SELF-STUDY

Submitted to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

December 2014

Executive Summary
Transformation is a word higher education institutions tend to exploit, regardless of the size or scope of change occurring. As you’ll discover in this 2015 Self-Study, at the University of Kansas it is a phrase that, perhaps, comes up short in describing our activity during the past decade.

We are in the midst of implementing a trio of initiatives most institutions would consider transformative if accomplished individually: *Bold Aspirations*, a five-year strategic plan for the Lawrence and Edwards campus, and the corresponding strategic plan at the Medical Center; *Changing for Excellence*, a comprehensive overhaul of administrative functions; and *Far Above*, a comprehensive fundraising campaign for the KU Endowment Association, the nation’s oldest public university endowment.

The self-study confirms what we have heard from our stakeholders, from our alumni and supporters, and from the Board of Regents. We are on the right track, and are poised for even greater progress.

Our accomplishments are the result of the hard work and willingness of our dedicated and talented faculty and staff to drive needed changes, even when some transitions have been rocky at times. Because of their work, we are seeing results in the successes of our students, in communities that are made healthier and more vibrant, and in the discoveries that will change the world.

And our study confirms the tasks that still lay ahead. Our strategic plan is comprehensive, and for all our success there is still much work to be done. To back those efforts, we will continue to find new ways to operate more efficiently and effectively, and to engage our donors in new ways to support the university.

There have been many challenges during the past decade, and certainly there are challenges to come. Kansas has not been alone in seeing a dramatic decline in state support for higher education over the past 15 years. And despite many states reinvesting in their universities, overall funding for higher education nationally has yet to return to pre-recession levels, and here in Kansas the prospects for that happening anytime soon are dim.

Our university has faced challenging times before. Yet in the face of these challenges our predecessors never gave up on the mission of this university, because they knew, like the founders of our nation and the founders of our state, that public higher education is vital to a prosperous democracy. So as we face challenges, we will remain focused on our bold aspirations, and we will continue to uphold our responsibilities to our students and society.

We look forward to your visit. Rock Chalk!

Bernadette Gray-Little
Chancellor
2015 HLC Reaccreditation Self-Study

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Complete list of 2015 HLC Reaccreditation Self-Study Steering Committee and Staff and Criterion Subcommittee Members
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Self-Study Process

In preparation for reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the University of Kansas (KU) embarked upon the Self-Study process with three goals in mind: 1) to obtain reaccreditation, 2) to identify and explore areas of strength on which to build and areas of challenge in planning for the future, and 3) to gain insights from the peer consultant-evaluators’ review of the Self-Study report and campus visit. With those goals in mind, the Self-Study process was designed to provide an opportunity for reflective and analytic dialogue within the university community to clarify substantive institutional issues, to assess the current status of outcomes from its planning initiatives, and to provide a perspective of current or anticipated challenges.

Self-Study Process

Two years ago KU formally began preparing for its institutional reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The chancellor formed a nine-person steering committee chaired by Susan Twombly, chair and professor of higher education. To gather the data and information required to provide evidence that KU met the criteria for reaccreditation, subcommittees were formed to address each criterion. The chairs of those subcommittees served on the steering committee along with other members at large. Almost 100 faculty, staff, and students at all campus locations participated in the Self-Study process.

The steering committee and subcommittees used a variety of resources to help in their deliberations. Each subcommittee had dedicated staff members to help in gathering the evidence and facilitating their work. Each subcommittee prepared draft reports for each criterion and submitted them to the steering committee for review and discussion. With that input in hand, a small writing group worked over the summer of 2014 to compile the Self-Study into a cohesive document. That report was shared with the deans and vice provosts. After their review and further refinements, the Self-Study was distributed across the university mid-fall for review and comment. Feedback was incorporated at each stage of the review process.

Accreditation History

KU has been continuously accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since January 1, 1913.

Organization of the Self-Study Report

The Self-Study Report is organized in four sections:

- Introduction.
- University Organizational Structure.
- Response to Recommendations of the 2005 Review Team.
- Response to each criterion.

Because KU celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2015, the introduction recognizes that milestone and provides a brief history of the university’s traditions and culture. The introduction further outlines the
leadership changes, challenges since 2005, and the planning and actions KU has undertaken to respond to those challenges.

The university’s organizational structure includes a high-level overview of the senior administration and affiliated corporations. While there were no concerns from the 2005 review, the 2005 review team did make recommendations, and the response to those recommendations is described.

The responses to each criterion contain the evidence to meet each component. At the end of each criterion are the strengths, challenges, and future directions for that criterion.

**Note to Readers**

The Self-Study report often focuses more extensively on Lawrence campus activities and cites the majority of examples from its programs, students, faculty, and staff rather than the Medical Center campus. The disproportionate focus is both intentional and appropriate for several reasons. First, the majority of the programs, students, faculty, and staff reside in Lawrence. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the health-related nature of the Medical Center programs requires more frequent and stringent specialized accreditation from a variety of public and private agencies. Furthermore, information specific to the Medical Center will be found in the multi-campus report.

Additionally, data in the Self-Study labeled “Lawrence campus” is inclusive of the students and faculty on the Edwards Campus. In some cases, the data are labeled Lawrence and Edwards and on occasion may only reference Lawrence. But in both cases, the data are inclusive of both.

It also should be noted that by its very nature, the Self-Study report is often repetitive – specific programs, processes, and policies may be mentioned multiple times throughout this report. This is intentional and due to the integrative nature of both the criteria and the educational enterprise. Teaching, research, and service are all intertwined and bound together by learning. A research agenda may at the same time fulfill the mission of the university, respond to needs of constituent groups, enhance student learning, further the acquisition of knowledge, and engage the community. In other words, one example provides evidence for multiple criteria.
**Introduction**

KU is celebrating its sesquicentennial in 2015. The Board of Regents for what would become KU first met in 1865 in the waning years of the Civil War. The goal of this new university was “to provide the inhabitants of this state with the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science, and the arts.” KU today is a vastly different place from the institution that began when the first class of 26 women and 29 men entered the “Old North College” to attend classes. On KU’s 100th anniversary, it enrolled approximately 13,000 students. Then-Chancellor Clarke Wescoe identified the challenge that KU faced in its next 50 years: how to provide the excellent, high-quality undergraduate education Kansans have come to expect to thousands more students while also becoming a major research university that is national and international in scope. Wescoe proclaimed KU ready for the challenge, and a glance at KU’s progress in the last 50 years proves him correct.

KU’s early faculty members and students would not recognize the university that exists today and is described below. What KU’s founders would recognize, however, is the sheer determination and resilience demonstrated by the thousands of professors, administrators, staff, and students who came after them to make KU what it is today. Thomas Burish, KU alumnus and provost of the University of Notre Dame, recently described KU as a gritty place. And that it is. The determined settlers who founded KU were undeterred by the bloody battles of “Bleeding Kansas,” a Civil War, and several near-defeats in the legislature in their quest to found a university. Their dream of educating the future leaders of Kansas remains the primary mission of the state’s flagship university nearly 150 years later. The university’s mascot, the Jayhawk, is more than a happy, colorful bird; it represents the hardscrabble settlers who took on the moniker “Jayhawkers.” Success in the face of challenging times is ingrained in the fabric of the university. KU has become all too experienced at leveraging the resources it has to produce outstanding outcomes. The past decade is no exception. In spite of rapidly declining state funding, fluctuations in enrollment, and increased scrutiny of its role as a public research university, KU has been resilient and enterprising. Grit, Burish noted, has defined KU.

The second characteristic that KU’s founders and early faculty, staff, and students would likely recognize is an extraordinary, almost indescribable sense of tradition and loyalty. Faculty, staff, and students are Jayhawks for life, with the “Rock Chalk Jayhawk” chant a phrase of all that unites them. When asked why they work at KU, a group of senior faculty cited the support for interdisciplinary scholarship, collegiality, and the incredible sense of passion and loyalty that students, current and past, feel for KU and the Jayhawk. This loyalty has benefited KU in many ways, not the least of which is providing extraordinary financial support to KU through its long-standing endowment association, a very strong international alumni base, stable leadership, and low faculty turnover.

**The University at 150: An Overview**

Today, nearly 150 years after its founding, KU has become a major public research and teaching institution of 28,000 students and 2,600 faculty in Lawrence, Kansas City, Overland Park, Wichita, and Salina with other satellite locations across the state. Its diverse elements are united by a mission to educate leaders, build healthy communities, and make discoveries that change the world.
As the summary display below shows, in addition to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that produces half of the baccalaureate degrees awarded, KU has a broad range of schools, including the only schools of pharmacy and medicine in the state. KU offers more than 360 academic degree programs. KU’s 28,000 students, split almost equally between women and men, come from 104 of the 105 Kansas counties, all 50 states, and 99 countries. About 15 percent are students from historically underrepresented groups. The University Honors Program is nationally recognized, and KU has produced 26 Rhodes Scholars, more than all other Kansas schools combined and 11th among public universities. See Table 1 for “KU by the Numbers.”

In fiscal year 2013, KU generated $375 million in overall research funding, of which $211 million was federal dollars. The KU Cancer Center is the only facility in the state to earn designation from the National Cancer Institute. On the Lawrence campus, 11 major centers oversee research in life span issues, the humanities, transportation, the environment, biosciences, drug discovery and development, biodiversity, polar ice sheets, and education, among other topics. At the Medical Center, in addition to the KU Cancer Center, nearly two dozen institutes and centers engage in research in areas from aging and Alzheimer’s disease to health care informatics and diabetes.

Core research resource laboratories and affiliated centers on the Lawrence campus specialize in such fields as biomedical research, molecular structures, technology commercialization, and oil recovery. KU has service centers statewide that offer training and professional development in law enforcement, firefighting, child development, health education, and public management. KU’s museums include the Spencer Museum of Art, with over 42,000 artworks and artifacts in its internationally known collection, and the KU Natural History Museum, featuring Lewis Lyndsay Dyche’s Panorama from the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago and a collection of over 11 million specimens (including Captain Keogh’s mount, Comanche, the only U.S. Army survivor of the Battle of the Little Bighorn). The Spencer Research Library houses the Kansas Collection, as well as Special Collections and University Archives, and serves as a resource for scholars from across the state and world.

KU is a major center of graduate education, offering master’s degrees in 107 fields and doctoral degrees in 77 disciplines. Programs in special education, city management, speech-language pathology, rural medicine, clinical child psychology, physics, nursing, occupational therapy, and social welfare are highly ranked. In her inaugural address, Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little emphasized doctoral education as one of her top priorities; her goal is operationalized in Goal 2 of Bold Aspirations, the university’s strategic plan. Efforts are under way to enhance doctoral education by developing sustainable funding for doctoral students, using data to inform program decisions, and establishing a coordinated recruitment plan.

