The annual reports were collected from 1994 to 2000. In 2001, the Graduate School modified the assessment process by identifying a series of quality indicators that are compiled annually for every graduate program.
program, and are available online to inform decision-making and planning. These indicators are traditional measures of program quality (e.g., quality of students and time to degree). Assessment of graduate programs will be reexamined in the Spring 2005 to return to a more learning-outcomes approach to assessment.

- **Academic Program Review.** As part of the Kansas Board of Regents program review process, each program at KU is evaluated at least once every eight years on centrality to mission; strengths, productivity, and qualifications of the faculty; curriculum and impact on students; student need and employer demand; service provided by the program; cost-effectiveness; and overall program quality by its academic deans and the Provost. A Graduate School evaluation of graduate programs is also part of every program review. It includes an analysis of student recruitment efforts, quality of the applicant pool and currently enrolled students (including information about GRE scores, undergraduate GPAs, or other standardized measures), timeliness of degree completion, adequacy of financial support, availability of professional development opportunities for graduate students, employer and student demand for the program, and the department’s record of placements for graduate students.

**Institutional Mission Statement**

The University of Kansas is a major comprehensive research and teaching university that serves as a center for learning, scholarship, and creative endeavor. The University of Kansas is the only Kansas Regents university to hold membership in the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU), a select group of 58 (now 62) public and private research universities that represents excellence in graduate and professional education and the highest achievements in research internationally.

**Lawrence Campus Mission Statement**

- **Instruction.** The university is committed to offering the highest quality undergraduate, professional, and graduate programs, comparable to the best obtainable anywhere in the nation. As the AAU research university of the state, the University of Kansas offers a broad array of advanced graduate study programs and fulfills its mission through faculty, academic, and research programs of international distinction, and outstanding libraries, teaching museums, and information technology. These resources enrich the undergraduate experience and are essential for graduate-level education and for research.

- **Research.** The university attains high levels of research productivity and recognizes that faculty are part of a network of scholars and academicians that shape a discipline as well as teach it. Research and teaching, as practiced at the University of Kansas, are mutually reinforcing with scholarly inquiry underlying and informing the educational experience at undergraduate, professional, and graduate levels.

- **Service.** The university first serves Kansas, then the nation and the world through research, teaching, and the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. The university provides service to the state of Kansas through its state- and federally-funded research centers. KU's academic programs, arts facilities, and public programs provide cultural enrichment opportunities for the larger community. Educational, research, and service programs are offered throughout the state, including the main campus in Lawrence, the KU health-related degree programs and services in
Kansas City and Wichita, as well as the Regents Center at the Edwards Campus and other sites in the Kansas City metropolitan area, Topeka, and Parsons.

- **International Dimension.** The university is dedicated to preparing its students for lives of learning and for the challenges educated citizens will encounter in an increasingly complex and diverse global community. Over 100 programs of international study and cooperative research are available for KU students and faculty at sites throughout the world. The university offers teaching and research that draw upon and contribute to the most advanced developments throughout the United States and the rest of the world. At the same time, KU's extensive international ties support economic development in Kansas.

- **Values.** The university is committed to excellence. It fosters a multicultural environment in which the dignity and rights of the individual are respected. Intellectual diversity, integrity, and disciplined inquiry in the search for knowledge are of paramount importance.

**Medical Center Mission Statement**

The University of Kansas Medical Center, an integral and unique component of the University of Kansas and the Kansas Board of Regents system, is composed of the School of Medicine, located in Kansas City and Wichita, the School of Nursing, the School of Allied Health, and a Graduate School. The KU Medical Center is a complex institution whose basic functions include research, education, patient care, and community service involving multiple constituencies at state and national levels. The following paragraphs chart the KU Medical Center’s course and serve as a framework for assessing programs, setting goals, developing initiatives, and evaluating progress.

The University of Kansas Medical Center is a major research institution primarily serving the state of Kansas as well as the nation and the world, and assumes leadership in the discovery of new knowledge and the development of programs in research, education, and patient care. The KU Medical Center recognizes the importance of meeting the wide range of healthcare needs in Kansas - from the critical need for primary care in rural and other underserved areas of the state, to the urgent need for highly specialized knowledge to provide the latest preventive and treatment techniques available. As the major resource in the Kansas Board of Regents system for preparing healthcare professionals, the programs of the KU Medical Center must be comprehensive and maintain the high scholarship and academic excellence on which the reputation of the university is based. Our mission is to create an environment for:

- **Instruction.** The KU Medical Center educates healthcare professionals to primarily serve the needs of Kansas as well as the region and the nation. High-quality educational experiences are offered to a diverse student population through a full range of undergraduate, graduate, professional, postdoctoral, and continuing education programs.

- **Research.** The KU Medical Center maintains nationally and internationally recognized research programs to advance the health sciences. Health-related research flourishes in a setting that includes strong basic and applied investigations of life processes, inquiries into the normal functions of the human body and mechanisms of disease processes, and model healthcare programs for the prevention of disease and the maintenance of health and quality of life.
• **Service.** The KU Medical Center provides high-quality patient-centered healthcare and health-related services. The University of Kansas Medical Center will be the standard bearer in the development and implementation of model programs that provide the greatest possible diversity of proven healthcare services for the citizens of Kansas, the region, and the nation.
**IV. Executive Summary of Self-Study Report**

**Significant Changes at KU (1994-2004)**

Significant changes have taken place at KU over the past decade and are briefly highlighted in this section. The table summarizes basic institutional data to broadly illustrate the differences between KU in 1994 and KU in 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Comparisons: FY 1994 and FY 2004</th>
<th>Fall 1994</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollment</td>
<td>28,862</td>
<td>29,272</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>26,127</td>
<td>26,814</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>2,458</td>
<td>-10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>19,554</td>
<td>21,118</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/First Professional</td>
<td>8,614</td>
<td>7,485</td>
<td>-13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Residents</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Students</td>
<td>2,326</td>
<td>3,281</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Amer. Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU average</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Average</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Year Retention Rate of New Freshmen¹</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Amer. Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic)</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minority Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Amer. Indian, Black, Hispanic)</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degrees Conferred</td>
<td>5,676</td>
<td>6,205</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>5,109</td>
<td>5,642</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate degrees</td>
<td>3,715</td>
<td>3,970</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters/First Professional/Doctorate</td>
<td>1,961</td>
<td>2,235</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degrees Conferred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Headcount</td>
<td>2,101</td>
<td>2,158</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Faculty</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minority Faculty</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
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<td>Endowment (total assets)</td>
<td>$389,281,000</td>
<td>$886,295,000</td>
<td>127.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratio of State General Fund Expenditures to General Fee (Tuition) Expenditures - Lawrence</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation-Adjusted State General Fund Expenditures per Student FTE²</td>
<td>$6,096</td>
<td>$5,591</td>
<td>-8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Expenditures³</td>
<td>$115,415,000</td>
<td>$257,906,000</td>
<td>123.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Government</td>
<td>$52,307,000</td>
<td>$133,309,000</td>
<td>154.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TotalAssignable Square Feet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>4,652,715</td>
<td>5,181,760</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>1,039,014</td>
<td>1,192,000</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First-year students are part of the Fall 1993 entering class and the Fall 2002 entering class.

