

SECTION IV

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The University of Kentucky is a comprehensive university with the goal to become one of the top 20 research institutions in the United States by the year 2020. In addition to the usual academic divisions, there is a medical college and, as a land-grant institution, an agriculture college. The research emphasis is being developed while attempting to maintain undergraduate programs and to provide educational, social, and medical services to the state.

4.1 General Requirements of the Educational Program

The educational programs of the University are related to the purposes of the institution and are appropriate to its land-grant and research university mission of “preparing students for an increasingly diverse and technological world and to improving the lives of people in the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world through teaching, research, and service.” The University provides a competent, full-time faculty numbering approximately 1,900, necessary computer resources and instructional equipment, and facilities to service a full-time enrollment of approximately 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students. A new main library opened in 1998 with a \$60 million acquisitions endowment. Library collections are appropriate ranking in the second tier of public university members of the Association of Research Libraries. Enrollment and financial resources are sufficient to support effective educational programs. The institution has mechanisms in place to ensure equivalent levels of student achievement and program quality at its off-campus sites and in its distance learning offerings.

The University offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs through a combination of off-campus sites and distance learning delivery. Off-campus sites presently include Northern Kentucky University, Morehead State University, Center for Rural Health at Hazard, and Paducah Community College. Degree programs offered at these sites include the Master of Science in Library Science, Master of Science in Physical Therapy, Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies, Master

of Social Work, Master of Science in Nursing, Bachelor of Science in Engineering, and Doctor of Education Administration. Appropriate substantive change notifications were submitted to the Commission on Colleges, and visits for review of degree programs at selected off-campus sites were a part of the visiting committee's charge. From review of the self-study, documents provided during the site visit, interviews, and visits to selected sites, it is evident that the University has made significant efforts to ensure equivalent levels of program quality at its off-campus sites and in its distance learning offerings. A major emphasis has been on ensuring equivalent quality of programs and appropriate levels of student achievement.

4.2 Undergraduate Program

4.2.1 Undergraduate Admission

The Board of Trustees approved a significant change in undergraduate admission policy in 1988 from one of open admission to selective admission. The policy change was based on an assessment of the negative impacts the open admission policy had on the institution such as high attrition rates and associated dilution of instructional resources.

Responsibility for establishing ongoing admission policies within the framework of the institution's selective admission framework is delegated by the institution's Board of Trustees to the University Senate. *Governing Regulation IV-3* states that a function of the University Senate is to "determine the conditions for admission and for degrees . . . in the University System." Additional central review and initiation of admission policy refinement is well developed and provided by appointed committees including the Enrollment Management Group and the Admission Advisory Council. The Office of the Registrar and Director of Undergraduate Admission handles administration of these policies.

The University's admission policies for first-year and transfer students, including quantitative and qualitative measures, are described appropriately in the *University Bulletin* and are consistent with the educational mission of the institution. Faculty and the Director of Undergraduate Admission review applications for such qualitative indicators as leadership experience, writing ability, and special characteristics that would make them "assets to the learning community." The *Bulletin* clearly states the admissions criteria and underlines that the University's "selective and competitive admissions requirements

often exceed the minimum eligibility requirement” stated for admission, given the limited places available in the first-year class. The 1999 freshman retention rate of 80.1% and a 55.3% graduation rate for the class of 1994 suggest the University is admitting students whose interests and capabilities are consistent with current admission policies.

The University provides a TRIO program through its Office of Student Support Services to assist admitted students who may lack the full range of college-level skills, have a disability, are first-generation college students, or fall within federal low-income guidelines. Additionally, four other support programs provide assistance for students admitted with deficiencies in preparation for collegiate study.

A student opinion poll in the fall of 2000 confirms that the University’s recruitment materials appropriately portray the institution and its programs.

The transfer admission process is appropriately structured and described; transfer credit is not granted for “life experience.”

Clearly defined policies for undergraduate academic dismissal, suspension, and readmission of students are established and are published in the *University Bulletin* and the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. There is consistency in readmission decisions and academic policies.

4.2.2 Undergraduate Completion Requirements

Academic regulations are published in the *University Bulletin* and on the web in the University Senate rules. Members of the Committee were unsuccessful in locating the institutional definition of the major or area of concentration in either location. During the interview process, the appropriate administrators were unable to provide a definition of these terms. (Recommendation 5) The Committee recommends that the institution establish a definition of a major or area of concentration and publish such definition in appropriate bulletins or catalogs.