Maintaining a strong undergraduate emphasis has been a consistent priority of KU chancellors, and that remains true today. In 2013, KU inaugurated the KU Core, a university-wide general education curriculum that ensures that all KU graduates will meet outcomes deemed essential in the 21st century.
### Table 1
**KU by the Numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Enrollment</strong></td>
<td>29,272</td>
<td>27,784</td>
<td>-5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>26,814</td>
<td>24,435</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>2,458</td>
<td>3,349</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>21,118</td>
<td>19,199</td>
<td>-9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/First Professional</td>
<td>7,485</td>
<td>7,769</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Residents</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Students</td>
<td>3,281</td>
<td>4,859</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACT Composite**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KU Average</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Average</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty Headcount**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Faculty Total</td>
<td>1,426</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center Faculty Total</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Headcount (non-student)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>3,236</td>
<td>3,542</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Use Funding - Lawrence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State General Fund</td>
<td>$132.03 million</td>
<td>$137.27 million</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fees Fund (Tuition)</td>
<td>$119.78 million</td>
<td>$264.15 million</td>
<td>120.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ratio of State General Fund Expenditures to General Fee (Tuition) Expenditures - Lawrence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inflation-Adjusted State General Fund Expenditures per Student FTE</td>
<td>$7,586</td>
<td>$6,148</td>
<td>-19.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Assignable Square Feet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2013</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>5,215,062</td>
<td>5,868,946</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>1,192,000</td>
<td>1,284,467</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

Changes and Challenges since 2005

Leadership Changes

Chancellor Robert Hemenway’s term ended in 2009 after 14 years, the longest tenure for a chancellor in 70 years and a period of much achievement. In the final four years of his term, Hemenway could build on the success of KU First, a $500 million capital campaign that ended in 2004 having exceeded its goal by $153 million. KU had been a featured case study in the 2005 book Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter for its engaging undergraduate educational climate. KU’s top research priority in Hemenway’s final years was gaining National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center in 2012. Hemenway forged partnerships with students to support tuition increases necessary to KU’s continued advancement as a research university. In 2007, on the recommendation of students, KU implemented a four-year guaranteed tuition compact for incoming freshmen.

Hemenway’s Graduate in Four Task Force made a host of recommendations in 2005 to enhance four-year graduation rates, most of which have been since implemented. The work of this task force and a strategic planning process begun in 2008, before Hemenway resigned effective June 2009, laid the groundwork for Chancellor Gray-Little’s strategic planning process.

In 2005, David Shulenburger, KU’s long-term provost and executive vice chancellor, announced he would step down at the end of the academic year. Hemenway chose Richard Lariviere, dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Texas, as KU’s new provost in 2006. In 2009, Lariviere left to assume the presidency of the University of Oregon.

Bernadette Gray-Little, provost at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, was named the 17th chancellor of the University of Kansas on May 29, 2009, marking a significant transition in KU’s history. She outlined her goals as chancellor at the 144th Opening Convocation: improve the experience for undergraduates, enhance scholarship across all disciplines, and ensure proper resources to meet these
goals. In July 2010, she hired Jeffrey S. Vitter as provost and executive vice chancellor of the Lawrence and Edwards campuses and tasked him with the development of a strategic plan for those campuses. In 2012, Barbara Atkinson stepped down as executive vice chancellor of the KU Medical Center, a position she held for seven years, and dean of the School of Medicine. In February 2013, Doug Girod became executive vice chancellor for the Medical Center, which developed a parallel strategic plan. In 2013, David Cook was named vice chancellor of the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park and tasked with establishing KU as the leader in higher education in the Kansas City area.

Challenges Since 2005
State appropriations have steadily declined since FY 2008. In FY 2014, state funding was below the FY 2006 level. KU’s FY 2014 state general funding of $241 million was down $152 million over the past 15 years.¹ KU recognizes the limited ability of the state to adequately fund higher education and has continued to successfully press for administrative changes to allow greater institutional control.

While state funding has declined, scrutiny of state spending has increased. More and more, the value of public spending on a research university is called into question, and the university has responded to numerous legislative inquiries over the past several years.

KU gained ownership of its tuition in 2001 and has gained administrative autonomy, allowing for greater flexibility and accountability in financial management. This control takes on added importance in the state’s current fiscal climate. After state revenues began to recover following the most recent recession, substantial income tax cuts were adopted. An ongoing downward trend in revenues calls into question the ability of the state to meet even its current commitments to higher education.

The net result is a far greater reliance on tuition funding on the Lawrence campus to provide for general operating costs, placing more of the costs of higher education on students and their families. In FY 2004, the State General Fund made up 52 percent of KU’s general use expenditures and tuition made up 48 percent. By FY 2014, the State General Fund made up 34 percent while tuition made up 66 percent. In addition, FY 2012 was the first year when tuition accounted for a larger percentage of KU’s overall revenue, at 22 percent, than state appropriations, at 21 percent. In FY 2013, tuition and fees accounted for 23 percent of KU’s $1.19 billion in revenue. In Fall 2013, KU’s resident tuition and fees ranked fourth of 11 among a group of Midwest regional peers, suggesting limited ability to raise tuition substantially. In Fall 2007, KU’s tuition ranked in the bottom half of the same group.

Enrollment rose steadily at the start of the 21st century. Fall 2008 enrollment was the largest in history, 30,102, and marked the first time KU enrolled over 30,000 students, including 4,483 first-time freshmen, also an all-time high. Due to a number of factors, including the national economic picture, enrollment dipped to 27,784 in 2013 before rising again in Fall 2014.

Questionable state revenues, fluctuating enrollment, and the changing higher education environment, including online programs, necessitated a change in the operating culture at KU. KU realizes state funding is unlikely to increase and the university’s ability to increase tuition has its limits. In order to remain competitive, Chancellor Gray-Little recognized that KU must find alternative sources of revenues. In response, the university has engaged in a trio of initiatives to be more innovative, effective, and efficient in its development and use of revenue.

¹ Figures are adjusted using the Higher Education Price Index.
Responding to Challenges by Transforming KU: *Bold Aspirations, Changing for Excellence, Far Above*

In a November 2009 message to campus, Chancellor Gray-Little outlined her goals for KU: identifying strategies for advancing KU in the areas of research engagement, admissions, and retention and graduation. To move KU forward, she appointed a task force for each of these goals. Each was chaired by a university leader and included broad representation of the Lawrence, Edwards, and Medical Center campuses, including deans, directors, students, faculty, and staff. She noted that these challenges were too daunting and the stakes too high to not engage the entire university community in developing the response. The yearlong process resulted in three reports: Research Engagement, Admissions, and Retention and Graduation.

The chancellor presented these task force reports and findings along with her response to incoming Provost Vitter when he arrived on campus in July 2010. The work of the three task forces would inform a broad, inclusive strategic planning process on the Lawrence and Edwards campuses. A simultaneous planning effort took place on the Medical Center campus, led by Executive Vice Chancellor Atkinson. In 2013, new Executive Vice Chancellor Girod led a comprehensive review of the Medical Center’s plan to respond to changing environments and simplify the goals to make them more accessible and relevant. Although separate, these plans are often discussed under the umbrella of *Bold Aspirations*.

**Bold Aspirations: The Strategic Plan for the University of Kansas, 2012–2017**

*Bold Aspirations* on the Lawrence and Edwards campuses launched in October 2011 following a vigorous campus-wide strategic planning effort that began in 2010, building on the foundation of the chancellor’s three task force reports. Key to the planning effort was broad engagement of the entire KU community in the planning process. Over 160 individuals — representing leaders from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the surrounding community — took part in the steering committee, its four work groups, or the four planning groups for the strategic initiative summit. Over a thousand individuals took part in other activities associated with the planning process.

The planning activity resulted in 22 strategies and 61 specific action steps around six goals that make up *Bold Aspirations*: Strategic Plan for the University of Kansas, 2012–2017:

1. Energizing the Educational Environment.
2. Elevating Doctoral Education.
3. Driving Discovery and Innovation.
4. Engaging Scholarship for Public Impact.
5. Developing Excellence in People.
6. Developing Infrastructure and Resources.

A unique aspect of *Bold Aspirations* was the myriad ways in which faculty, staff, and students personally became involved in the strategic planning process. For example, the educational goals of the new KU Core undergraduate curriculum were proposed and then prioritized at departmental faculty meetings across campus, as well as via student and alumni focus groups. Another example is the proposal process involving over 900 individuals that resulted in the four multidisciplinary strategic initiative themes, described below.

**Strategic initiatives.** A key aspect of the strategic plan is focused investment in big, bold ideas that allow KU to harness its unique assets to improve the world. These bold ideas took the shape of four strategic
initiative themes that grew out of a bottom-up response to a campus-wide request for proposals. The objectives included:

- To address emerging and escalating global grand challenges and societal issues where KU has special capabilities.
- To build scholarly communities that challenge, engage, and inspire individuals from many disciplines around a common theme.
- To enhance KU's national and international visibility and impact.
- To engage and motivate funding agencies, foundations, state government, community, alumni, and friends to provide much-needed resources.
- To provide our students with unique experiences that will position them as highly recruited and valued drivers and innovators of social and technological change.

In total, 104 proposals for strategic initiatives were received and organized into four strategic initiative themes:

- Sustaining the Planet, Powering the World.
- Promoting Well-Being, Finding Cures.
- Building Communities, Expanding Opportunities.
- Harnessing Information, Multiplying Knowledge.

Broadly inclusive summits connected scholars across campus who helped form research networks, generate funding ideas, and plan work. These initiatives identify KU’s research investment and faculty hiring priorities for a five-year period ending in 2017.

**Bold Aspirations** has driven KU-Lawrence academic and research activities and budget allocations for the past three years and will guide its investments for the next two. Strategic initiatives have driven faculty hiring and research investments. By the end of the second year of implementation (2013), KU had made progress in all 22 strategies and 61 action steps of **Bold Aspirations**. Additional progress is evident in the 2014 Annual Report. These accomplishments are highlighted throughout the Self-Study that follows.

The Medical Center strategic plan is described in greater detail in the Campus Location report.

**Changing for Excellence: Transforming Business Practices**
In order to reach the full potential of **Bold Aspirations** and to keep the university competitive in the face of declining state support, the university realized significant resources would be required. To accomplish this, organizational structures would need to be transformed to make business and administrative operations more effective and efficient. As the chancellor and provost wrote to campus, “There are inefficiencies in our administrative processes, and in many cases these inefficiencies are compounded by limits placed on our talented staff members.” KU’s **Changing for Excellence** (CFE) initiative generated a number of programs designed to deliver maximum effectiveness and generate savings to be reallocated to the higher-level priorities. Although some of the CFE initiatives involve the Medical Center, the core activities apply to the Lawrence campus.

For six months, the university, with assistance from an external consultant, worked to identify areas of opportunity and develop business cases or project and implementation plans. Each project had a
primary goal of making KU more effective and efficient while providing new and better opportunities for staff.