2 Expenditures are in FY 2004 and adjusted for inflation using the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). FTE is the fall term of the appropriate fiscal year, Lawrence campus only.

3 Most current available data is FY 2003.

4 FY 1994 Medical Center data was adjusted to remove the hospital square feet since that figure is not included in FY 2004 data.

Strategic Planning
During the past decade, the University of Kansas has engaged in numerous planning activities. The most visible, inclusive, and successful effort is Initiative 2001, KU’s planning framework for the 21st century that was launched in 1997. Its major priorities include: Build Premier Learning Communities, Serve Kansans, Act as One University, and Serve as the Research University for the Greater Kansas City area.

Qualified Admissions
• In the Fall of 2001, a qualified admissions policy was put into practice for the six universities in the Regents system by Kansas state statute. Under the previous open admissions policy, any graduate of an accredited Kansas high school received guaranteed admission to a Regents university.
• Under qualified admissions, Kansas high school students, as well as out-of-state students, are required to achieve minimum standards to be admitted to a Regents university as measured by ACT score, high school rank, or completion of a college preparation curriculum.
• University enrollment remains at an all-time high.

Increase in Undergraduate Retention and Graduation
• The continued improvement of KU’s academic support programs is evidenced in the best-ever freshman retention rate of 82.7 percent for the Fall 2003 entering freshman class. This is a significant increase over the University’s all time low of 74.9 percent in Fall 1993. The University continues to work toward a goal of 85 percent.
• Over the last ten years, the six-year graduation rates for full-time, first-time freshmen also have increased from 55.9 percent to 58.1 percent. The University goal is to increase the six-year graduation rate to 65 percent.
• The retention and graduation rates for minority students have risen more rapidly than for the student body overall.
• Factors that contribute to improved retention and graduation rates include: the Freshman-Sophomore Advising Center, the KU Writing Center, HAWK Link, expanded tutoring services, successful modifications in course content and delivery methods in introductory math courses, and qualified admissions standards.

Administrative Reorganization
Over the past decade, the University of Kansas has reorganized its administrative structures both to increase organizational effectiveness and to better position itself to respond to future challenges.

• Chancellor Hemenway was hired in 1995 and implemented an administrative reorganization in 1996. One of the key changes consolidated all campus academic and support operations under one position – the provost. Academic policy development and communication are facilitated by
an organizational arrangement in which academic units report directly to the provost/executive vice chancellor.

- The KU Center for Research, Inc. (KUCR) was expanded to oversee the financial administration of externally sponsored research and training grants for the entire Lawrence campus. The Research Institute (RI) at the Medical Center was expanded to increase research capacity for privately funded and federally funded research projects. The research structure changes have been instrumental in the growth of externally funded research and in fostering a sense of efficacy and enthusiasm in KU’s research community.

- The University of Kansas Hospital was established as a separate entity with its own governing board in 1998. By operating as a public authority rather than continuing as part of the University structure, the hospital gained greater flexibility and additional autonomy from state rules and regulations.

- In 2003, an office of Student Success was created by integrating student and academic services. The changes in student services allow the University to continue to build upon its success in the enrollment and retention of a high-quality, diverse student body.

- The KU Libraries and the information technology units were brought together in a unit called Information Services. The partnership has enabled the University to move rapidly in the implementation of technology and acquisition of content to support learning and research on campus.

**Funding Mechanisms**

- A major change in state funding support for higher education occurred in 2001. The Regents universities are now funded by block grants and full tuition ownership; henceforth, all tuition paid by students remains with the University.

- With the advent of tuition ownership, KU developed a five-year tuition enhancement plan to address needs and priorities identified in Initiative 2001, as well as those identified as high priorities by students, faculty, and staff. Under the plan, 100 new faculty will be recruited, compensation for graduate assistants has increased, expansion of support for technology investments, support staff for various student service programs have been added, and opportunities for undergraduate research and international experiences have been expanded.

**Infrastructure and Capital Improvement**

- Over the past decade, more than $300 million in new building projects have been funded on the Lawrence and Edwards campuses and another $155 million at the Medical Center.

- During the past 5 years, sponsored research and indirect funds have grown at double-digit rates annually, tuition has increased.

**Administrative Information Systems**

- Enterprise-wide administrative systems have been installed over the last 10 years including a human resources and payroll system, a financial system, and a student administrative system.
• An integrated library system was introduced in 1998, and the newest generation of library search technology was launched in November 2002.

• The design and development of a university-wide analytical system (DEMIS) that stores University data and provides access to that data for both operational and decision-making has been pivotal in providing operational managers and decision makers with current data.

• In Fall 2003, the University created a web portal – Kyou – for students, faculty, and staff to access electronic information and online services – including online enrollment.

**Institutional Support Systems**

In 1999, a new courseware system, Blackboard, was implemented as a standardized course management system to maximize effective technical capabilities and instructional development support.
Concerns from 1994 Accreditation Visit

This section outlines the concerns from the 1994 accreditation visit and provides a brief summary of how KU addressed these concerns.

Concern 1

*There has been a considerable amount of deferred maintenance, which has resulted in the need for building repairs. For example, the Art and Design building should be tested for high levels of solvent and other fumes. This building’s ventilation system most likely is grossly inadequate. There is also a need to upgrade facilities and equipment in several units.*

Response 1

- Coping with aging facilities and current life safety building codes continues to be a pressing issue for KU and other universities across the country. Since the last NCA accreditation visit in 1994, the University has addressed a significant portion of deferred maintenance as a result of the 1996 Crumbling Classrooms legislative initiative.

- The Kansas Board of Regents continues its advocacy with the state legislature for increased funding. However, recognizing that state funding alone will not be sufficient in the near future, the University has sought to identify additional sources of revenue in order to maintain and build on the progress made as a result of previous initiatives. Two strategies have been identified and implemented. The first was to earmark $500,000 of the tuition enhancement funds each year over the next five years for classroom improvements, with an additional $2.4 million targeted annually for technology and equipment. The second strategy was to leverage cost-savings from energy improvements.

- The 1994 NCA team expressed specific concerns regarding conditions in the Art and Design Building. The Environmental Safety Officer assigned to this project determined that conditions in the building never approached any exposure level that would be of concern. Nonetheless, the foundry exhaust system was repaired, ventilation was improved for various studios and the darkroom, and the entire HVAC system was replaced. These projects cost approximately $190,000.