The University Studies Program (USP) contains a basic core of general education courses comprised of more than 30 semester hours. Although the institution may publish the requirements for the components of the degree program in different sections of the *University Bulletin*, members of the Committee were unable to ascertain the actual total number of credits for individual programs since the credit hours to complete the USP requirements may vary based on the background of the individual student. The difficulty of interpreting the USP requirements was cited in the self-study report and was confirmed by

interviews with faculty, administrators, and students. (Recommendation 6) The Committee recommends that the institution clearly specify in the *University Bulletin* the total number of credits for each degree program, the number and distribution of general education credits, the number of credits to be earned in the major or area of concentration, the number of electives, and other degree requirements. (Suggestion 2) The Committee suggests that the institution utilize a uniform, systematic format to specify in the *University Bulletin* and on the website the requirements for undergraduate degrees.

According to the self-study, the University Studies Program provides the basis for compliance with the criterion related to basic competency in reading, writing, oral communication, and fundamental mathematical skills. The institution has undertaken a review of the USP and the faculty members on the University Studies Committee have confirmed that they have established goals for the components of the USP. The institution is in the process of determining an effective means of assessment and presently cannot provide systematic documentation that its graduates are competent in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills and the basic use of computers across all degree programs. (Recommendation 7) The Committee recommends that the institution provide documentation demonstrating that graduates of its degree programs are competent in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic use of computers.

4.2.3 Undergraduate Curriculum

The University of Kentucky has a curriculum review process in which the faculty has an active role. The process for the approval of courses and degree programs is detailed in the University Senate rules and is published on the website. The governing board has an appropriate role in the approval of new degree programs and organizational structure. There is a program coordinator for each of the majors offered by the institution, and there is at least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials in each teaching area.

4.2.4 Undergraduate Instruction

Policies for undergraduate instruction are in accord with the purpose of the institution and are appropriate to the specific goals of an individual course. Because of the size and complexity of the institution, individual instructors primarily handle decisions regarding instructional techniques and policies. Both faculty and administrators support the University's efforts to develop a coherent assessment process that includes measurable learning outcomes included in course syllabi. The Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) provides assistance to both faculty and graduate teaching assistants in designing course strategies intended to enhance student learning.

Instruction is evaluated on a regular basis and this information is used to ensure quality instruction. Student evaluation of courses is accomplished through the University of Kentucky Teacher/Course Evaluation Questionnaire. The results of the course evaluations are considered in faculty evaluations and merit decisions. The evaluation system is being strengthened through implementation of recommendations from an ad hoc student evaluation committee that was appointed by the University Senate in 1999.

Prior to the beginning of each semester, the academic ombud distributes a memorandum reminding instructors that they must provide each student with a syllabus that includes course content, evaluation and grading criteria, and mid-term evaluation as well as policies regarding absences, office hours, academic misconduct, and class attendance.

Methods of instruction are appropriate to the goals of each course and the capabilities of the students. One indicator of the appropriateness of instruction is related to the number of programs accredited by specialized accrediting bodies. Almost every college has an accredited program and some units have several. There are selected examples of experimentation with methods to improve instruction (e.g., MathExcel) and, according to the self-study, care is taken to ensure that these efforts are evaluated before they are widely adopted.

Faculty use a variety of methods, in addition to traditional examinations, to evaluate student performance. The range of evaluation strategies reflects the comprehensive nature of the institution.

Overall effectiveness of instruction is assessed using a variety of techniques. Standardized tests are utilized in programs such as law, medicine, nursing, and dietetics; portfolio review is used in several

arts-based programs. Exit interviews, follow-up surveys of graduates, surveys of employers, and advisory boards, among other techniques, are employed in determining instructional program effectiveness. An annual, centralized assessment process based on student outcomes is being instituted, and it is anticipated that inconsistencies across academic units will be minimized.

The grading policies are published in the undergraduate catalog and there is evidence provided by faculty and students that these policies are reflected in grading practice. Student academic grievances are handled by the academic ombud.

For the most part, courses offered in nontraditional formats are designed to ensure an opportunity for preparation, reflection, and analysis concerning the subject matter and for students to have equivalent experiences to those taking courses in traditional formats.

Experiential education is central to many of the programs at UK. Care is taken to ensure that these learning experiences are under the control and supervision of the institution. The relationship with external constituencies provides a source of practical input to assure that courses reflect current practices in the field of specialization.

Program length, clock hours or credit hours, and tuition and fee charges are appropriate for the degrees and credentials.

A range of programs attests to the fact that the institution is committed to a positive learning environment. Examples of such programs include the Freshman Discovery Seminars, an honors program, foreign language residences, and experiential education. Undergraduate research and student travel are encouraged through competitive grants from the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

There are challenges that face undergraduate education at the institution, including the overall goal of becoming a top 20 institution by the year 2020 that will necessarily increase the emphasis on graduate education and research. Given the increase in undergraduate enrollment and the overall resource issues, there will continue to be difficulties in balancing the major goal of the University with maintaining a learning environment that supports scholarly and creative pursuits for undergraduate students.