The decision was made to implement all 11 identified CFE initiatives or business cases (see list below) concurrently with the implementation of the strategic plan. These initiatives would impact every unit on campus (primarily Lawrence), so thorough planning and careful coordination was a high priority:

- Budgeting.
- Construction.
- Enrollment – Domestic.
- Enrollment – International.
- Facilities.
- Human Resources.
- Libraries.
- Procurement.
- Research Administration.
- Shared Service Centers.
- Information Technology.

Three years into the process, several pieces of the initiatives have been successfully implemented. One of the first initiatives was the merger of custodial and maintenance staffs on the Lawrence campus, which focused first on improving the workplace climate and then on empowering leadership to transform the unit and generate savings. Surveys of facilities staff suggest the transition has had a positive effect on performance and morale.

KU Information Technology has moved aggressively to implement its initiatives and has tracked $6.5 million in savings and avoided costs through the centralization of servers, procurement contracts, and reorganization of staff. By focusing in the first year on KU’s top six procurement contracts, KU Purchasing generated $5.2 million in rebates and savings compared to previous contracts. In FY 2014, KU’s review of construction spending reduced costs by $1.6 million.

These savings are making Bold Aspirations possible. They have been invested in KU’s Foundation Distinguished Professors initiative, in Strategic Initiative Grants approved by the Research Investment Council, in the Office of First-Year Experience, and in support for course redesign, among other areas.

A third major CFE initiative, the creation of Shared Service Centers, is about halfway implemented. Through these centers, multiple units pool staff and share their expertise on the Lawrence campus.

Far Above: The Campaign for Kansas
The third initiative the university chose to undertake concurrently was a $1.2 billion comprehensive capital campaign, named Far Above: The Campaign for Kansas. The target goal was announced in April 2012, to be raised by June 2016. Already, commitments from donors have generated $612 million. By the end of FY 2014 (June 2014) donors had contributed $1.15 billion, mostly in planned gifts, for the campaign, including FY 2014 gifts of seven new professorships, 91 new scholarships and fellowships, and leadership gifts for new facilities, including Capitol Federal Hall (new Business School building), the DeBruce Center for student services for the southern part of the campus, the Earth, Energy and Environment Center, and KU Hospital’s Cambridge North project. Alumni and friends also set a new
milestone in generosity for a single year, donating more than $253.2 million for KU, much of it in planned gifts, in FY 2014.

**Notable Ways in Which Bold Aspirations, Changing for Excellence, and Far Above Have Changed and Will Change KU**

The outcomes of these key processes are highlighted throughout the Self-Study, but some major outcomes are listed here:

**KU Core**
In Fall 2013, KU launched the KU Core, a significantly revamped general education curriculum for the 21st century. The KU Core is described in greater detail throughout the following Self-Study and represents the most recent vision of KU’s long-standing commitment to a liberal arts education. The KU Core is a sharp departure from previous general education curricula. It is the first (in the last 50 years at least) to be required of all KU undergraduates, including those on the Lawrence campus, majors in nursing and allied health professions at the Medical Center, and students in professional schools and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The KU Core encourages experiential learning options by allowing approved experiential learning to count toward the KU Core. With significant investment in structures to support experiential learning and other high-impact practices, such as learning communities and major capstone courses, KU seeks to build on its reputation for engaging teaching and learning practices and increase the number and percentage of its students who participate in them.

**Changing for Excellence**
Significant reinvestment has been made possible by *Changing for Excellence savings*.

- Twenty-two faculty positions have been created from *Changing for Excellence* savings to strengthen academic programs and the four strategic initiatives. Additionally, 12 Foundation Distinguished Professors and 30 positions for the engineering expansion, funded by the state of Kansas, are in the process of being filled. Collectively, the new additional faculty positions will total 64 by 2017.
- The Research Investment Council (RIC) has provided over $5 million to date in seed funding for multidisciplinary research by KU faculty, from autism to arts collaboration to drug discovery.
- New offices and programs for undergraduates in experiential learning and First-Year Experiences will help engage and advance more students on campus. Enhancement of academic support services, including the MySuccess early warning system and Supplemental Instruction for large courses that have no discussion section, are helping students succeed in their courses and continue to make progress toward a degree.
- Postdoctoral teaching positions have been created to help units redesign gateway courses, especially those with high rates of D/F/W grades, in order to improve student learning and retention.
- KU has tripled funding for graduate fellowships over the last four years from a variety of funding sources, including *Changing for Excellence*.
- The Classification and Market Study has to date identified approximately 800 positions whose compensation were below market and have been brought up to the minimum salary range compared with the market. Now in Phase III of the study, it is expected that an additional 100 positions will have their compensation adjusted upward to meet the market minimum. No employee salaries have been reduced as a result of the study.
Far Above: The Campaign for Kansas
The $1.2 billion committed during the Far Above campaign will ensure continued stability of KU’s already strong endowment, whose resources are then invested in students, faculty, academic programs, and facilities. On November 20th, KU Endowment Association hosted a donor recognition event for the new Earth, Energy and Environment Center, leading into the first phase of the major Innovation Way project, the key part of the Campus Master Plan for 2014–2024. It will provide important infrastructure for teaching labs, research infrastructure, and student learning spaces. The Earth, Energy and Environment Center is funded in part by private donations, as is a greatly needed new medical education building at the Medical Center.

National Cancer Institute Designation
Although planning for a National Cancer Institute designation began a decade ago and thus is not a direct outcome of Bold Aspirations, such designation represents KU’s significant research achievements over that last decade. Moreover, the KU Cancer Center will anchor the university’s continuing efforts to reach and exceed its goals for external research funding.

Summary
Over the past decade, KU has made significant advancements despite recession and a leveling in enrollment growth. In order to keep its promise to the citizens of Kansas and to keep pace as an Association of American Universities (AAU) research university, KU has engaged in careful, thorough, and comprehensive planning to guide its actions and investments. It has launched Changing for Excellence to enhance efficiencies and improvements in its business process that will generate funds to devote to KU’s primary teaching and research missions.

Increased research productivity improves lives, spurs prosperity, and enhances teaching. It also helps KU be recognized as a top-tier public international research university, which aids recruitment. Increased efficiency in KU’s administrative functions frees resources to invest in teaching and research, while also enabling staff members to fully realize their potential.

And all of these changes generate excitement among KU’s friends and supporters, which encourages them to be part of our university as volunteers or donors. This takes on extra importance during a time of scarce state resources.

The past 10 years have been a time of significant accomplishment and change across KU, in spite of record decreases in state appropriations, an increase in scrutiny of the role of public higher education, fluctuations in undergraduate and graduate enrollment, and a notable increase in the reliance on tuition for general use funding.
University Organizational Structure

University Administration

The chief executive officer for the University of Kansas is Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little, who oversees all campuses and reports to the Kansas Board of Regents. Two executive vice chancellors report to the chancellor and oversee separate administrative structures for the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses. On the Lawrence campus, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Jeffrey S. Vitter is chief operating officer and chief academic officer. He oversees all academic, research, and public service activities for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the nine professional schools, libraries, research, and the units that support these activities, including academic affairs, enrollment management, diversity and equity, and faculty development. At the Medical Center, Executive Vice Chancellor Douglas Girod fulfills similar duties, overseeing the educational, research, patient care, and community engagement missions of the KU Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Professions. A more detailed organizational chart is shown below.
Affiliated Corporations – University Controlled

The following affiliated corporations are controlled by the university through membership on their boards.

University of Kansas Center for Research Inc. (KUCR). The research administration office of the Lawrence campus, KUCR applies for all grants on behalf of the university and manages and oversees grants as well as the technology transfer operation.

- University of Kansas Memorial Corporation (Kansas and Burge Unions). The memorial corporation operates the student union for the Lawrence and Edwards campuses, including the bookstores, food services, and other student services, and oversees the student-run radio station, KJHK.
- Kansas Athletics Inc. The athletic corporation manages and oversees intercollegiate athletics for the university.
- Studio 804. A nonprofit organization created to provide students in the School of Architecture, Design and Planning opportunities to gain educational experience in design and hands-on construction projects.

The university-controlled affiliated corporations at the Medical Center and the key services they provide are listed below.

- University of Kansas Medical Center Research Institute. The research administration office for the Medical Center handles non-federal grants, clinical trials, and technology transfer.
- University of Kansas Medical Center Research Properties Inc. A land-holding company whose mission is to assist the Medical Center is acquiring and developing property.
- Student Union Corporation. The student union corporation administers the student union and bookstore for the Medical Center.
- KU Innovation and Collaboration. Manages the transfer and commercialization of technology created by KU faculty and researchers on all campuses.
- KU Health Partners. The faculty practice corporation for the Schools of Nursing and Health Professions.

Affiliated Corporations – Not University Controlled

The university does not control the following affiliated corporations. However, as with the university-controlled affiliates, the university has a formal, legal agreement with each. The Lawrence campus organizations and the key services they provide are listed in the following section.

- University of Kansas Alumni Association. The Alumni Association was established in 1883 for the purpose of strengthening loyalty, friendship, commitment, and communication among all graduates, former students, current students, parents, faculty, staff, and all other interested friends of KU.
- University of Kansas Endowment Association. Founded in 1891, KU Endowment is an independent, nonprofit organization recognized by KU as the official foundation for raising and managing private funds on behalf of the university. It was the first endowment in the nation affiliated with a public institution. By securing donor contributions, as well as managing and investing the funds established from those contributions, the KU Endowment Association provides an increasing amount of financial support for the university.
• William Allen White Foundation. In 1944 the Kansas Board of Regents established the William Allen White School of Journalism at KU. The following year, a group of William Allen White’s friends established the William Allen White Foundation in his honor. The William Allen White Foundation continues to contribute to KU as well as promote White’s journalistic ideals.

• Global Pharmaceutical Education Network (GPEN). Established by the Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, the network fosters and facilitates scientific exchange in the pharmaceutical sciences.

• Hilltop Child Development Center. KU has a contractual arrangement with Hilltop to provide child care services for university students and employees.

The affiliated corporations at the KU Medical Center that are not controlled by the university and the key services they provide are listed below.

• University of Kansas Hospital Authority. The University of Kansas Hospital is the primary teaching hospital for the School of Medicine. It is a separate public authority of the state of Kansas.

• Wichita Center for Graduate Medical Education. The education center provides graduate medical education in Wichita.

• Wichita Medical Practice Association and Physician Practice Corporations in Kansas City. These organizations include the 18 physician practice corporations for School of Medicine faculty. The physician practice corporations in Wichita and Kansas City were created as a means to provide additional salary support for School of Medicine physician faculty through clinical practice.

• Clinical Research Institute. This subsidiary of the Wichita Medical Practice Association was created to provide opportunities for faculty and medical students at the School of Medicine – Wichita to perform clinical research, including clinical trials.

• University of Kansas Physicians. The management service organization assists the 19 physician practice corporations at the Medical Center in Kansas City.
Response to Recommendations of 2005 Review Team

Selective Admissions

Recommendation: Consistent with admissions requirements of AAU member institutions, the 2005 HLC visiting team recommended that KU should consider a phased approach to implementing a more selective admissions policy.