Concern 2

*There needs to be a more systematic plan for accountability at the institutional and department levels for recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities and women among the students, faculty, and staff. Patterns of evidence for support of affirmative action should be strengthened.*

Response 2

- KU enrolled a record number of American Indian, Asian, Black, and Hispanic students in both Fall 2003 and Fall 2004 – 3,281 students (11.2 percent) and 3,420 students (11.6 percent), respectively. These increases are due, in part, to targeted recruiting, support programs designed to improve retention of diverse students, and efforts to maintain accessibility.

- There has also been a steady increase in the numbers of both minority and women faculty over the last decade. The proportion of women faculty increased from 29 percent in Fall 1993 to 39
percent in Fall 2003. The proportion of minority faculty increased slightly from approximately 10 percent to 14 percent.

- Over the past decade, KU administrators have reinforced the expectation of increased campus diversity. The University has strengthened policies, processes, and procedures to develop a more systematic plan for accountability for recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities and women.

- Minority recruitment now is tracked systematically as part of institutional performance indicators, as mandated by the Kansas Board of Regents. The University is cognizant of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in June 2003 in the Michigan cases. These decisions confirmed KU’s belief that diversity in the student body, staff, and faculty is essential to the educational process.

**Concern 3**

*The open admissions policy continues to pose problems for an institution committed to academic excellence. There are insufficient academic support services for underrepresented students entering the university directly from high school. Efforts should be made to provide additional advising and support programs to improve retention of such undergraduate students.*

**Response 3**

The concern expressed by the 1994 NCA team regarding academic excellence has been addressed in two ways. First, the university no longer has an open admissions policy and, second, the University has expanded academic support programming to enhance retention.

**Concern 4**

*There is a need for more strategic and tactical actions regarding technological improvement for administration, teaching, research, and professional programs. This includes computerization, networks, wiring of buildings, and facilities and software acquisition.*

**Response 4**

- Information Services was formed in July 1996 to coordinate and optimize technological improvements across the University. Information Services includes all campus-wide technology software, hardware and networking services, KU’s printing division, and the libraries.

- Technological facilities in support of KU’s research mission have also been upgraded substantially over the past decade. Between 1996 and 2001, *KUWired*, a campus-wide strategic plan for information technology, was developed.

- Significant technological improvements over the last 10 years include the implementation of the PeopleSoft enterprise software for financials, human resources, admissions, student records, and student financials; significant upgrades of the data and voice network capacity; upgrades of web presence and implementation of the Kyou portal; and implementation of a campus-wide groupware (email and calendaring) system, with more than 27,000 accounts.
Concern 5

The NCA team is aware that the University has established additional instructional sites, for example, the Capitol Center [now the Public Management Center], in pursuit of its mission. The team is concerned, however, that the University’s institutional and academic integrity be maintained and not be diluted by diversion of resources to service those sites.

Response 5

Strategic planning priorities drive the University’s response to opportunities to expand or establish instructional sites. KU’s programs offered at the Edwards Campus in Overland Park and at the Public Management Center in Topeka are direct responses to the Serving Kansans and the Research University for Kansas City initiatives of Initiative 2001. The additional instructional sites are integral extensions of the University mission rather than diversions or dilutions of resources.

Concern 6

In some disciplines, undergraduate teaching needs appear to drive admission to graduate programs rather than the research potential of applicants to those programs.

Response 6

The University of Kansas has used several strategies to address this concern successfully, including:

• Developing administrative policies to control the growth of undergraduate enrollment
• Capitalizing on the centralization of the GTA appointment process
• Using information gained from academic program reviews to deploy resources more effectively
• Allocating tuition enhancement funds to increase the number of tenure-track faculty positions

Concern 7

Continued progress is needed to improve graduate stipends and to provide tuition remission for graduate research assistants.

Response 7

The University has implemented a range of strategies to improve support levels for graduate students.

• GTA and GRA salaries have increased
• The value of benefits provided to GTAs and GRAs has increased
• A portion of the new revenues from the five-year tuition enhancement plan has been earmarked for graduate fellowships

Concern 8

Parking on the KUMC campus, for patients and others, is a definite problem.
Response 8
As the Medical Center continues to expand its academic, clinical, and research efforts, the issue of parking noted by the 1994 NCA team continues to be a challenge.

- In the short term, 200 spaces were added in a new lot on the north edge of campus in 2001, and additional spaces were acquired at the Rainbow Mental Health Center.
- In Summer 2004, improvements were made to the Cambridge Parking Facility, and a new 230-car surface lot was completed.
- The Medical Center's master plan for campus expansion includes a detailed commitment to improve parking over the next three years with parking in the north campus area a high priority.

Concern 9
There is a need to address inadequate and insufficient space in the libraries.

Response 9
The University has been able to address space needs in the University Libraries in several ways since the 1994 NCA Accreditation visit, and tremendous progress has been made. In the Libraries Strategic Plan 2000, the top priority is the construction of a Book and Archival Record Depository (BARD) that will be completed in 2006. The first module will hold approximately 800,000 volumes.
Criteria for Accreditation

This section summarizes how KU satisfies the criteria used by NCA for accreditation. (Note: This material is a duplicate of the executive summary included in the Self-Study report)

CRITERION 1: MISSION AND INTEGRITY

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Overview

The University of Kansas is a major public research and teaching university that operates through a diverse, multicampus system. KU’s many parts are bound together by a mission to serve as a “center for learning, research, scholarship, and creative endeavor” in the state of Kansas, the nation, and the world.

The University’s mission is achieved through high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction, high levels of research productivity, and valuable service to the community. The mission is sustained by outstanding administrative support units, exceptional student support services and programs, research centers, libraries, and museums. Students, faculty, and staff are committed to excellence, integrity, and diversity in the creation, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge, and in service to the broader community and constituent groups.

Graduate and professional education, with their direct links to scholarly endeavors and funded research, distinguishes KU from other universities in the state of Kansas. Twenty-five graduate and professional programs are ranked by U.S. News & World Report among the top 25 at public universities nationwide.

Outside groups also recognize the University’s distinctive core commitments. Recently, the National Study of Student Engagement found four distinctive institutional characteristics during a site visit to KU: 1) a collegial environment, 2) an emphasis on undergraduate teaching, 3) data-driven decision-making, and 4) traditions and culture.

Criterion Components

Under Criterion 1, the University responds to a series of mission-related component statements.

• The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

• In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

• Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

• The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.
The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

**Commentary**

The goals and priorities of KU’s individual campuses vary according to their particular niches, but the University mission (approved by the Kansas Board of Regents in 1992) flows through all activities, policies, and structures and links them together into a more coherent whole. In addition, the mission statements serve as a framework for assessing programs, setting goals, developing initiatives, and evaluating progress.

