REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT

TO

University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

January 30 – February 2, 2005

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
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ASSURANCE SECTION

I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit:
The purpose of the visit was a comprehensive evaluation of the University of Kansas. The University also requested approval to expand electronic delivery of degree programs to include all campuses.

B. Organizational Context:
During the decade since its last NCA comprehensive evaluation, the University of Kansas, like many universities around the country, has had to contend with a host of challenges related to reduced state funding. These challenges notwithstanding, KU has increased the academic profile of entering students; exceeded its $500 million capital campaign goal; addressed numerous space needs through new construction and renovation; increased by 120 percent its research and development expenditures; achieved helpful regulatory relief from the state; and worked with students to enact a tuition enhancement plan which provides the university with resources needed for continued growth and quality improvement.

In addition, opportunities for teaching, research and public service have been expanded significantly across all campuses. To enhance efficiency and effectiveness on the Lawrence campus, in 1996 the chancellor implemented a new administrative structure whereby all academic and support functions are under the leadership of the provost/executive vice chancellor.

C. Unique Aspects of Visit:
None

D. Sites or Branch Campuses Visited:
Two team members visited the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas and two team members visited the Edwards Campus in Overland Park, Kansas.

E. Distance Education Reviewed:
The team discussed the University’s distance education offerings with several university officials, including:

Dean, School of Pharmacy
Dean, William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communications
Vice Chancellor and Dean, Edwards Campus
Vice Provost, Faculty Development and Associate Prof., Special Ed.
Associate Dean, Continuing Education
Interim Dean, School of Education
Associate Dean, Academic Affairs, Edward Campus
Vice Provost, University Outreach & Dean, Continuing Education
Dean, School of Social Welfare