KU Response: In May 2012, new admission standards for incoming freshmen and transfer students were proposed to the Board of Regents after a legislative change delegated that responsibility to the regents. Because open admissions has been a very controversial subject, new standards were developed after careful consideration of KU’s typical and ideal pool of applicants and the profile of the successful KU student, as well as a review of admissions standards for peer institutions. More than 200 stakeholders, including students, parents, alumni, educators, and policymakers, were engaged before the new requirements were submitted to the regents. The vast majority expressed support for the change and the importance of standards that not only set out clear goals for students but also reflect the differences among the missions of the universities in Kansas.

The standards were developed under four guiding principles:

1. Admission criteria should be clear and understandable to students, parents, and other key stakeholders involved with college selection and choice.
2. Admission criteria should be informed by data and based upon attributes shown to predict success at KU.
3. Quality, quantity, diversity, and net revenue should be considered to ensure a balanced incoming class.
4. KU should maintain flexibility in adjusting admission criteria based upon institutional priorities and changing enrollment conditions.

Objectives included improving retention and graduation rates, attracting students who can succeed at a research institution with standards that match the academic standards and expectations of a KU education, and maximizing state, institutional, and student resources by admitting students whose previous academic preparation and motivation indicate a high probability of success at KU.

The Board of Regents approved the new admissions standards on June 20, 2012. Under Kansas statute, the new standards can take effect with the Fall 2016 entering class. New freshmen will need to complete the Kansas Qualified Admissions Precollege Curriculum, graduate from a high school or home school, and meet one of two GPA/ACT thresholds. The first requires a minimum 3.0 high school GPA combined with a 24 on the ACT (1090 SAT), while the second requires a minimum 3.25 high school GPA and a 21 on the ACT (980 SAT). New transfer students will need 24 or more semester credit hours of transferable coursework and a minimum 2.5 GPA or an associate of arts or associate of science degree from a Kansas public community college.

Students who do not meet the automatic admission criteria will have their applications reviewed by a committee.
International/Global Awareness

*Recommendation:* “As the Global Awareness Program and other undergraduate and graduate international experiences grow to include all KU students, the university needs to make appropriate budgetary and curricular provisions to accommodate the increased demands.”

*Response:* KU’s international programs are described in detail in Criterion 3.B.4. The most significant change since 2005 is the separation of International Programs from Graduate Studies, concentrating programs under a single unit and appointing Susan Gronbeck-Tedesco as associate vice provost. This change allows greater focus on KU’s international programs. KU consistently ranks among national leaders in the percentage of students who participate in Study Abroad, and has set a goal of increasing that percentage and the number of students who complete semester-long or yearlong experiences. KU also established an innovative Academic Accelerator Program in partnership with Shorelight Education with the goal of eventually doubling the international student population.

Communications

*Recommendation:* The team recommended that KU could better tell its story if communications were designed for the audiences that are their targets. “The audience should include alumni and the larger higher education community as well as potential students, legislators, prospective donors, and taxpayers. The audience should also include internal constituents … (evidence) suggests that internal communications are not as strong as they should be.”

*Response:* Chancellor Gray-Little reviewed her performance after one year as KU’s leader with new Provost Vitter and two peers from AAU institutions. As a result of this review, in early 2011, after a national search, Tim Caboni was hired as vice chancellor for public affairs and tasked with shaping KU’s communications and government affairs operations. He has created a coordinated organization, the Office of Public Affairs, for strategic communications, news and features, marketing and communications, and state and federal relations. Outreach includes implementation of a campus communicators cabinet, quarterly meetings of all campus communicators, a national mail and advertising campaign, implementation of a content management system for university websites, and a coordinated messaging strategy across all units, including affiliated units.

Assessment

*Recommendation:* “The objectives of a quality and successful general undergraduate education have been consistently and carefully honed over the years ... it is hoped that as the assessment process evolves it will be further augmented with additional tools such as student portfolios. In contrast, the assessment of graduate programs is in its infancy, made possible in recent years by the greater centralization of programs in the graduate school. While the graduate school has a good sense of the data required for the assessment of quality education in the graduate programs, careful attention will be needed in the compilation, reporting, and feedback to relevant units of the data obtained. KU’s desire to increase its stature as a major research institution requires these important data to help it strengthen its requirement and retention of quality graduate students.”

*Response:* KU’s work on assessment during the past decade is described in detail in Criterion 4.B.
Regulatory Relief

*Recommendation:* “As is the case with many public universities, the University of Kansas has seen substantial reductions in state funding. Recognizing that state funding will continue to be limited, the University has sought and received relief from a number of state regulatory requirements. The University needs to continue this program and have the authority to set and retain tuition revenue if it is to meet its instruction and research needs in the future.”

*Response:* As suggested in the 2005 report, KU was granted the authority to transfer administrative responsibility for its classified staff from the state to the university during the 2005 legislative session. In 2014, the regents approved a similar transfer for the five other Regents institutions. In addition, KU has undertaken a classification and market study to review nonfaculty job titles, ensure employees are paid at a market rate, and eventually transfer all positions to unclassified professional staff. In 2006, the Legislature approved a pilot program to grant KU authority over its purchasing, exempting the university from state statutes. During the three years of the pilot program, KU saved approximately $1.76 million and achieved a 40 percent reduction in transaction processing time. Thanks to these results, the statutory change was made permanent in 2010, greatly improving flexibility across campus.

Infrastructure Issues

*Recommendation:* “Over 40% of the campus buildings are more than 40 years old. With the need to address more than $200 million in deferred maintenance the campus should continue to focus on repair, renovation, and replacement of obsolete facilities. The campus master planning process is an effective vehicle for identifying these needs.” “The campus has made significant progress with its information technology programs. It has merged information technology activities with those of the Library. It has developed a portal for access to a wide variety of campus information. The university has one of the more successful PeopleSoft implementations. There is a need to develop a plan to provide for regular upgrading of its technology equipment and to allocate funding for the continuing costs of the PeopleSoft application as it matures.”

*Response:* The 2014–2024 University of Kansas Campus Master Plan was unveiled in March 2014. The document includes extensive analysis and reports on space and classroom utilization, historic patterns and resources, land use, program accommodation, sustainability, coordination with the local community, and other areas. In 2012, the university undertook a single implementation for all campuses of a PeopleSoft upgrade, referred to as HR/Pay. This centrally funded, joint project has streamlined the human resources processes between the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses.
Criterion One. Mission
The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

Core Component 1.A
The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

Overview

The mission statement of the University of Kansas was developed through an inclusive process leading to Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) approval in 1992. The Medical Center mission was modified slightly in 2011 to include the program in Salina. The mission has been enacted and refreshed through strategic planning processes in 2000, 2008 and 2010–11. Each strategic plan has identified timely goals to enhance and build on KU’s fundamental mission to provide an excellent education, world-class research, and service to the state, nation and world. These goals are expressed through a short, more easily communicated statement: “To lift students and society by educating leaders, building healthy communities, and making discoveries that change the world.”

Befitting a comprehensive research university, KU’s 10 Lawrence-based academic units and three Medical Center schools offer bachelor’s degrees in 139 disciplines, 128 different master’s degrees, and doctoral degrees in 100 fields. Through the Office of Undergraduate Studies, the Office of Graduate Studies, and the Division of Student Affairs, KU maintains a comprehensive range of programs to support undergraduate and graduate students comparable to services provided by peer institutions. Its research activity is broad and growing, emphasizing the humanities and arts as well as the sciences and engineering. In FY 2012, KU ranked 38th on the National Science Foundation survey of federal research expenditures, a jump of 11 places among public universities since FY 2003.

True to KU’s mission as a state university, Kansas residents continue to constitute the majority of students enrolled and graduated. In Fall 2013, Kansas residents made up 65.5 percent of enrolled students on the Lawrence campus and 56.0 percent at the Medical Center. Both locations are enrolling more nonresident students than Fall 2003 as a result of deliberate efforts to attract a more geographically diverse group of students. The proportion of nonresident U.S. students has increased from 31.8 percent to 34.5 percent on the Lawrence campus and from 31.0 percent to 44.0 percent at the Medical Center. International students have increased from 5.9 percent to 9.2 percent over this time period on the Lawrence campus and from 4.6 percent to 5.5 percent at the Medical Center. The student body also has become more diverse; 21.8 percent of its first-time freshmen in 2013 were from underrepresented groups, up from 12.6 percent in Fall 2003.

KU’s planning and budget priorities for the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses are tightly coupled to its mission. For example, Bold Aspirations, the strategic plan for the Lawrence campus, specifically targets, among other things, establishing the KU Core curriculum (general education) and investing in first-year experiences as strategies for improving undergraduate education. The institution annually evaluates its progress in attaining its goals.
Core Component 1.B
The mission is articulated publicly.

Overview

The fundamental mission of KU remains the same today as it was when approved in 1992 and has regularly been refreshed through strategic planning processes. Its shortened version — “To lift students and society by educating leaders, building healthy communities, and making discoveries that change the world” — is communicated widely through various public documents, the website, strategic planning documents, and even on billboards. Specifically, Bold Aspirations and the Medical Center strategic plan and annual reports are widely available on dedicated websites. As indicated in Criterion 1.A, the mission statement clearly identifies the scope of KU’s academic programs, research, and service activities as well as the nature, scope, and intended constituents of its programs, each characteristic of a public AAU university. Budgeting priorities are tightly coupled to the strategic plan, and progress toward achieving the goals in the strategic plan for each campus is publicly documented annually.

Core Component 1.C
The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

Overview

KU’s role in an increasingly diverse society that has domestic as well as global dimensions has deep roots extending back to the debate over whether Kansas would be a free or a slave state. KU’s commitment to the diversity of society is outlined in its mission statements for the Lawrence and the Medical Center campuses and in the current strategic plans for both. Since 2005, through intentional efforts, the student body and the faculty have become more diverse. The percentage of domestic students from underrepresented groups and international students has increased. Likewise, there has been growth in the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members from underrepresented groups.

KU’s commitment to preparing its students and cutting-edge scholarship for an increasingly global and diverse society is evident in its curricular and co-curricular offerings. Evidence of this includes its significant success in developing and promoting academic programs and research emphases on area studies programs such as African and African American Studies, American Studies, and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. In fact, KU was among the first universities in the country to offer academic programs in women’s studies and African American studies.

Likewise, KU has a strong commitment and record of success in international programming. Over 22 percent of KU baccalaureate degree recipients study abroad, and its Title VI centers have ensured strong academic and research programs. KU is recognized nationally and internationally for its leadership in teaching and research on disability. Beginning in 2013, the KU Core requires all KU graduates to meet learning Goal 4: “Respect human diversity and expand cultural understanding and global awareness,” which they can do by choosing from among over 350 approved courses or through experiential learning programs such as study abroad and the Global Awareness Program. Co-curricular diversity initiatives are led and coordinated through the Office of Diversity and Equity in the Provost’s Office.
Although KU has made significant strides in fulfilling its commitment to the values expressed in its mission of creating a multicultural environment, there is always more to be done. The newly hired vice provost for diversity and equity is leading an effort to develop a multifaceted, campus-wide diversity agenda.