The University has a strong tradition of providing high quality, broad-based services to multiple constituencies in the region, state, nation, and world through a variety of programs and delivery methods. KU’s mission clearly acknowledges the diversity of its learners, as well as the University’s role in preparing students to live in an increasingly complex and multicultural society. KU currently has many programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing the international flavor of the University. At the Edwards Campus and through Continuing Education, KU also serves the lifelong educational needs of businesses, organizations, and working adults.

University strategic planning activities are grounded in and informed by the University mission. The current university-wide strategic plan, *Initiative 2001*, clearly reflects the mission, values, culture, and traditions of KU through its emphasis on building premier learning communities, serving as the research university for the Kansas City metropolitan area, and serving the state of Kansas.

The value placed on shared governance at KU is reflected in the highly visible role of governance in discussion and change. Students, faculty, and staff understand both the importance and challenge of shared governance and work in concert to ensure its success. Issues are raised and debated, and result in changes to academic and administrative policies through collaborative processes. Decisions are inclusive, giving a large number of people from different constituent groups a sense of ownership.

The University is strongly committed to ensuring that the activities of the institution are consistent with its mission and are conducted with integrity and sensitivity. A wide range of statutes, policies, and procedures with implications for the ethical behavior of students, faculty, staff, and administrators govern the institution. These rules and procedures are periodically reviewed and revised, if necessary, to ensure that they remain pertinent and effective. In this context, challenges to academic values and integrity are addressed in a fair and open manner.

**CRITERION 2: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE**

The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

**Overview**

Over the past decade, the University of Kansas has engaged in numerous planning activities across many levels of the organization – from institution-wide strategic plans to departmental enrollment...
planning. All of these different planning processes are bound together by a common understanding of the University’s mission, goals, and priorities. Planning initiatives are also linked with budgeting processes so that adequate resources can be allocated to support planning initiatives. The budgeting processes also inform planning efforts in a continuous cycle of evaluation and feedback.

Planning activities at KU typically include students, faculty, and staff. This broad-based inclusiveness is a key feature of the University’s culture, and all groups have major, legitimate roles in the decision-making processes. A crucial component of all planning activities is identifying situations and issues in the external environment that are likely to impact the University and its constituents. Through such environmental scanning, the University is better able to identify challenges that will face KU in the future.

One of the most visible, inclusive, and enduring of KU’s planning efforts is Initiative 2001, which involved 185 students, faculty, and staff. Launched in 1997, the plan continues to guide the University. The key components of the University's mission statement – instruction, research, and service – form the basis for Initiative 2001’s major priorities:

- Build Premier Learning Communities
- Serve Kansans
- Act as One University
- Be the Research University for the Greater Kansas City area

In addition to Initiative 2001, numerous other KU planning initiatives have provided a framework for addressing future opportunities and challenges. Examples include:

- Five-Year Tuition Enhancement Plan (2001-2006)
- KU Medical Center Campus Strategic Plan (2003)
- KU Lawrence Campus Master Plan (1997)
- Research Foundation Committee to restructure KU Center for Research, Inc. (1996-1997)
- Kansas Board of Regents Performance Indicators (2001-present)

**Criterion Components**

Under Criterion 2, the University responds to a series of planning-related component statements.

- All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.
- The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.
- The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Commentary

Planning drives decision-making at KU. All planning is firmly grounded in the mission and values of the University: highest quality instruction; high levels of scholarship and funded research productivity; service to the state, nation, and world; students prepared for lives of learning in a complex and diverse multicultural and international community; and commitment to excellence.

*KU First: Invest in Excellence*, is one example of how the *Initiative 2001* vision was realized. The $500 million capital campaign focused on raising private funds for educational and research initiatives that position KU to pursue cutting-edge knowledge in science education, computer science, health sciences, and biomedical research, as well as provide monies for student support services (including scholarships), additional facilities for growing programs, endowed positions for senior faculty, and awards for promising young faculty. As of Fall 2004, the campaign has gifts and pledges of $578 million, and will exceed a new goal ($600 million) by year’s end. *KU First* has funded 15 construction projects on three campuses, 230 new scholarships, and 31 new professorships.

Adherence to the mission and institutional values are central to planning and budget decisions at KU. The annual budget process demonstrates the strong interrelationship of the mission, planning, and fiscal management. The budget documents are structured to: 1) relate to institutional goals and priorities, 2) respond to specific institutional priorities (e.g., retention, diversity, graduation rate, etc.), and 3) identify strategies for continued progress toward goals in varying fiscal environments.

The overarching philosophy that guides planning and budgeting decisions at KU is to protect and enhance the academic core and mission. These principles reflect KU’s core values and guide budget decisions – both allocations and reductions – on all campuses. During the mandatory state budget reductions imposed in FY 2002-2003, cuts were made in accordance with these principles.

Academic units work within the framework provided by the KU strategic plan to prepare for the future. Implementation of the tuition enhancement plan has strengthened this alignment of academic priorities with institutional priorities. Stable leadership in senior administrative positions has allowed the coherent implementation of strategic planning initiatives. With full tuition ownership and tuition enhancement resources, the KU administration now has resources to fulfill such *Initiative 2001* priorities as targeted faculty positions and funding for premier learning community initiatives such as the Global Awareness Program, Thematic Learning Communities, among others.

Systematic environmental scanning enables KU to identify societal and economic trends and threats at the regional, national and global levels that have potential to shape KU’s organizational context in the future. While strategic planning positions the University to evaluate the trends and threats that require attention, some are beyond the University’s control. Examples include changes in the state’s funding mechanism for higher education, an aging state population, changes in student demographics, shifts in the labor market for graduate students, advances in technology, and the increasingly complex and global nature of society.
KU consistently utilizes operational, management, and analytical data to maintain and improve institutional effectiveness. Both quantitative and qualitative data are used on a systematic basis to inform decisions, evaluate programs and processes, and make improvements. Centralized institutional research offices on both the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses play key roles in providing accurate and reliable data for budgeting and strategic planning processes as well as operational decisions. Evaluation and assessment activities are not limited to institutional research offices, but occur in both academic and administrative units across the University. The broad range of coordinated activities performed by the institutional research offices help to ensure that the collection and interpretation of data at the University is consistent, explicit and accurate, as well as widely disseminated across the University to better inform planning at all levels of the organization.

Financial resources flow from four main sources: state appropriations, tuition revenue, externally funded research, and endowment funds. Of these:

- State appropriations per FTE student at KU declined in inflation-adjusted dollars from FY 1994 to FY 2004 ($6,100 to $5,600), an amount equivalent to almost $12 million.
- Tuition enhancement revenue generated from student tuition is new money targeted primarily for improving the academic core to strengthen and improve the quality of education, generating $26 million over the first three years.
- University research, development, and training expenditures increased from $102.7 million in FY 1993 to $257.9 million in FY 2003, an increase of more than 150 percent.
- KU’s annual financial support from the KU Endowment Association grew from $44 million in 1998 to $83 million in FY 2004.