F. Interactions with Institutional Constituencies: team participants
Associate Professor of Psychology
Executive Vice Chancellor for KUMC and Dean of the School of Medicine and Professor of Pathology
Dean of the School of Pharmacy
Associate Professor of Teaching and Leadership
Director of the Hall Center for the Humanities and Professor of History
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies
2nd Year Law Student and Law Student Senator
Semi-retired; former partner in Campbell-Becker, Inc.
Dean of the School of Engineering
Dean of the Libraries
Senior Vice President of the Lawrence Convention & Visitor’s Bureau
Associate Dean for Clinical and Community Affairs, School of Nursing
Associate Dean for Nursing Research, School of Nursing
Dean of the William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communications
Graduate Student in American Studies
Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Professor of Psychology
Director of the Center for International Business and Associate Professor of Business
Post Doctoral Trainee
Associate Athletic Director for Student Support Services
Assistant Professor of Allied Health, Physical Therapy, Rehabilitative Services, KUMC
Dean of the Graduate School and International Programs and Professor of Communication Studies
Associate Dean in Architecture and Urban Design and Associate Professor of Architecture
Executive Vice Chancellor for External Affairs
Chair, Department of Molecular and Integrative Physiology
Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Edwards Campus
Special Collections Librarian
Associate Dean for Student Affairs, School of Nursing
Associate Dean in the School of Nursing and Professor of Nursing, KUMC
President of the KU Alumni Association
President of UPSA and Director of Academic Technology Services
University Architect and Special Assistant to the Chancellor
Dean of the School of Medicine – Wichita
Lawrence City Commissioner
Vice Provost for Administration and Finance
Director of the Writing Center
Associate Dean in the Graduate School and Professor of Aerospace Engineering
Chair, Department of Hearing & Speech, School of Allied Health
Dean of the School of Business
Assistant Dean of Libraries for Scholarly Communications
Director of the University Career Center
Dean of the School of Architecture and Urban Design
Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Associate Professor of Special Education
Director of the Experimental Therapeutics Program, Kansas Masonic Cancer Institute; Director of the Center for Drug Discovery, Higuchi Biosciences Center; and Distinguished Professor of Medicinal Chemistry
Staff to the President of Haskell Indian Nations University
Professor of Chemistry
Associate Dean for Medical Graduate Education, School of Medicine
Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering
Assistant Vice Provost and Comptroller
Vice Provost for Information Services and Chief Information Officer
Director of Study Abroad
Lawrence City Commissioner
Director Gastroenterology/Hepathology/Motility, School of Medicine
Associate Professor of Aerospace Engineering
Professor of English
Dean of the School of Fine Arts
Associate Dean of International Studies and Associate Professor of Political Science
Chancellor and Professor of English
Professor of Chemistry
Vice-Mayor of the City of Lawrence
Associate Vice Provost for Research and Professor of Communication Studies
Vice Chancellor for Research and Distinguished Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology, KUMC
Associate Dean in Continuing Education
President of Classified Senate and Procurement Officer in Comptroller’s Office
Director of the Kansas African Studies Center and Professor of Anthropology
Student Co-Director of the Center for Community Outreach
Director of the Kansas Masonic Cancer Research Institute
Director Developmental Disabilities Center, Acting Chair, Department of Pediatrics
Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Dean of Students
Chair of the Douglas County Commissioners
Junior and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Senator
Director of the School of Business Career Services Center
Director of Educational Opportunity Programs
Senior Policy Analyst in Institutional Research and Planning
Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Students
Chief Financial Officer for Business and Financial Planning
Medical student, Class of 2006
Professor of Business
Distinguished Professor of Environmental Engineering
Associate Vice Provost for Information Services
Associate Professor of Speech, Language, and Hearing
Assistant Dean for Administration, Schools of Allied Health and Nursing
Vice Provost for Facilities Planning and Management
Chair and Associate Professor of Architecture
Student Co-Director of the Center for Community Outreach
Director of the Multicultural Scholars Programs and Professor of Business
Director of the Kansas Biological Survey and Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Dean of the School of Law
Associate Professor of Geography and Academic Advisor for the Freshman- Sophomore Advising Center
Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Professor of Psychology
President, Graduate Student Council
Assistant Vice Provost and Director of Budget Management and Fiscal Services
Assistant Director of the Center of Latin American Studies
Director of the Higuchi Biosciences Center and Distinguished Professor and Chair of Pharmacology and Toxicology
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, KU Medical Center and Dean Schools of Nursing and Allied Health
Director of Design and Construction Management
Associate Professor of Teaching and Leadership
Associate Vice Provost for Student Success
Student Body President
Associate Director of the University Career Center
Associate Vice Provost for Student Success
Vice President of Classified Senate and Accountant in the Comptroller’s Office
Chair of the Division of Biological Sciences and Professor of Molecular Biosciences
Director of Multicultural Affairs
Vice Chancellor for Administration
Director of International Student and Scholar Services
Director of the Kidney Institute
Law Student
Director of the Academic Achievement and Access Center
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate Studies, and Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, KUMC
Vice Provost for Research, President of the KU Center for Research, Inc., and Professor of Electrical Engineering
Lawrence School District Board Member
Interim Dean of the School of Education
Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Professor of Public Administration
Vice Provost for Student Success
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Edwards Campus
Director of the School of Engineering Career Services Center
Associate Professor of Business
Assistant Dean of the University Libraries
President of the KU Endowment Association
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Lawrence Campus and Professor of Business
SenEx Chair and Professor of Economics
Vice Provost for University Outreach and Dean of Continuing Education
Director of the Mental Retardation Research Center
PhD Post Doctoral Trainee
Associate Professor of History and Academic Advisor for the Freshman- Sophomore Advising Center
Director Project EAGLE Community Programs
Vice Provost for Scholarly Support and Distinguished Professor of Geology
Distinguished Professor of Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Chair, Department of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Sciences, School of Allied Health
Student Senator
Assistant Professor of Music and Dance
President and CEO of the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce
University Director of Institutional Research and Planning
Assessment and Survey Coordinator for Institutional Research and Planning
Interim Director of the Center for East Asian Studies and Associate Professor of History
University Council President and Professor of Teaching and Leadership
Executive Director of the Lied Center
Assistant Director for Planning and Programming in Design and Construction Management
Director of the Institute for Life Span Studies and Professor of Applied Behavioral Science
Dean of the School of Social Welfare
Douglas County Administrator
Assistant to the Chancellor
MD/PhD Student
Director, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences
Superintendent of the Lawrence USD 497 Public School District
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Vice Provost for General Education and Professor of Speech, Language, and Hearing
Lawrence City Manager
Associate Vice Provost for Research and Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Chemistry
Director of Instructional Development and Support
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Coordinator for Thematic Learning Communities
Coordinator for Global Proficiency Program
President of the Kansas Board of Regents
Chair of the Kansas Board of Regents

G. Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed:
Self-Study, Volumes 1 & 2
University of Kansas Profiles
Student Handbook and Planner, 2004-2005
Annual Financial Report, ‘03
Annual Report: From Generation to Generation, ‘03
Graduate Catalog, 2003-2005
Undergraduate Catalog, 2004-2006
Senior Survey
Assessment in the Major, 2002-2003
Assessment in the Major, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 2001-2002
Placement Information: Licensure Pass Rates
Selected Results: Survey of Earned Doctorates, FY 1992-FY 2000
General Education Assessment, 2002, 2003, 2004
Focus Groups, NCA Self-Study
Faculty and Staff Surveys
Initiative 2001 Status Updates
Fact Book, 2002-2003: KU School of Medicine
Organizational Records of Student Complaints
University of Kansas Landscape Master Plan, Volumes 1, 2, & 3
Memorial Drive: Conceptual Development Plan
Executive Summary of the Operating Budget, Lawrence Campus, FY 03, 04 & 05
The University of Kansas Operating Budget, FY 05
Supporting Documentation: Distance Delivery Degree Programs
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Spring Classes, 2005
H. Athletic Control

Institutional control of athletics is, as of February 2005, in the hands of the new six member Board of the KU Athletic Corporation, a majority of whose members are appointed by the Chancellor and Provost. They pay careful attention to compliance issues, have made an academic support center available to all student athletes and note that alumni are supportive of the current KU athletics program.

II. COMMITMENT TO PEER REVIEW

A. Comprehensiveness of the Self-Study Process:

The Self-Study Report is comprehensive. This Self-Study Steering Committee included individuals from all parts of the University of Kansas, and its preparation involved several drafts, followed by widespread distribution and review of those drafts.

B. Integrity of the Self-Study Report:

The self-study accurately reflects what the Team found when we were on campus and spoke with the many individuals identified in I, F.

We were told by members of the Self-Study Steering Committee that focus groups in the KU community who had reviewed copies of the Report were both surprised and pleased to learn much about other aspects of their institution, things about which they had not known.

C. Adequacy of progress in addressing Previously Identified Challenges:

The 1994 accreditation team identified several concerns and these were carefully addressed by the Self-Study Team and in its Report. No monitoring, contingency or progress reports were required by the 1994 team. The team considers the response of the institution to previously identified concerns to be adequate.

D. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment:

The requirements of notification of the evaluation visit and the solicitation of third party comment were fulfilled.

III. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

Requirements were fulfilled.

Comments: The procedures for handling complaints are well organized and include documenting each step from the initial complaint to resolution of issues raised by
complainant. Moreover, the university has in place the appropriate policies, personnel and procedures to address a wide array of issues irrespective of magnitude or complexity.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

A. CRITERION ONE: 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.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion and Core Components

1. The institution’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the institution’s commitments.
2. KU’s mission statement makes it clear that research and teaching are mutually reinforcing, with scholarly inquiry underlying and informing the educational experience at all levels of instruction.
3. The mission documents make clear the university’s commitment to serving not only the educational needs of Kansans, but those in the national and international arena as well.
4. Through its ongoing planning processes, the university’s mission is reviewed and revised as needed by KU administrators and regents.
5. The mission and planning documents state clearly student learning goals and expectations.

Recommendation of the Team

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

B. CRITERION TWO: 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.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion and Core Components

1. A number of significant planning activities have occurred since the last visit and are evidence of constant attention to the future of the university. These activities demonstrate a logical, sequential and proactive approach to developing and implementing inclusive planning processes that add value to the university. Documents and related written evidence, as well as testimony at meetings, indicate a clear commitment to acting on recommendations.
2. The team noted good alignment between planning priorities and mission as well as significant evidence of links between resource allocations and planning priorities. The university has taken the position that data informs planning and planning informs decision-making.
3. The Chancellor’s vision, shared by members of the university community, drives decisions throughout the organization. For example, the Initiative 2001 priorities are well integrated in significant activities such as the recently completed capital campaign.

4. Senior administrators understand the larger context in which they plan and they are making appropriate strategic decisions related to the political, economic, demographic and global environment in which they operate. For example, the development of a stronger presence in the Greater Kansas City area was accomplished not only through the clarification of the roles and service commitments of KUMC and the Edwards campuses, but also after a careful analysis of the competitive environment and the strengths of the university.

5. The university is in the process of implementing an integrated marketing plan to promote the identity of the University of Kansas as “one university”.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

**C. CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING**

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

**Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion and Core Components**

1. The objectives of a quality and successful general undergraduate education have been consistently and carefully honed at KU over the years. These goals are assessed regularly through surveys and interviews that pay attention to important methodological issues such as sampling and interview protocol.