**Core Component 1.D**
The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

**Overview**

KU’s actions and decisions reflect an understanding that, as the state’s flagship public university, it has an obligation to serve first the citizens of the state, then the nation and the world. This is reflective of the academic programs it offers, the research it conducts, and the public service programs it offers. KU’s historic public commitment is reinforced by the current strategic plans for the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses that emphasize engaging scholarship for the public good. Myriad means are used to discern constituent needs, such as interaction with elected officials, the Alumni Association, and program-specific advisory boards. A good example of such engagement is the Johnson County Research Triangle funding to support academic programs at the Edwards Campus and research at the Medical Center.

KU’s public obligation is represented in its work through the Kansas Biological and Geological Surveys; educational outreach programs; continuing education programs, such as Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, and Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute; service projects through programs such as the Big Event; health and wellness programs such as the JayDoc Free Clinic; academic centers such as the Hall Center for the Humanities and The Commons; and cultural enrichment programs through the Lied Center, the museums, and the Dole Institute of Politics. Additionally, service learning is one form of experiential learning that can be approved to meet the KU Core.

The strategic plan, Bold Aspirations, specifically focuses on service and public benefit in Goal 4, “Engaging Scholarship for Public Impact.”

**Criterion One Summary**

The evidence presented in Criterion One demonstrates that KU meets each of the core components. The university’s official mission statement has periodically been refreshed through inclusive strategic planning processes, the most recent of which resulted in Bold Aspirations, an ambitious five-year plan that guides the university’s activities and budget priorities through 2017. Bold Aspirations identifies specific goals and strategies that build on the pillars of KU’s mission to deliver high-quality education to an increasingly diverse population, to conduct research, and to put the results of that research to work building healthy communities and making discoveries that will help make the world a better place. The mission and strategic plan recognize KU’s role as a public research university that has obligations to the state of Kansas but also to the nation and world. This recognition is made real through excellent academic programs, world-class research, and hundreds of public outreach activities. As demonstrated
in Criterion Five, KU’s budgeting priorities and processes are tightly coupled with the strategic plan to enable the university to achieve its goals.

**Strengths**

- KU’s mission is regularly refreshed through strategic planning processes. The current plan, *Bold Aspirations*, is a comprehensive plan centered around KU’s mission as a public research university. The plan drives decision making in a very focused way. KU’s priorities align with its mission.
- KU has made significant strides over the last 10 years in diversifying the makeup of the student body it enrolls and the faculty and staff who teach and support students.
- Despite recent cuts in funding to many of its Title VI National Resource Centers for area studies, KU continues to be a leader in the Midwest in promoting the study of languages and in the academic programs and research produced on critical regions of the world. The KU Core ensures that all KU graduates will meet outcomes relating to domestic as well as global diversity.
- KU has made strides in the last decade in improving public access to its information through adoption of a single content management system, resulting in a more standardized format for its web pages. In addition, the Office of Public Affairs has increased communication of KU’s activities to the public.
- The faculty, staff, and students engage in hundreds of activities and services that promote the health, well-being, and cultural enrichment of the citizens of Kansas, the region, and the world.

**Challenges**

- Through the Self-Study process, it became apparent that the formal mission had not been updated to include newly approved locations (e.g., Salina, Garden City, Fort Hays, and online programs) and formally approved by the Kansas Board of Regents. This will be done.
- In a decentralized environment, it can be a challenge to get various units to integrate the strategic plan into their work. In such an environment, it is safe to say that not all members of the KU community share the same levels of knowledge of and excitement about the strategic plan.
- Recruiting, retaining, and assisting in the success of historically underrepresented students, faculty, and staff remains a continuing challenge. The Self-Study process served as a reminder that the university has data on these populations that can be used to better understand their experiences, and that KU can make better use of those data. In other cases, a more proactive approach is needed to understand the experiences of these populations as a foundation for mounting more systematic efforts to create a welcoming climate in which all can thrive. A newly hired vice provost for equity and diversity has begun to study the current environment and to plan a coherent strategy moving forward.
- Recruiting high-quality undergraduate and graduate students remains a challenge. The competition was described as “cut throat” by some associate deans, particularly in the face of surrounding state universities that offer in-state tuition to Kansas residents.
- Increasing student debt load is a growing concern, especially in professional schools. For example, the typical graduate from KU’s six-year pharmacy program owes about $70,000, while the starting salaries are almost $120,000.
Future Directions

- In order to fulfill its mission as a state-supported public university, KU will continue to develop partnerships with community colleges. For example, the university has a dual admission process with Johnson County Community College to allow students to take courses where and when they need them. At the urging of the Kansas Board of Regents, additional efforts will be undertaken to develop 2+2 programs with the 19 Kansas community colleges to enhance degree completion within the state.

- Although KU is a relatively late entrant into the online degree program market, in the next 10 years the university will see additional growth in this area as a means of better serving the state and region. In addition to new School of Education online programs, the School of Business recently voted to also enter a partnership with Everspring to develop an online master of business administration degree program. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences plans to offer a bachelor’s of general studies completion program online.

- The next 10 years will see increasing efforts to diversify the campus in accordance with its mission. KU will respond to demographic changes in the state by enhancing efforts to recruit minority students and providing academic supports that will help them succeed. Also, with the assistance of Shorelight Education, KU seeks to recruit international students from more geographic regions and double the number of international students on campus.

Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity: its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Overview

As a public university, KU is subject to all state and federal laws as well as stipulations of the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) in the conduct of its business. Above and beyond its legal obligations, KU holds itself to the highest standards of integrity in all its functions, as expected of an excellent university. When KU discovers a breach of this ethical contract, it acts swiftly to remedy the precipitating incident and ensure that the appropriate structures and educational programs are in place to prevent future problems. Since the 2005 Self-Study, the university has created a robust series of offices and functions to assure that all areas of the university act ethically and with integrity. These offices complement long-standing research integrity offices regarding human and animal protection and include an expanded Office of General Counsel, Office of Internal Audit, Office of Institutional Compliance on the Lawrence campus, Office of ADA Education, Office of Institutional Opportunity and Access, and Office of Export Compliance, in addition to individual teams for threat assessment and campus safety. KU’s financial functions are consistent with best business practices, and regular audits are conducted. All controlled and affiliated auxiliary operations have supervising governing boards that conduct audits of their financial operations.
A comprehensive set of policies exists to ensure that faculty members, staff, and students are treated fairly and ethically in their employment relationships with the university and with respect to academic activities. All policies are housed in an accessible Policy Library. In 2013, the Policy Library moved from a document management system to a content management system, greatly improving search ability and ease of use.

**Core Component 2.B**
The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

**Overview**

Information on program, academic requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, and accreditation relationships are available on KU's website. KU has implemented a single content management system to standardize the look and feel of the KU website with an eye to improving access to information. Printed academic catalogs have been replaced with a more complete website, most recently redesigned for the 2014–15 academic catalog. With the rapid development of web-based technologies and changing user preferences, maintaining accurate and easily accessible information is an ongoing process requiring constant attention and revision. Websites are at varying stages of adoption of the content management system, which will streamline access to information and make it easier to keep the information current. Assuring accuracy of such a large, complex website is an ongoing effort, and the Self-Study process revealed varying degrees of attainment of the “ease of access” to information, broken links, and different titles for the same policies. This provides an opportunity to correct these problems and, in many cases, move to adoption of the content management system.

**Core Component 2.C**
The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

**Overview**

The Kansas Board of Regents was established in 1925 following a lame-duck governor’s attempt to remove KU Chancellor Ernest Hiram Lindley, who had advocated for an independent board whose members were not beholden to political parties. KBOR was established with nine members serving four-year terms with oversight of the state university, the agricultural college (now Kansas State), and the three teacher colleges (now Fort Hays State, Emporia State, and Pittsburg State).

KBOR now governs six public universities, including Wichita State, and maintains a coordinating function with respect to all public postsecondary institutions, including Washburn University and the state’s community and technical colleges. State statute defining Board of Regents membership and a conflict of interest policy are designed to ensure its independence from undue influence.
KBOR has in place an extensive professional staff, committee, and council structure that permits it to learn about and act in the best interests of postsecondary education in general and the institutions it oversees. KU administrators, faculty, and students are represented on appropriate councils, and KU provides an extensive range of reports annually to inform KBOR of its actions and needs. Examples of how the board considers KU’s specific needs include regulatory relief and establishment of new, KU-specific admissions standards and annual tuition increase approvals. KBOR recognizes the different missions of the institutions it governs by establishing general frameworks and allowing individual institutions to tailor processes to fit their unique missions. Examples include program review and post-tenure review.

The Board of Regents hires the chancellor and delegates to him or her day-to-day management of the institution. KBOR sets broad policy and retains the responsibility of ultimate approval of some matters such as the calendar and approval of new programs. Otherwise it expects the faculty to determine curriculum, to set and uphold academic standards, and to assume responsibility for faculty hiring and evaluation.

**Core Component 2.D**  
The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

**Overview**

A commitment to freedom of expression is deeply entrenched in KU’s history. In the late 1960s and early ’70s, KU’s chancellors were staunch defenders of freedom of expression in the face of unprecedented and sometimes violent student protest. In 1980, students and faculty members fought against a regents policy restricting banners at nonpolitical events. In the 1990s, Chancellor Gene Budig upheld the right of the Ku Klux Klan to speak on campus despite much pressure to do otherwise. In the late 1990s and early years of the 21st century, Chancellor Robert Hemenway defended the teaching of evolution in Kansas public schools and the methods used by a professor to teach human sexuality. The consistent range of diverse speakers and demonstrations on campus is testimony to a tolerant environment.

KU subscribes to the AAUP Statement of Principles, which serves as the foundation for its many documents reinforcing academic freedom, and attending obligations, for faculty. Similarly, the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities guarantees students the freedom of expression.

In 2013, academic freedom and freedom of expression at all Regents institutions became an issue. The Board of Regents, in response to a controversial tweet by a KU faculty member, issued an unpopular Social Media Policy that allows for disciplinary action for misuse of social media, despite protest by faculty and staff at Regents institutions. At KU, the chancellor and provost have tasked a committee led by the University Senate president with outlining a process for handling violations of the policy.
Core Component 2.E
The institution’s policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by its faculty, students, and staff.

Overview
KU takes seriously its obligation to uphold the highest ethical standards of scholarly and academic honesty and integrity. Oversight of and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice are the responsibility of the Office of Research on the Lawrence campus and the Office of the Vice Provost of Research at KUMC. Both campuses have robust policies and administrative structures in place to ensure ethical treatment of humans and animals in the conduct of research. The university has and enforces policies on scholarly misconduct. Since 2009, the Lawrence campus Research Integrity, a unit of the Office of Research, received 18 allegations of misconduct and conducted eight investigations that resulted in six findings of misconduct.