Since 1994, KU has made substantial investments in its physical plant and infrastructure, including more than $308 million for projects that are completed, in progress, or in design. These include construction or renovation of classroom, research, laboratory, residential, athletic, recreational, museum, parking, administrative, childcare, and service-related structures.

As of Fall 2004, KU had 8.7 million gross square feet of space on the Lawrence and Edwards campuses and 2.5 million gross square feet at the Medical Center. On average, KU has added more than 40,000 square feet of space per year for more than a century. Projects now underway will add about 30,000 square feet. Plans are underway for construction of 170,000 gross square feet of office and research space within the next 5 years. The need for research space, particularly laboratory space, parallels KU’s increase in funded research, especially for larger projects in engineering and the sciences.

**CRITERION 3: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING**

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**Overview**

The University of Kansas is a major research university that excels at student learning and effective teaching at the undergraduate, graduate, and first professional levels. KU is characterized by the
breadth and outstanding quality of its academic program offerings. KU continues to value undergraduate teaching as much as graduate teaching and sustains a culture that views research and teaching as equally critical to the overall learning environment.

The past 10 years have seen major coordinated and strategic investments in the teaching and learning environment, improving on an already strong tradition. The Build Premier Learning Communities initiative, part of the Initiative 2001 strategic plan, illustrates the importance KU places on teaching and learning. Build Premier Learning Communities has served as a framework for establishing many of the programs cited in this section.

In this process, KU has kept several important commitments in mind: adherence to its mission as a research university and belief in the value of face-to-face instruction in a tradition-rich environment of frequent student-faculty and student-student interaction. KU has made significant technological advancements since the last review, and has also focused on improving student experiences on its brick and mortar campuses. In addition, three specific components of the undergraduate experience have been enhanced: an international experience, service learning, and undergraduate research.

At the graduate level and in the professional schools, courses have been re-engineered to support and enhance learning through the integration of technology. Beyond the strategy of hiring and retaining high-quality faculty with active research agendas, the institution has made concerted efforts to enhance the quality of the graduate experience. These efforts include creating a more central role for the Graduate School, raising student stipends, expanding fellowship and scholarship opportunities, and improving advising and career preparation.

KU has used assessment since the mid-1980s to guide the development of the complex teaching and learning environment. In particular, the general education assessment process has become part of the Lawrence campus culture. Not only has this provided important campus-wide data on the extent to which Lawrence undergraduate students meet university-wide General Education goals, it has served as the basis for campus-wide conversations about the kind of general education a KU graduate should possess. Other pieces of this process include: assessment in the undergraduate major, assessment of graduate programs, academic program review, and professional accreditation. In addition, KU also reviews and evaluates its assessment processes.

**Criterion Components**

Under Criterion 3, the University responds to a series of component statements about teaching and learning.

- The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.
- The organization values and supports effective teaching.
- The organization creates effective learning environments.
- The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.
Commentary

The information provided in this section articulates KU’s commitment to student success. The recent DEEP Report, for example, provides external documentation of KU’s success in developing a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. KU has devoted significant attention during the past decade to increasing its research profile, while protecting the quality of the undergraduate experience. KU has made major investments in the teaching and learning environment that have led to increased retention rates and praise from the NSSE researchers.

KU has established a set of university-wide goals for general education that are independent of specific course requirements. First identified in 1987 and revised in 2000-01, these six goals represent the common expectations for a KU graduate.

- **Goal 1**: Enhance the skills and knowledge needed to research, organize, evaluate, and apply new information and develop a spirit of critical inquiry and intellectual integrity.
- **Goal 2**: Acquire knowledge in the fine arts, the humanities, and the social, natural, and mathematical sciences and be able to integrate that knowledge across disciplines.
- **Goal 3**: Improve the core skills of reading, writing, and numeracy, and enhance communication by clear, effective use of language.
- **Goal 4**: Understand and appreciate the development, culture, and diversity of the United States and of other societies and nations.
- **Goal 5**: Become aware of contemporary issues in society, technology, and the natural world, and appreciate their complexity of cause and consequences.
- **Goal 6**: Practice an ethic of self-discipline, social responsibility, and citizenship on a local, national, and international level.

Assessment of General Education is an annual activity, and the goals now are included in information provided during new student orientation. The goals also are in the undergraduate catalog. A University General Education Task Force is exploring the issues surrounding general education on a university-wide basis.

KU’s academic programs have identified goals for student learning that drive an ongoing, multifaceted assessment program at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. KU’s assessment programs all have a high level of faculty involvement, and the results are used by programs to enhance learning experiences. Assessment in the major is required of all undergraduate academic programs, and has prompted curricular changes as well as the addition of scholarship opportunities and improved laboratory equipment. The assessment of graduate programs occurs through program assessment and departmental self-studies as part of academic program review. Other forms of assessment include those linked to the dissertation process in doctoral programs and surveys conducted by organizations outside of the University.

Effective teaching is a celebrated hallmark of KU. The past ten years have seen many concrete initiatives to recognize and facilitate effective teaching and learning. Efforts to support excellence in teaching include increased recognition through teaching awards and professorships, and initiatives that integrate technology in instruction. KU values teaching excellence and the evaluation of teaching effectiveness is an important component of annual merit reviews, tenure and promotion reviews, and post-tenure reviews. The quality of teaching is not limited to tenure-eligible faculty.
Typically, 20 percent of the memorable teachers mentioned by seniors on a comprehensive survey are graduate teaching assistants – an indication that GTA workshops, coaching, and development opportunities are effective.

The academic learning environment, particularly the curriculum, is never static and this has been particularly true at KU during the past 10 years. Much effort has been directed toward meeting the challenges outlined by Initiative 2001. The Build Premier Learning Communities task force identified preparation of the emerging professorate – graduate students – for teaching, advising, and research as a prerequisite of an effective research university learning environment. Among the many KU programs that support teaching, learning, and retention are the Freshman-Sophomore Advising Center, Thematic Learning Communities, HAWK Link, PRE 101 Orientation Seminars, the Honors Program, scholarship halls, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Multicultural Resource Center, the Haskell Mentor Program, and academic support for student athletes.

KU has made major investments in the use of technology to support learning and instruction, in terms of computing labs, a digital library, and wireless zones. KU has also integrated technology into instruction. One example is the use of instructional technology that enables faculty to teach large classes while maintaining a degree of interactivity and active learning. Tuition enhancement funds have been used to upgrade technology in academic units.