2. The development and conduct of graduate programs at KU historically has followed a loosely federated and decentralized model with assessment primarily limited to individual graduate programs participating in departmental self-studies as part of the Kansas Board of Regents Program Review. There has been a shift to a more activist and centralized Graduate School serving both an advocacy role for the graduate/research enterprise and an advisory role for individual program planning and assessment.

3. The movement towards greater selectivity in the admission of students to the undergraduate program is a significant step towards enhancing KU’s stature as a premier research university serving the state of Kansas and beyond.

4. The team was surprised and impressed by the extensive international emphasis found on the KU campus. The strength of the many area studies programs is further enhanced by the large number of students attending KU from other countries, the many study abroad opportunities in various countries for US students on the KU campus, the multiple institutional connections with campuses abroad, the number of faculty teaching abroad, and the collaborative research...
projects that cross borders. This “globalization” of the KU campus is surely a significant part of the institution’s march towards diversity and the development of an international awareness among its students. This is especially commendable and significant at a time of so much international conflict and the team urges KU to make this exciting dimension of the campus more evident in its efforts to publicize the KU image nationally.

5. The culture at the University of Kansas values effective teaching and student learning. Effective teaching shares emphasis with research in annual merit and promotion and tenure review. Many academic administrators regularly teach, thus reflecting the importance of teaching. Since the last NCA review, a Center for Teaching Excellence, which has adopted an emphasis on student learning and outcomes, has been created. The University of Kansas was one of two large public research universities identified by the National Survey of Student Engagement where effective teaching practices were in widespread use (Project DEEP).

6. The provision and utilization of space and facilities for the libraries have improved since the last review. Additional library facilities have been built and the construction of an off-site storage facility will begin later this spring. Service functions have been consolidated to create additional student study space. The library has added services and staff assignments that support effective teaching and student learning.

7. Information technology is effectively integrated to support student learning, teaching and research.

8. The university has made noteworthy progress in the improvement of student retention and graduation rates. They have established a wide array of support services. Moreover, the university reorganized all of student affairs into a unit focused on student success.

9. Major steps initiated by KU to support its request to offer distance education degree programs at all levels include:

   a) policies to preserve the academic quality of the course and degree program offered at a distance
   b) significant technology upgrades
   c) enhanced student support systems
   d) adoption of a standardized course management system
   e) implementation of a courseware policy
   f) long history of success in delivering courses at a distance through more traditional modalities
   g) recent success in the delivery of on-line instructional programs

**Recommendation of the Team**
Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.
D. CRITERION FOUR: 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, social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion and Core Components

The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Evidence (context, background, judgment) that demonstrates that the core components are met:

1. The Board of Regents mandates that all degree granting programs must be reviewed every 8 years. Departments and programs conduct self-studies and contextualize the objective data about their teaching and research resources, their graduation rates and other objective indices. All mandated reviews have been completed during the time since the last NCA visit. Analyzed at the school, college and provost level, these reviews provide an important assessment of program strengths and weakness.

2. During the past decade, the research, scholarship and creative activities of the faculty of the University of Kansas have been strengthened through a careful strategic planning process linked to budget allocations to support the plan. The expansion of the University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc.(KUCR), a closely affiliated, nonprofit corporation that has responsibility for research administration, development, coordination and reporting for research on the Lawrence campus has been of particular value. This foundation complements the University of Kansas Medical Center Research Institute (RI) which enhances the research capability of the Medical Center faculty. KU research expenditures across public and private sources have more than doubled in the past decade. As the flagship research university of the state of Kansas, KU is successful in supporting the creative, scholarly and research activity of faculty across the arts and humanities, engineering, natural, life and social sciences.

3. Both financial investments and the allocation of resources by the University as well as by the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas legislature demonstrate the value placed on the research enterprise. The $500 million commitment over a 10-12 year period from the state of Kansas for the development of the life sciences research is one such initiative as well as the approval of $65 million in bonding authority. Consequently, the university is well-positioned to become an even more vibrant research university.

4. Within the past decade, the University of Kansas has invested heavily in new construction and facility renovation in support of its teaching and research mission. Through a combination of bonding, private gifts, federal and state allocations, the University has invested $450 million in facilities during the past 10 years. The University has developed and is following master plans for each of its campuses. The
university has effective space and facilities planning processes in place to insure continued growth.

5. A tuition ownership model is in place allowing the university to retain its tuition revenue, thereby strengthening its learning environment. This funding will allow the university to add up to 100 new faculty lines, to increase support for graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and to enhance student support services. The university has made deliberate and thoughtful plans to allocate these new faculty positions to key programs in order to strengthen university-wide teaching and research.