Beginning in 2011, every doctoral program was required to ensure that its students receive training in responsible scholarship and conduct of research. In 2013, KU adopted the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) responsible conduct tutorial as well as the research integrity module. University Senate Rules and Regulations define academic misconduct and a graduated series of potential sanctions. Each academic unit is required to have and enforce a policy. Research Integrity, KU Writing Center, and KU Libraries provide instruction and outreach on topics concerning ethical scholarship and academic misconduct, such as plagiarism. A full 88 percent of respondents to the 2013 Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey indicated they had received training on academic plagiarism and other topics related to academic honesty; 95 percent were satisfied with the training. Although each unit enforces its academic honesty policy, the Self-Study revealed that not all units are reporting their data annually to the Provost’s Office. Steps are being taken to rectify this gap.

Criterion Two Summary
KU has policies, processes, and oversight functions in place to ensure that it complies with all state and federal regulations. It acts with integrity in all that it does, as should be expected of a public educational institution. When KU identifies problems in its operations, such as the athletics ticket scandal in 2010, it acts swiftly and appropriately to address the problem. It strives on a daily basis to present itself clearly to students, its faculty and staff, and the public through its documents, websites, and public communications. Improved website management and oversight by an enhanced Office of Public Affairs have helped to achieve this objective.

KU is governed by the Kansas Board of Regents, which exercises its role of governance of all six state universities. The board sets broad policy that is adapted and adopted by each institution. It considers the best interests of each institution through membership on key committees and dozens of reports collected annually. It acts as the intermediary between the Kansas Legislature and the universities. KU has a long history of valuing freedom of expression. That freedom has been recently challenged by the Kansas Board of Regents’ social media policy. KU leaders have attempted to reassure faculty and staff that this policy will not be used to stifle freedom of expression on campus. A faculty-led committee is drafting policy for handling alleged violations. Finally, KU has a robust set of policies and procedures to
ensure that faculty, administrators, and students conduct their academic and scholarly work with integrity.

Strengths

- Since the last review, KU has established or augmented a series of units, such as the Office of Internal Audit and the Office of Institutional Compliance, and reformulated the Office of Affirmative Action into Institutional Opportunity and Access to ensure that KU remains in compliance with all federal and state laws and that employees and students are treated equitably and with respect. These efforts seek to centralize strategic oversight while maintaining the integrity of specific offices and subject matter expertise.
- KU has a comprehensive set of policies ensuring the rights and responsibilities of its faculty, staff, and students that are developed through a process of shared governance and publicly available through an enhanced online policy library.
- Although the Kansas Board of Regents governs six universities, each with a very different mission, its practice has been to set broad policy and allow each university to define and enact a policy as appropriate for its mission. KU has shaped regents-mandated policies and processes—such as program review, proficiency assessment, and post-tenure review—to fit the nature and expectation of an AAU research university.
- As the state’s flagship university, KU has been a leader in seeking and obtaining dispensation from state regulations; subsequently, other universities have sought such relief. An example of this was the separation of the classified staff from the state system. More recently, KU has asked for and received permission to adopt more selective admissions requirements than mandated by the state.

Challenges

- Although there are many “hits” on the policy library, focus groups from various governance groups indicated a lack of knowledge of the policy library and difficulty finding policies. Nonetheless, all policies are now located in one central place and some changes have already enhanced the search function as well as policy format. Each policy includes the history of its creation, modifications over time, and who approved such changes, adding transparency to the policies. Concern over lack of access to computers, and thus to the Policy Library, among some employee groups (e.g., facilities staff) is being addressed by provision of iPods so that employees have ready access to the Internet.
- A significant challenge remains with respect to the social media policy adopted by the Kansas Board of Regents. Faculty and staff members across the Regents universities opposed the adopted policy, putting university presidents and the chancellor in a very difficult position as well as potentially affecting the climate for free speech on campus. Administrators must enforce Regents policy while demonstrating support for academic freedom, a hallmark of U.S. higher education for nearly a century. KU is developing a policy for how alleged violations will be handled.
- Developing and implementing effective policies, procedures, and sanctions for sexual assault remains a continuing challenge despite all that has been done in this area. Chancellor Gray-Little has established a Task Force on Sexual Assault to comprehensively study these issues during 2014–15 that will shape KU’s actions moving forward. That report is due in April 2015.
Future Directions

- Over the last half a dozen years, KU has invested significantly to bolster its compliance infrastructure and support. Recent visibility and increased reporting of sexual assault on and near campus have shown that this work is never complete. In particular, the Chancellor’s Task Force on Sexual Assault will make its report and recommendations in April 2015. Evaluating and implementing the task force recommendations to create a university climate in which sexual assault is unacceptable and all students feel safe will be a major focus of the next few years.
- The Self-Study review process set in motion a proposal to centrally collect and maintain a database on compliance-related issues such as student complaints.

Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Core Component 3.A
The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

Overview

The faculty is charged with developing and revising curriculum and setting performance expectations appropriate to the degree. The university hires highly qualified faculty who design, approve, and monitor the course approval process. Required student course evaluations, faculty evaluation processes, assessment of student learning outcomes, Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) program review, and accreditation are additional mechanisms through which currency and expectations are monitored.

Each academic program has stated learning goals and degree requirements differentiated by degree level. Requirements and goals may be differentiated within level (for example, for Ph.D and Ed.D. in the School of Education). Each degree program is expected to describe goals and expectations in the appropriate academic catalog and to identify specific learning goals guiding its assessment plan.

KU ensures quality and consistency across locations and modalities of instruction through the disciplines and departments. Home academic departments on the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses control the course approval process and the faculty hiring and evaluation processes.
Core Component 3.B
The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

Overview

In Fall 2013, KU implemented the KU Core, the first university-wide undergraduate curriculum. The KU Core comprises six learning goals and 12 specific learning outcomes that reflect KU’s mission as a comprehensive research university, fulfilled through courses, experiences, or a combination of both that fulfill a specific learning outcome. KU is a pioneer in allowing approved experiential learning options to count toward the undergraduate curriculum.

As described online, in the catalog, and during advising, the KU Core is designed to develop fundamental skills, build a broad background of knowledge, generate capacity for integrating ideas, strengthen knowledge of an appreciation for diversity, and cultivate ethical integrity. When building the KU Core, KU followed a set of principles: It should apply to all KU and KUMC undergraduates; be outcomes-based; cover key skills and core values of diversity and social responsibility; include options for experiential learning; and retain the expectation of exposure to the breadth of disciplines characteristic of a research university.

KU’s curricular and co-curricular offerings recognize domestic and global human and cultural diversity through the prior general education requirements, the KU Core, language programs, multi-disciplinary area studies programs, and through co-curricular programs such as the Global Awareness Program and programs offered by the Office of Multicultural Affairs. KU is a national leader in the study of foreign languages. Data from the 2014 Senior Survey indicate that KU’s efforts have yielded positive results. In 2005, 62 percent of seniors rated their attainment of “understanding and appreciation” of diversity a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale. In 2014, 72.5 percent of the seniors rated their attainment a 4 or 5 on this same item. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) also support the notion that KU promotes interaction with diverse people and learning about different cultures.

KU faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and knowledge discovery in keeping with the mission of an AAU research university. Many of KU’s faculty members are national and international leaders in their fields, and faculty members tout KU’s research centers as a strength of the university. In 2012, KU established the Center for Undergraduate Research to stimulate additional undergraduate opportunities and support the KU Core. KU also recently expanded its nationally recognized University Honors Program.
Core Component 3.C
The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Overview

KU has a stable and growing contingent of highly qualified faculty members to accomplish its mission and fulfill its aspirations as a top-tier research university. Annual turnover is low. Faculty Senate members, Unclassified Professional Staff senators, and students cite a commitment to teaching as one of KU’s strengths. Both in and out of the classroom, faculty work to ensure cutting-edge curricula and course redesign to enhance student learning. In response to instructional needs, KU has over the last 10 years more clearly defined types of nontenure-track faculty positions. Regardless of whether faculty members are tenure-track or multi-term lecturers, on-campus or online, all hiring is guided by the standards of the disciplinary expectations of a research university.

KU engages in a robust series of evaluative activities, including required evaluations of teaching in every course, annual evaluation, progress toward tenure, promotion and tenure, and now post-tenure review. All multi-term lecturers undergo a summative evaluation at the end of their three-year term in addition to annual evaluations. Similarly, graduate teaching assistants are evaluated in accordance with the university’s agreement with them.

Led by the Center for Teaching Excellence and numerous programs to recognize excellence in teaching and research, KU faculty members, including graduate teaching assistants and multi-term lecturers, have ample means for keeping current in their disciplines and for enhancing teaching skills.

Core Component 3.D
The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

Overview

Befitting a comprehensive research university, KU provides a rich complement of programs and services on all of its campuses and online to support students’ personal and academic growth and success. On the Lawrence campus, the Office of Undergraduate Studies and the Office of Student Affairs serve undergraduate students and Graduate Studies provides additional programming to enhance the academic progress of graduate students. At the Medical Center, the Division of Student Affairs oversees these programs and services. In order to fulfill its commitment to educate leaders, KU has over the last 10 years made significant investments in programs widely recognized as high-impact practices. For example, the Office of First-Year Experience implemented a Common Book program, has expanded new student orientation, and is offering First-Year Seminars. Most notably, the Undergraduate Advising Center, and other advising centers located in academic units, have expanded both in terms of the number of professional advisors and in the types of data utilized.

KU faculty, students, and staff are provided resources and infrastructure to support teaching and learning. Over the last 10 years, the highly ranked KU Libraries has transformed itself into a hub for instruction and for connecting with the information resources necessary to academic pursuits.
Significant investments have been made in expanding learning management system capabilities and in support for using technology to enhance interactive learning at the Medical Center and Lawrence campus. KU uses its museums and performance theaters for public outreach and instructional spaces. Campus Master Plans have been developed for KUMC and Lawrence to identify space needs and to prioritize construction for the future. On the Lawrence campus, modern instructional lab space is a high need; at KUMC, construction of a new medical education building is a top priority.

**Core Component 3.E**
The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

**Overview**

Rock Chalk, Jayhawk! KU students and 338,000 alumni around the world share a common bond symbolized by this chant. That bond represents the sum total of the KU experience in and out of the classroom that results in one becoming a Jayhawk. This identity is forged while attending Traditions Night during orientation, learning in the classroom, talking out-of-class with professors, camping for seats at KU basketball games, serving in Student Senate, cooking meals in the scholarship halls, doing an honors project, adapting to living with a Costa Rican family while studying abroad, rebuilding tornado-damaged Greensburg, Kansas on alternative break, and finally “walking down the Hill” at Commencement. Building on the high-quality undergraduate and graduate academic programs, the co-curricular activities KU provides are the linchpin that prepares graduates for a successful life as leaders who can build healthy communities and make discoveries that change the world. In the focus group preparing for the Self-Study, Student Senate members identified these many opportunities as a key strength of KU. Results of the NSSE identify “supportive campus environment” as one of the benchmarks on which KU consistently does well. Responses to the regularly administered Senior Survey and the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey suggest high degrees of satisfaction with the overall KU experience.