Since 1996, KU has received $48 million at Lawrence and $20 million at the Medical Center for facilities improvements as part of the Kansas Board of Regents Crumbling Classrooms initiative. Projects have included the renovation of existing space, additions to existing buildings, ADA and fire code improvements, and construction of a new School of Nursing building. The Kansas Board of Regents has documented deferred maintenance and repair needs of more than $600 million at the six state universities, and is urging increased funding for this purpose. Tuition enhancement funds have also been earmarked for physical improvements directly related to the student educational experience.

Several strategies are used to ensure educational effectiveness: task forces for in-depth investigation of a perceived problem or issue and periodic comprehensive surveys of students. For example, a new, flexible organizational structure was established to address the changing needs of students. The reorganized student services office was renamed Student Success. Student Success has identified 11 priorities, each clearly linked to key student needs, which it plans to pursue.

Another example is the Senior Survey conducted at regular intervals since 1977. The survey, to be administered next in 2005, provides a baseline measure of the level of student satisfaction with the university experience. The Student Perceptions Survey has been administered five times since 1996 and is intended to measure student perception on instruction, faculty help outside the classroom, opportunities for intellectual challenge, English language ability of instructors, development of course schedules, overall educational experience, and the quality of academic advising.

One of the overarching themes that emerged from the DEEP Report was KU’s commitment to an environment that values student success. It provided outside confirmation that KU’s culture places a high value on creating effective learning environments for students. KU was selected as one of only two public research universities for an in-depth follow-up case study because of “higher-than-
predicted scores on five clusters of benchmarks of effective educational practice and higher than predicted graduation rates.”

The Self-Study process identified these areas of challenge at KU:

- KU’s goal of having every undergraduate student complete a research experience and a service learning experience are not as full developed as the Global Awareness Program. Although service learning and undergraduate research take place, experiences are not systematic and available for all students.
- Although some efforts have been made to improve the support for graduate students and several programs have been instituted to prepare graduate students for future careers, greater attention will be given over the next 10 years to the quality of the graduate student experience.
- Renewed attention should be given to graduate outcomes assessment. Because of the program specific nature of graduate education, identification of graduate program goals and appropriate means of determining goal attainment is an important step in building strong graduate programs.

**CRITERION 4: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE**

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

**Overview**

The acquisition, discovery, and application of new knowledge are of paramount importance and a principal institutional focus at the University of Kansas. The depth and breadth of research resources and scholarly activity are outward manifestations of the pivotal value this activity holds in the life of the University. From cutting edge scientific investigation on the neurological effects of aging, to cutting edge research on autism, to maximizing useable bandwidth in telecommunications, to analyzing the works of poet Langston Hughes, KU faculty, as well as graduate and many undergraduate students, are actively engaged in the research arena. In many ways, research at KU clearly reflects the true value and meaning of a “life of learning.”

The importance of preparing students for a life of learning in the world outside the academy is also stressed. Through multiple and varied methods of evaluation, KU constantly assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students, modifying it continually to meet the demands of the workplace while exposing students to a diverse and dynamic global society.

**Criterion Components**

Under Criterion 4, the University responds to a series of component statements about the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.
• The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.
• The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.
• The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.
• The organization provides support to ensure that students, faculty, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Commentary
KU has a core belief that research is important – both for itself and because it is essential to a vibrant the teaching and learning environment for all KU students and faculty. As a major research university, KU values the work of its investigators as they seek to better the human condition and provide leadership to researchers around the world.

The educational priorities of KU clearly rest in the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge as demonstrated by the depth and variety of research resources and research opportunities available to faculty and students. The sustained research activity and scholarly productivity of the faculty, the emphasis on research experiences for students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and the significant growth in research expenditures over the past decade all testify to the high value KU places on a life of learning.

Research at KU is a thriving, dynamic enterprise. Research productivity is a key criterion in the hiring, promotion, merit reviews, and post-tenure reviews of faculty. The critical importance of research is expressed through the campus strategic planning initiatives, which encourage the collaborative creation of new knowledge. Sponsored project expenditures have nearly doubled since 1995, building on traditional strengths while recognizing and taking advantage of research opportunities and trends at the national level. Increasing the effect and volume of externally funded research is a major goal at KU.

Research collaboration is promoted at KU through multidisciplinary centers focused on common themes. KU is home to six national research centers funded by NIH and NSF. Major research foci are the arts and humanities, education, the environment and natural sciences, human health, information technology and informatics, societal organization, and quality of life.

Research meets crucial educational goals by enhancing the ability of KU faculty to teach at the frontiers of their fields and by providing students with research experiences. The effects of research in these and other areas are profound, increasing knowledge and understanding, and contributing to economic development.

Research universities need suitable research space and equipment, especially during periods of growth. The Kansas Legislature recently provided $65 million in bonding authority for the construction of a biomedical research facility at the Medical Center, and $5 million for life sciences research equipment on the Lawrence campus. This support has continued in the form of the Kansas...
Economic Growth Act, enacted by the Legislature in 2004, which is aimed at promoting life sciences research within the state as a lever for economic development.

On the Lawrence campus, nearly 100,000 square feet of laboratory space was acquired or built in the past three years. The first phase of the Structural Biology Center was completed in 2004, and construction is about to begin on a new 100,000-square foot research building. Plans call for an additional 50 percent increase in research space over the next five years. Similar efforts are underway at the Medical Center to improve and expand space available for research.

The directors of KU research centers and institutes, surveys, science-based museums, and core service laboratories all report to the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. This organizational structure facilitates interdisciplinary research and places KU in a better position to compete for interdisciplinary research grants. In addition, the research center structure provides substantial benefits that enhance research productivity, such as pooling of faculty talent, institutional resources and grant support. More than half of the sponsored project expenditures at KU are conducted through approximately 60 centers, institutes, and other non-academic units, including the following:

- Biodiversity Research Center
- Center for Environmentally Beneficial Catalysis
- Center for Research on Learning
- Joyce and Elizabeth Hall Center for the Humanities
- Higuchi Biosciences Center
- Information and Telecommunication Technology Center
- Schiefelbusch Institute for Life Span Studies
- Hoglund Brain Imaging Center
- Kansas Masonic Cancer Research Institute
- Landon Center on Aging
- Kansas Biological Survey
- Kansas Geological Survey
- Policy Research Institute
- Transportation Center

KU’s traditional strength in the arts and humanities provides a focus for interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and discourse. KU is also an important center for educational research, and has become a leader in research that addresses environmental issues. KU researchers are also involved in the development of resources such as energy, water, and fuel cells, as well as improving infrastructures such as better roads and bridges.

Human health research has always been a major focus of research at KU, focusing on drug discovery and delivery, neurosciences, and cancer research. In recent years, this focus has intensified, with more than two-thirds of KU’s sponsored project expenditures now in projects related to the life sciences (including $67.7 million in NIH awards in FY 2003). The KU Medical Center is at the forefront of the University’s human health focus. In July 2004, the Medical Center received an $18
million NIH grant, the largest in the state’s history. KU’s School of Pharmacy currently ranks second in total NIH funding among all U.S. schools of pharmacy. Its research programs have consistently been among the most successful and well funded in the country.