6. The creation of the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor and its current reporting structure demonstrates that the University is committed to its academic mission. All student services, research officers, information services, facilities planning and management, and outreach units report to the Provost. This structure reinforces the fact that all these service units share a sense of the academic mission.

7. Research and teaching are clearly intertwined across the University of Kansas. Libraries, museums and information technology resources are aligned to support the teaching as well as the research mission. In addition, undergraduate students at KU have the opportunity to work with faculty on a variety of research projects.

**Recommendation of the Team**

Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

E. **CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE**

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

**Salient Evidence of Fulfillment of Criterion and Core Components**

1. KU students have ample opportunities to engage in their own learning through activities initiated and sustained by the faculty and administration. Examples include Independent Study, service learning, volunteer activities, and outreach which are integrated into coursework.

   International and global perspectives are being effectively integrated into KU’s teaching and learning enterprise. Long-standing and nationally regarded area studies programs, including three Title VI National Resource Centers, and thirty-one language degree programs underpin the Global Awareness Program which has been designated recently as an undergraduate certificate program. In addition, the International Studies Program provides the option of a co-major in conjunction with another undergraduate major or a master’s degree in International Studies.

2. The Office of International Studies Programs (OISP) coordinates campus-wide initiatives ranging from more than 100 study abroad programs to the hosting of six
percent of the student-body (primarily graduate students) who come from outside the United States. The global outreach of KU and the ability of its scholars to do research on international issues such as global biodiversity are greatly assisted by the active leadership of (OISP).

3. International Education efforts have recently been relocated from the office of Student Affairs to the Dean of the Graduate School and International Programs. This change has brought about coordination of the existing international activities into a cohesive effort that advances the international agenda of the University’s global mission.

4. The university has identified key stakeholders and places high value on public service and citizenship. These values are central to planning and were very evident in the town-gown meeting focused on community engagement. The robust discussion indicated a deep understanding that the futures of the university and the community are closely intertwined.

5. KU continues its tradition of serving the local community and beyond. The involvement of its faculty and students in outreach projects ranging from a varied array of research applications to specific fields such as assistive technology development, to training for law enforcement officers and fire fighters, to student service learning projects.

6. Health care professionals continue to provide a broad range of services to the people in the Greater Kansas City area, Wichita and throughout the state.

7. During the past decade, KU has experienced a 41.1% increase in the percentage of underrepresented minority students.

**Recommendation of the Team**
Criterion is met; no Commission follow-up recommended.

V. AFFILIATION STATUS
The team recommends continued accreditation for the University of Kansas. Next comprehensive visit: 2014-2015.

Rationale: The University of Kansas clearly meets all the criteria required for continued accreditation. The university has an appropriately articulated mission; faculty and administrative expertise to deliver high quality academic programs and services; effective executive level leadership and regent support; and the university has the necessary resources to continue fulfilling its mission. In addition, significant planning activities since the last comprehensive evaluation are evidence of constant attention to the future of the university. These activities demonstrate a logical, sequential and proactive approach to developing and implementing inclusive planning processes that are data-driven and effective.
A. SUMMARY OF COMMISSION REVIEW

B. NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

1. Legal Status
2. Degrees Awarded

C. CONDITIONS OF AFFILIATION

3. Stipulation on Affiliation Status
4. Approval of Degree Sites
5. Approval of Distance Education Degree: No prior Commission approval required

Rationale: Through its strategic planning processes, over the past 10 years, the University has demonstrated its commitment to developing distance education programs of high quality to serve students who are time and/or place bound.

Given the evidence demonstrated thus far, and with the encouragement and enthusiastic support of high-level administrators, deans, department chairs, and faculty on the Lawrence campus, KU is well positioned to develop and deliver superior on-line degree programs to serve the people of the state of Kansas and beyond.

6. Reports Required
   None required
   
   Progress Report
   None required
   
   Monitoring Report
   None required
   
   Contingency Report
   None required

7. Other Visits Scheduled
   None required

8. Other
   Not applicable

(Sanctions and Adverse Actions are only used in exceptional circumstances.)

D. COMMISSION SANCTION OR ADVERSE ACTION--None required

On Notice
   Due date for report
Rationale and Expectations
Areas that must be addressed

On Probation
Next evaluation visit
Rationale
Requirements for removal of probation

Denial/Withdrawal of Status
Rationale

VI. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR EXPLANATIONS (Optional)