**Criterion Three Summary**

The evidence presented in Criterion Three demonstrates that KU has sufficient faculty, curriculum, and support services in place to fulfill its commitment of offering high-quality educational programs characteristic of a flagship research university. Quality begins with the faculty hiring process and extends to the course and curriculum approval process and then to periodic program review. Providing a high-quality liberal education to its students has been a cherished value throughout KU’s history. The KU Core is outcome-based, required of all KU undergraduates, and provides a well-rounded education that will benefit leaders in a rapidly changing society. The KU curriculum addresses the increasing multicultural and global nature of the society in which its students will live and work and is delivered by nationally recognized scholars who also are recognized for their excellent teaching. It ensures that its faculty has multiple professional development opportunities to enhance teaching and research skills. A trained and dedicated professional staff assist faculty in these efforts by offering the full range of services and programs expected at a comprehensive research university. As indicated by a variety of sources of evidence, KU demonstrates that it fulfills its claims of educating the whole student.
Strengths

• In keeping with its promise to the state, KU has over the last 10 years built on the achievements of previous generations to continually enhance the quality of its undergraduate educational experience. To this end it has dedicated significant resources to enhancing high-impact practices, such as undergraduate research, learning communities, participation in study abroad, and more proactive advising (e.g., adoption of an early warning system). It is currently engaged in a major course-redesign project.
• Implementation of the KU Core is the first major undergraduate curricular change in nearly 30 years. This is an important and notable change because it applies to all KU students — a first for KU in the modern era — because it is outcomes-based and because it allows for inclusion of approved experiential learning experiences. It is also notable because the KU Core required creation of a university-wide curriculum committee, again a first in recent history.
• Salary increases of just over 2 percent have been awarded in each of the last four years, following two years of no increases. Despite low (or no) salary increases since 2008, KU’s highly recognized faculty has remained remarkably stable with a relatively low turnover rate. Gains have been made in the diversity of the faculty. The numbers of faculty members from underrepresented groups increased, and the data show that they also are earning tenure.
• In addition to excelling at research, KU faculty members care about teaching. When members of Faculty Senate were asked to identify KU’s strengths, they mentioned first KU’s emphasis on undergraduate teaching and current activities to further enhance teaching.
• Faculty and staff identify the KU Center for Research and KU’s other disciplinary and interdisciplinary research centers as a significant strength. Not only do the research centers assist faculty in securing and managing external funding, they also provide spaces in which faculty members from a wide range of disciplines come together to share cutting-edge scholarship.
• KU has made significant progress in recent years to increase the clarity and transparency of its multi-tiered promotion and tenure process by revising its guidelines. The COACHE data suggest this is one of the areas in which KU outperforms its comparison universities.
• KU seniors’ satisfaction with interactions with the Office of Student Affairs and other administrative staff is considerably higher than at other AAU Data Exchange institutions that participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
• “Supportive campus environment” is a particularly strong characteristic of KU and has been KU’s highest-rated benchmark on the NSSE. KU student senators raved about the co-curricular activities available to them and appreciated that being a Jayhawk ties them to a global network of fellow graduates. The shared bond symbolized by “Rock Chalk Jayhawk” is as real in 2015 as it was in 2005.

Challenges

• Advancing into the world of online education is new to KU and not necessarily universally accepted. There are many concerns, ranging from how to maintain quality educational programs to how online education might damage the “KU brand.” Additionally, KU is entering the market as enrollment is plateauing. The efforts require innovation, careful monitoring, constant market analysis, and necessary adjustments to meet market demands.
• Adoption of the KU Core is merely the first step to achieving the Bold Aspirations goals for undergraduate education. Ensuring its full implementation represents a significant challenge that will require considerable attention. The same can be said for many of the other high-impact
practices. Careful monitoring and assessment are needed to ensure that these programs achieve the goals KU is seeking to meet.

- Although the number and percentage of faculty members from historically underrepresented groups have increased, there is still work to be done in this area. The newly hired vice provost for equity and diversity is in the process of appointing a faculty fellow to help guide further efforts to increase faculty diversity and enhance programming to support a campus climate supportive of all students, faculty, and staff members.

- To fully achieve Goal 2 of Bold Aspirations for graduate study, efforts to recruit and retain graduate students will need continued attention and support. This includes funding as well as programs and services. Although all of KU’s student services are available to graduate students, they are frequently targeted more toward serving undergraduate students.

Future Directions

- In addition to future actions mentioned with respect to challenges in undergraduate education, KU recently entered national collaborative efforts to increase retention and timely graduation rates and to enhance the nature and quality of its educational experience. Active, experiential learning is a theme running through the latter. These alliances include:
  - University Innovation Alliance (UIA) a “consortium of large public universities committed to making high-quality college degrees accessible to a diverse body of students.” As a member of this collaborative, KU will continue to experiment with the UIA’s first project: the use of predictive modeling to inform educational practices, especially with respect to proactive advising targeted to “deciding students.”
  - Generation Study Abroad, an initiative led by the Institute of International Education, involves more than 200 colleges and universities working to enhance the number of students studying abroad as well as the experience of those who do. KU’s “Mapping Study Abroad to the Major” project, announced in November 2014, seeks to increase the percentage of baccalaureate graduates studying abroad from about 22 percent to 30 percent. This will be done by integrating study abroad with the major and encouraging students to study abroad for longer periods while continuing to make progress toward a degree and not incurring additional costs.
  - Bay View Alliance and KU's C21 Course Redesign Consortium. As a member of the Bay View Alliance, a learning community of research universities interested in applying action research to improve teaching and learning methods, KU is engaged in course redesign. As the Self-Study has shown, early efforts have had promising results. Over the next several years, the university's goal is to increase the number of courses redesigned to enhance student learning, with a goal of making engaged and active learning in and out of the classroom the norm at KU.

- Work on Goal 2 of Bold Aspirations, to “Prepare doctoral students as innovators and leaders who are ready to meet the demands of the academy and our global society,” is in progress. Graduate Studies is (1) establishing comparative data for setting standards for student progress and publishing key data in a consistent online format by doctoral programs and departments (and will soon include master’s programs), (2) developing and revising active recruitment plans to enhance unit-based recruiting efforts for high-quality applicants with renewed focus on recruitment of underrepresented students, and (3) examining models of funding to enhance support for doctoral graduate students.
Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Core Component 4.A
The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

Overview

The University of Kansas exercises responsibility for the quality of its programs through regular program review, specialized accreditation of professional programs, and a series of policies that guide acceptance of transfer credit, prerequisites, and course rigor. It evaluates the success of its graduates using measures such as employment statistics, licensure pass rates, graduate school acceptance rates, and participation in programs such as the Peace Corps and Teach for America. Increasing sophistication and availability of centrally maintained data, such as that available from Professional Record Online (faculty vitae), Data Analytics, and the Administrative Information Management System are making program review more data-oriented. KU evaluates transfer credit and is participating in a Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) Transfer and Articulation Council to facilitate transfer of approved courses from Kansas community colleges.

The responsibility for maintaining rigor of courses falls to the faculty in academic units and begins with the course approval process. All professional schools for which specialized accreditation exists are regularly and rigorously examined by their professional accrediting bodies and are fully accredited. KU uses a variety of sources to identify post-graduation outcomes and is constantly working to improve that information. Based on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Destination Survey, the College is implementing a new career component for bachelor of science graduates (see Criterion 4.B).

Core Component 4.B
The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

Overview

As noted in Criterion Three, KU’s undergraduate general education requirements have long included learning. The KU Core altered the existing model by establishing a university-wide curriculum built around meeting learning outcomes tied to six goals. Learning goals are also in place for the schools and College and for majors.

Assessment processes have been generally established university-wide but are more fully developed in some areas than in others. Building on the assessment process employed in the previous general education requirement and the Documenting Learning Outcomes Project led by the Center for Teaching Excellence from 2007 to 2010, KU has developed considerable expertise that has informed the
development of assessment for the KU Core and the structure and process for assessing programs. To facilitate and oversee assessment, KU has hired an assessment specialist, created the University Academic Assessment Committee, and created an electronic assessment management system.

KU has made recent strides in assessing co-curricular programs as well. All co-curricular programs in the Office of Undergraduate Studies implement regular evaluation of programs. The Division of Student Affairs has employed a full-time assessment coordinator, identified learning goals that map onto the KU Core, and implemented assessment processes.

Core Component 4.C
The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

Overview

The goal of improving retention, persistence, and graduation rates has driven much of the university’s investment in student programing since 2005. Efforts have been hampered by relatively low admissions standards, so KU moved to put new standards in place effective Fall 2016. Chancellor Gray-Little has set ambitious one-year retention (90 percent) and six-year graduation goals (70 percent). Over the last 10 years, KU has vastly increased the amount and type of data it uses to understand the factors that impact retention and timely progression to degree at all levels. Data are widely and continually analyzed through specially charged task forces and regularly occurring structures, such as the Student Research Finding Summit and Enrollment Management.

Such analysis has resulted in a host of changes from procedural (e.g., common course withdrawal dates) to major (e.g., the KU Core, which dramatically reduces the number of required general education hours). KBOR has identified courses that facilitate transfer from Kansas community colleges. Considerable investment is being made in first-year experiences known to positively affect retention and graduation rates. In 2014, KU unveiled a comprehensive strategic plan for student success.

Criterion Four Summary

Through the preceding narrative, KU demonstrates that it assumes responsibility for the quality of its programs. It maintains a well-developed process of regular program review and has policies and processes for reviewing transfer credits and rigor of its own courses. All professional programs for which specialized accreditation is expected are accredited. While KU collects some data on success of recent graduates, the university plans to collect more and to centralize access to those data. KU has been assessing learning outcomes since 1989 through multiple processes for general education, the major, regents proficiencies, and at the doctoral level. While general education assessment has endured, other efforts have not been coordinated nor sustained. To consolidate and enhance the assessment efforts as a system, the provost has invested resources to create a consistent, effective university-wide assessment infrastructure. This includes hiring an assessment specialist. Over the past 10 to 20 years, KU has developed considerable expertise in designing and conducting effective outcomes assessment. With this base of expertise, the assessment infrastructure will move toward institutionalization of an
assessment culture of continuous improvement. The evidence presented also demonstrates that KU has persistently collected and analyzed data and implemented changes to its practices to improve student retention. The challenge of improving retention and timely graduation rates in a virtually open access institution has proven to be a difficult problem to solve regardless of attention paid to it. KU anticipates that soon-to-be raised admission standards will result in higher retention and graduation rates.