Another important research area is the distribution of information across networks and data mining – particularly the areas of computational technologies, communications, and sensors for a host of applications. KU is also at the forefront of informatics research, which brings emerging computational technologies to bear on a wide range of issues.

Significant questions related to public policy and social organizations are studied at KU, based on interdisciplinary expertise in the social sciences, business, law, and journalism. The Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics is a major new catalyst for public policy discussion on campus, providing a forum for pressing public policy issues.

The Offices of Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property on the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses facilitate the transfer of technology by assisting researchers with intellectual property protection and commercialization, maintaining entrepreneurial and industry resources, and summarizing technology transfer activity for statistical and outreach purposes. The Research Dissemination and Support Program within KU Continuing Education works to ensure that KU’s research is shared widely.

The KU Libraries provide an array of print and digital research materials and user services to support research at the University. The Libraries provide access to on-site collections of traditional materials, collections of electronic resources, and services that help users find, retrieve, and use information conveniently.

An array of financial support is available to faculty members to support research, including the Competitive General Research Fund, the New Faculty General Research Fund Program, the Higuchi Research Achievement Award Program, federal financial support, travel grants, and utilization of overhead funds.

The University is committed to striking a balance between general education and discipline-specific knowledge so that all students acquire the fundamental skills necessary to pursue a life of learning in a diverse and complex society. In doing so, it encourages faculty and students to pursue critical inquiry into a broad range of subjects as well as to build upon this broad base through specialized focus in disciplines of particular interest.

A guide to achieving this balance is the General Education goals, described earlier, which reflect the breadth of knowledge that KU encompasses in its educational programs. The Kansas Board of Regents also provides direction by establishing minimum credit hours and distribution requirements for general education courses for students transferring among Kansas postsecondary institutions.

All of the 5,700 graduate students on the Lawrence campus participate in research as part of their education. Many undergraduates also take advantage of the abundant research opportunities available to them.

The regular evaluation of academic programs is critical to effective self-management. A combination of self-assessment and outside review facilitates improvements in curriculum and instruction as well
as better use of faculty time and talent. The principal formal assessment of program quality, usefulness, and capacity is the Kansas Board of Regents Program Review process. In addition, the relevance and value of the KU curricula are routinely evaluated by faculty and administrators, as well as by external constituencies such as the professional licensure boards and accrediting agencies. Less formal but equally important assessment of curricula and program utility comes from entities such as advisory boards, recruiter surveys, and solicited feedback through program and departmental newsletters.

All degree programs at KU are reviewed on an eight-year cycle through an intensive departmental Self-Study and recommendation process. Annual reports are submitted to the provost by academic units. In addition, a common set of data is collected on an annual basis, giving KU administrators and the Kansas Board of Regents a statistical overview of each academic program.

An additional, independent check on whether the curricula are current and relevant is professional accreditation. All of the KU programs that have external accrediting bodies are accredited. At the Medical Center, healthcare professional curricula are influenced by national and external forces, such as licensure requirements and program accreditation, as well as national mandates. On the Lawrence campus, the professional school programs are subject to periodic evaluation by professional organizations and licensing boards.

KU’s research and scholarly endeavors benefit the citizens of Kansas, the nation, and the world. Strengths in this area include the breadth of research in the humanities, social sciences, and natural and physical sciences, a tradition of interdisciplinary research, and an international focus. Challenges in this area include outgrown infrastructure, the need for more technical/research/library staff, and barriers to collaborative research or differences in policies and practices between the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses.

**CRITERION 5: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE**

**As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.**

**Overview**

The constituents of the University of Kansas include students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as the citizens of the state, the nation, and the world. “Kansas roots, global reach” is the term that best captures KU’s dual obligation. This commitment is reflected in the University’s mission and in the many documents and activities highlighted in this section.

Both KU’s mission statement and *Initiative 2001* identify key constituencies. KU serves Kansans through a variety of collaborative efforts targeted at enhancing the Kansas and greater Kansas City workforce, developing research and responding to specific needs. KU serves the region, the nation, and the global community through a variety of educational and research efforts. The *Serve Kansans* task force for *Initiative 2001* defined public service at KU as follows:

- Public service is the purposeful application of teaching, research, and scholarship to the needs of citizens and communities within Kansas and beyond. Public service involves active outreach that is responsive to the needs of
diverse constituencies within the State, with special emphasis toward assisting underserved communities and disadvantaged populations. Such responsive outreach requires the formation of vital partnerships between representatives of the University and Kansas communities.

- While recognizing its broad-reaching responsibility, KU must target its external activities to capitalize on its strengths and avoid duplication of services. The KU Medical Center, as the only medical school in the state, is one example of strength and opportunity.

**Criterion Components**

Under Criterion 5, the University responds to a series of component statements about engagement and service.

- The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.
- The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.
- The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.
- Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

**Commentary**

KU interacts with its constituent groups to better understand and respond to their needs. The University must invest its limited resources carefully and thus must assess and match its level of engagement with its capacity to provide effective collaborations. KU and its many units constantly scan the appropriate external environments to identify mutually beneficial forms of engagement. This approach ensures that activities are based on capacity and need as judged by those most able to respond.

KU faculty and administrators are regularly involved in efforts to identify critical public education issues and workforce development needs in the region and beyond, with the Medical Center, the Edwards Campus, and KU Continuing Education playing key roles.

In addition to these services, the University employs other programs and mechanisms to communicate with key audiences. Such communication provides opportunities for KU to better understand the needs and expectations of external constituencies. It also enables KU to convey to constituency groups the role that a public research university can play in meeting their needs. As a public university, it is important for lawmakers, prospective students, donors, and the citizens of Kansas to understand the value of KU.

University Relations, part of External Affairs, is the central public relations office for KU, providing information to foster a better understanding of the University and its contributions. In 2004, KU began the development and implementation of an integrated marketing strategy to enhance the image, reputation, and visibility of KU. The four main objectives are:

- To enhance KU’s reputation statewide in order to increase state funding for teaching, research, and public service
• To identify and communicate to Kansans and the greater Kansas City region the benefits of having a public research institution with a strong national reputation
• To enhance recruitment to ensure that KU’s student body is a strong and diverse mix of high achieving students from Kansas, the nation, and the world
• To develop and implement an effective visual identity for KU

Since 1883, the KU Alumni Association has provided information and programs to connect alumni and friends to the University. One of the Association’s most significant duties is construction and maintenance of KU’s official database on graduates. Other programs and services include the Kansas Alumni magazine, an online alumni directory, and KU Connection, a monthly online newsletter. The professional schools, as well as the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, have advisory boards that assist them in maintaining up-to-date contact with their alumni and professional communities. These advisory boards facilitate connections between KU and its constituent groups to address curricular issues as well as the needs of the larger community.

KU’s service and outreach reflect its mission, through research endeavors, faculty expertise, and teaching resources. KU Continuing Education provides a wide variety of educational services, including professional certification, law enforcement, fire service training, distance and correspondence courses, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all ages. Curricular and co-curricular activities also provide opportunities for student engagement in the community through service learning activities and internships that are part of academic programs. A large number of units on campus provide service based on their expertise and capacity to serve a particular clientele.

In addition, many other KU units actively engage in public outreach and service that benefit constituency groups, including the KU Libraries, the Spencer Museum of Art, the Office of International Programs, the Kansas Audio Reader Network, Kansas Public Radio, the Faculty Speakers Bureau, the Lied Center, and the Athletic Department.

As part of the Serving Kansas component of Initiative 2001, KU committed itself to increasing service learning opportunities for all students. Examples include:

• Rural Health Services, including a required preceptorship month with a generalist physician in private practice in a medically underserved area of the state
• Alternative Breaks in January or March each year, involving groups of 7-10 KU students
• JayDoc Free Clinic, a free, student-run medical service in Kansas City
• Jubilee Café, providing breakfast for in-need community members in Lawrence

KU has forged partnerships with other postsecondary institutions, schools, public agencies, and private companies to promote the education, health, and well being of all people, particularly Kansans. These partnerships focus on shared educational, economic, and social goals and build effective bridges among the diverse communities that KU serves.

Each fall, 1,400 to 1,500 students transfer to KU. About half arrive from Kansas community colleges, another 25 percent come from other states, and the balance are from other universities in Kansas. The existence of a sound articulation process is an important element in the relationship between the institution and potential students. It is also a necessary component in a statewide...
educational system with differentiated institutional missions. Students transferring to a Kansas public university with a completed associate of arts or associate of sciences degree are given junior status.

In addition to the policies outlined by the Kansas Board of Regents, the University makes every effort to ensure that its transfer policies and procedures are clear to students and other stakeholders and are consistently and fairly administered. KU’s postsecondary relationships include KU-Haskell Indian Nations University partnerships, cooperative institutional agreements with universities in 29 countries, agreements for faculty exchanges with 16 universities, a partnership with the University of Costa Rica, a cooperative pharmacy graduate program with Monash University in Australia, and Graduate Direct Exchange agreements with nine European partner universities.

KU has many partnerships that promote economic development in Kansas and the nation, including participation in the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation, the Lawrence Regional Technology Center, the KU Small Business Development Center, the Biotechnology Development Center of Kansas City and Higuchi Biosciences Center. At each of its four campuses, KU has also established other mutually beneficial relationships with the local community.

Public research universities, such as KU, play a crucial role in the economic, political, and cultural life of the nation and its people. Every center and academic unit engages its constituents in ways appropriate to its mission and in concert with KU’s mission as a research university.

Workforce development is not only the province of community colleges and technical and vocational colleges. Increasingly, the workplace is global, knowledge-based, and dynamic. KU must prepare its graduates to enter the workplace and continue to supply them with the knowledge they will need to grow and adapt successfully in their careers over time.

KU Continuing Education offers courses – both public and custom-tailored for specialized industries – to keep professionals current in such fields as engineering, law, accounting, business, education, medicine, journalism, public administration, public works, and life sciences. Professional continuing education allows these professionals to continue to learn and benefit from the research and expertise of the University’s faculty. Many of the professional schools also offer continuing education opportunities for professionals.

Continuing Education constituents include participants from every county in Kansas, all 50 states, and 48 other countries. Programs include 1,000 professional, academic and public service events annually, which serve 50,000 noncredit participants. Continuing Education also offers 170 undergraduate and graduate distance education courses, developed and taught by KU faculty, with 2,300 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled. Through its educational service to the community, KU furthers the development of community leaders. For example, many of the graduates from the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center are now in leadership positions, including 162 police chiefs and 81 sheriffs.

Lawrence, in partnership with KU, is a cultural center for northeastern Kansas. Thousands of individuals attend events at the Lied Center, the School of Fine Arts, the Dole Institute of Politics, Memorial Stadium, and Allen Fieldhouse. Last spring, for example, more than 12,000 students,
faculty, staff, and citizens attended a speech on campus by former president Bill Clinton. The Museum of Natural History is one of the most visited tourist attractions in Kansas. The Lied Center’s education and outreach programming includes over 150 activities serving over 15,000 patrons. Kansas Public Radio estimates that some 70,000 people listen each day to its varied musical and public service programming.

One of the themes to emerge from KU’s Self-Study is the large number of units on campus that contribute to K-12 education in Kansas. This extends beyond the School of Education, the Center for Research on Learning, and the Life Span Institute. Nearly every academic unit and a diverse array of research centers, museums, and administrative departments have outreach activities that benefit K-12 students and/or teachers. Other programs, such as Telekids, the clinics sponsored by the Department of Psychology and the School of Education, and such community projects as Juniper Gardens and the Rosedale neighborhood initiatives, work directly with children to improve their mental, social, and physical health.

The KU Medical Center, in partnership with KU Physicians and the KU Hospital, provides over $400 million in patient care and $70 million in research each year – with an economic impact in excess of $1 billion on the Kansas economy. In addition, the School of Medicine provides an average of $12 million in uncompensated care each year, i.e., charity and billed-but-uncollectible charges for medical care provided to patients who were unable to pay.

The direct effects of research at KU contribute significantly to the local and state economies. Numerous positions are created directly by research projects. Scientists as well as student workers are employed by the University in a myriad of programs. A study commissioned by the Milken Foundation found that one of the best predictors of a region’s economic success was its proximity to a major research university. KU serves this role for greater Kansas City.

The year 2003 marked the seventh consecutive year that research expenditures increased at KU. Since 1995, KU’s total research expenditures have more than doubled. Over 80 percent of these expenditures came from federal agencies, i.e., money brought into the state that would not have contributed to the state’s economy otherwise. Each dollar spent directly on research will also circulate through the economy, indirectly generating additional income and employment. Further, basic university research may result in discoveries with commercial potential. Transferring technologies from research laboratories to the marketplace can have significant economic impact. KU research has generated 52 patents, 24 licenses, 13 equity positions, and 15 startup companies.

Clearly, KU engages its constituents in many ways. The breadth and depth of engagement mirrors the diversity of the University in general. This diversity is both a strength and a weakness. Because of the broad range of activities, citizens of the state often do not realize the amount or extent of service provided to the state and beyond. This general lack of knowledge of the range and extent of service activities exists even within the university community. KU’s integrated marketing effort is aimed at helping the University better communicate these and other messages to the public.