**Strengths**

- KU has a reasonable and effective system of program review that responds both to the needs of the regents as well as the university. The process results in changes such as creation of the School of Languages, Literature and Culture.
- Through assessment projects, such as the degree-level assessment, general education assessment, and regents proficiency assessment, KU has developed considerable expertise in how to conduct effective assessment using embedded assignments and AAC&U rubrics.
- The current administration has devoted resources (e.g., hiring an assessment specialist) to develop and implement a university-wide assessment system that will generate useful data to inform decisions about the teaching and learning process.

**Challenges**

- Although KU has employed an effective system of assessing general education outcomes since 1989, assessment in the major is in a more formative stage. Consistent attention is needed from central administration to ensure that assessment in the major at both the graduate and undergraduate levels becomes institutionalized as part of the academic culture.
- Assessment of general education represents a challenge of a different sort in that it involves a large number of courses to be assessed to ensure they are meeting the goals of the KU Core curriculum. The challenge here is to develop an assessment system that is consistent, informative, and manageable.
- Persistent efforts must continue to ensure that assessment of co-curricular and support programs continues to advance.
- KU has numerous programs intended to improve retention. The Self-Study process revealed that there is limited evidence of the success of some of these programs, though several are in their infancy and their impact may not be evident for several more years. Retention programs must be based on research, continually evaluated, and modified (or even deleted) to ensure that KU is doing its best to increase retention and graduation rates.

**Future Directions**

Two areas are of particular focus for the future. The first is outcomes assessment and the second revolves around retention efforts.
- The Office of the Provost has devoted resources to bringing central oversight and support to outcomes assessment activities. Going forward, the focus is inculcating a culture of assessment campus-wide and “closing the loop” or ensuring that assessment data are used to improve teaching and learning.
- Although KU has been focused on improving retention since at least 2000, it will continue to invest in this effort. This includes gathering and assessing data on the effectiveness of existing activities.
and experimenting, with assistance of collaborators such as the UIA, to come up with new ways to improve retention. While the university expands these programs, it also must ensure that minority, low-income, and first-generation students participate in these activities and that their participation leads to positive outcomes. KU will collect, analyze, and use data to understand these experiences and to inform decisions to improve classroom experiences for these students. All of these efforts will help KU reach its goal of 90 percent first-year retention and 70 percent six-year graduation rate.

- KU will monitor the impact of new admissions requirements taking effect in 2016 on admissions as well as on retention.

**Criterion Five. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**

The institution’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

**Core Component 5.A**
The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

**Overview**

Uncertain state revenues — caused first by declining state revenues and then by large tax cuts — have forced the University of Kansas to increasingly diversify its resource base in order to maintain the high level of excellence expected by citizens of the state and to achieve goals set forth in strategic planning documents for the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses. As with most state-funded universities, students are bearing a greater portion of the burden through increased tuition.

Likewise, research expenditures have increased significantly. KU has engaged in several critical activities to enhance and broaden its resource base to support teaching, learning, and research. Some of these activities include *Changing for Excellence*, a campus-wide initiative to identify efficiencies in administrative functions, and partnerships with private partners such as Everspring to develop high-quality online programs and Shorelight Education to increase international student enrollment, in addition to a renewed investment in enrollment management.

The successful KU Endowment, the first of its kind among public institutions, completed a capital campaign in 2004 and is in the midst of another capital campaign. The university has nearly met the established goal of $1.2 billion almost two years before the campaign’s end.

Comprehensive strategic planning and the budgeting process ensure that resources are used to achieve the university’s goals. Despite challenging economic times, KU has maintained a highly qualified faculty and staff; used its planning efforts to guide additional investment in faculty and staff resources; and made necessary advances in technology infrastructure. Campus Master Plans for the Medical Center and Lawrence prioritize and guide future investments in facilities.
Core Component 5.B
The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

Overview

As shown in Criterion 2.C, the Board of Regents is knowledgeable about KU and provides effective oversight of the institution. Shared governance has been a cherished value since the late 1960s when Chancellor Clarke Wescoe approved creation of University Senate and in the early 1970s when Chancellor Laurance Chalmers agreed that students should constitute 20 percent of the membership on policymaking committees. Shared governance is enacted through regular administrative meetings, governance bodies, and provost’s committees and task forces. On the Lawrence campus, Student Senate is particularly influential, distributing approximately $20 million in student fee revenues annually. Additionally, KU’s unique University Senate involves students, faculty, and staff in academic and other policy decisions that affect the entire university. Each campus also has a faculty senate. On the Lawrence campus, Unclassified Professional Staff and University Support Staff each have their own senates. Rapid and significant change in recent years has resulted in some concerns about the extent to which constituent input is valued. The chancellor and provost have enacted strategies to respond to these concerns.

Core Component 5.C
The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Overview

Since 2000, KU has engaged in three, inclusive comprehensive planning exercises. The most recent were initiated under Chancellor Gray-Little, Provost Vitter, and former Medical Center Executive Vice Chancellor Barbara Atkinson and resulted in Bold Aspirations, the plan for the Lawrence and Edwards campuses and the Medical Center Strategic Plan. Both comprehensive plans focus on education, research, human resources, diversity, and using the university’s resources for public impact. Strategic plans are integrated with the comprehensive campus master plans. Resource allocation decisions are tightly coupled to plans. For example, assessment of data around courses resulting in high rates of grades of D, F, and W led to investment in the MySuccess early warning system and programs such as First-Year Seminars and course redesign. New faculty positions typically align with one of the university’s strategic research initiative themes. The administration holds itself to transparency in attaining these goals by annually publishing progress.
Core Component 5.D  
The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

Overview

Since 1972, when the Office of Research and Planning was established, KU has built a rich tradition of collecting, analyzing, and using data about all aspects of its performance to improve institutional effectiveness. Databases such as the Departmental Executive Management Information System and the Academic Information Management System provided information for academic department and program decisions. More recently, the Office of Enrollment Management and units dedicated to improving student retention and graduation rates started using sophisticated data analytics tools to improve student recruitment, retention, and progression. *Bold Aspirations* and *Changing for Excellence* were informed by data and are scrupulous in collecting and reporting data about progress toward goal or project completion.

Criterion Five Summary

KU has never been flush with resources and has always done a lot with relatively little. The most recent strategic plan, *Bold Aspirations*, ensures that the entire university has defined priorities appropriate to its mission and that its limited resources will be directed to achieving those priorities. As is true for most public universities, KU has come to rely more heavily on student tuition to meet its obligation of providing the high-quality education and world-class research expected of it. Consequently, it has sought to define new sources of revenue through *Changing for Excellence*, increasing research productivity, increasing its student base through careful enrollment management, and embarking on an ambitious capital campaign. Without additional resources, KU simply could not compete with its better-resourced peers. Its staff is well-trained and remarkably stable. KU has made significant investments in its technological infrastructure. Master plans for the Lawrence and Medical Center campuses will drive investment in the physical infrastructure to ensure instructional space meets contemporary learning needs. An Office of Institutional Research and Planning was established in the 1972 with the recognition that data should inform planning and decision making. That tradition has continued to the present day. Finally, institutional effectiveness is enhanced through a comprehensive system of shared governance.

Strengths

- *Bold Aspirations* is a carefully crafted strategic plan to advance the university. The plan is publicized widely and drives decision making in all corners of the university. Central administrators are using a wide range of metrics to track progress toward the goals and provide publicly available annual updates. *Bold Aspirations* is integrated with other planning processes, such as the student affairs strategic plan, plans of the academic units, and master planning efforts on both campuses that build on the goals of *Bold Aspirations*.
- *Changing for Excellence* comprises the restructuring of 11 administrative and operations activities. Savings are being invested in the *Bold Aspirations* strategic plan. They are supporting the creation of 22 additional faculty positions (as part of 64 new positions), major new science buildings, research seed funding, student recruitment and retention, course redesign, a classification and market study, library subscriptions, and graduate student funding.
• The amount of federal research dollars generated by KU faculty and staff has increased significantly since 2003. Achieving National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center bodes well for continued increase in research dollars and the impact of research conducted.

• KU’s distinctive system of shared governance in which students, faculty, and staff come together in University Senate to formulate policies that affect the entire campus has served it well. Through Student Senate, students have considerable influence through the student fee money they allocate to various activities. As members of the Tuition Advisory Committee, students are actively involved in recommending tuition increases and how those resources will be allocated.

• The Johnson County Research Triangle tax to support investment in academic programs is a unique partnership to advance the science and technology workforce in the Kansas City metropolitan area. It has contributed to a new building on the Edwards Campus and supported additional programs at Edwards Campus and clinical trials at the Medical Center.

• KU has long used data to inform decisions. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) maintains data on a wide range of topics to support an equally wide range of decisions. The Department Executive Management System (DEMIS) was developed in the mid-1990s to provide administrators with access to data to support their decision making. Although DEMIS remains central, it is supplemented by data from external surveys such as NSSE and internally developed instruments such as the Senior Survey. OIRP has played a key role in developing the predictive models used in enrollment management and advising. Data have informed retention efforts and the key **Bold Aspirations** strategies.

**Challenges**

• Revenue remains a continuing concern. Stabilizing and growing enrollment as well as instituting efficient business practices will be important in the current economic climate.

• Faculty and staff morale in a time of rapid change is a concern. KU cannot achieve its aspirations without a high-quality and thoroughly engaged faculty and staff. Although it is easy to attribute perceptions of low morale to “change is difficult,” the reasons are likely more complex. Many initiatives have been implemented very rapidly, and some business process changes have not initially worked well, causing frustration and requiring rethinking and reimplementation. Reactions to some of the new sources of enrollment growth and revenue (e.g., Everspring, Shorelight Education) have not always been positive, in part because they were developed rapidly, without review through governance channels. There is concern over creation of Shared Service Centers. In order to ensure that faculty and staff remain committed to the institution and to the change necessary for KU to achieve its goals and objectives, constant attention must be given to understanding the current campus climate and identifying ways to respond as necessary.

• Maintaining strong shared governance will continue to be important as rapid decisions and change efforts clash with a deliberate culture of slower, more traditional methods.

**Future Directions**

• The state’s financial situation and support for higher education in general, and KU in particular, will determine KU’s planning and resource allocation strategies into the future. Given that state financial support is unlikely to increase in the near future, KU will need to continue to be entrepreneurial in a way that is consistent with its mission. In addition to public-private partnerships with Shorelight
Education and Everspring, new partnerships may help address infrastructure needs identified in the Campus Master Plan.

- The current strategic plan, *Bold Aspirations*, provides guidance for the university through 2017. Within the next few years, KU will enter a new planning phase by developing a new plan or extending and modifying the current plan.

- KU managed the effects of the federal government shutdown and sequestration on its research operation through careful planning. Use of internal funds, such as those from *Changing for Excellence*, along with leveraging federal research dollars will be key to remaining competitive.

- Serious consideration to faculty and staff salaries is necessary. KU has managed to keep up with its peers in recent years through modest increases. But as the economies in other states improve, KU may find itself once again falling behind and at the risk of losing its strongest faculty members and administrators if salary increases remain low.