4.2.5 Academic Advising of Undergraduate Students

The University currently has several different advising models that vary depending on the academic unit. Some units use faculty only to advise freshmen through seniors; others use a mixture of professional advisors and faculty. Regardless of the model used, students are assigned an advisor early in their programs of study. Advisors are effective, especially in their knowledge and accessibility. Further, there appears to be an appropriate number of students per advisor. The inclusion of professional advisors has strengthened the advising system on campus because of their accessibility and commitment to the advising function. Entering full-time and part-time students have the opportunity to participate in orientation sessions during the summer; academic units have program-specific orientations. The assessment of the effectiveness of the advising system is handled in a variety of ways, including student evaluation surveys conducted during central advising and informal feedback to department chairs that is considered in faculty evaluations and merit decisions. Students, advisors, and administrators acknowledge that there is no standard process within the University to assess advising effectiveness. (Recommendation 8) The Committee recommends that the institution develop a systematic process to assess the effectiveness of undergraduate academic advising and use the results to enhance assistance to students.

4.3 Graduate Program

4.3.1 Initiation, Operation and Expansion of Graduate Programs

The University has an established process for the initiation of new degree programs, and there is evidence the process is appropriately followed. The Graduate Council minutes reflect careful consideration of new degree programs as well as other areas of responsibility assigned to the Graduate School.

4.3.2 Graduate Admission

The graduate admission process is well outlined and includes both qualitative and quantitative requirements. Students are informed of the requirements via the graduate bulletin in both print and web-based formats.

Specific rules for transfer of graduate credit are published in the graduate bulletin. Only graduate credit from an accredited institution is accepted toward graduate degrees. Transfer credits are recommended by the academic area Graduate Studies Program Director and approved by the Graduate School. Credit is not awarded for prior experiential learning.

The Graduate School does not vary admission requirements for different levels of graduate work, although some individual degree programs do have differentiated requirements. Conditional or provisional requirements are published and are time limited.

Faculty within the unit establish any criteria for admission beyond those established by the Graduate School. These criteria are to be reported to the Graduate School and published in the appropriate section of the catalog. There is evidence that this policy is not followed consistently. (Suggestion 3) The Committee suggests that the

Graduate School ensure that published materials include all special admissions requirements for individual graduate programs.

4.3.3 Graduate Completion Requirements

Recommendation IV-5 in the institutional self-study report is as follows: “The Graduate School must find a uniform way of informing students of additional (e.g., certification) program requirements that are not listed in the graduate catalog, due to the time lag in publishing, or that do not appear on its website.” In response to this recommendation, the graduate bulletin on the website was declared to be the “official” *Graduate School Bulletin*. Information on this website is “updated quarterly and includes all program requirements that have been approved by the faculty of the program. A printed *Bulletin* is published every two years for archival purposes, but the Web Bulletin provides a uniform and official documentation of current program requirements.”

To avoid possible misunderstanding of degree requirements, newly accepted students should be informed, perhaps via the letter of acceptance, that they should check the website for any recent changes in degree requirements. Current students should be kept abreast of such changes via their advisor and/or the web publication. (Suggestion 4) The Committee suggests that the institution devise a means of informing all continuing and newly matriculated graduate students about any recent changes in degree requirements.

It does not appear that every course is applicable as a requirement or an elective to a degree or certificate program. (Recommendation 9) The Committee recommends that the institution include in the approval process for any graduate course a clear indication of the course’s candidacy as a requirement or an elective for at least one graduate degree or certificate program. The absence of such should be clearly indicated on the transcript.

4.3.4 Graduate Curriculum

Recommendation IV-8 of the institutional self-study deals with the need to establish policies to ensure appropriate differentiation of requirements in courses enrolling both undergraduate and graduate

students. A proposed policy in response to this recommendation is scheduled for consideration in an upcoming meeting of the graduate faculty: “This differential is to be accomplished by (i) the completion of additional or distinct assignments by the enrolled graduate students that are consistent with graduate-level scholarship and/or (ii) the establishment of different grading criteria in the course for graduate versus undergraduate students, reflecting a higher standard for graduate students.” The Committee agrees that the first part (i) of this rule is appropriate; however, part (ii) does not appear to be an appropriate means of distinguishing graduate work from that of undergraduate work. (Recommendation 10) The Committee recommends that in courses offering combined instruction of graduate and undergraduate students the course requirements be properly structured to ensure appropriate attention to and expectations for both groups.

4.3.5 Graduate Instruction

Among a number of graduate coordinators and graduate students, there is confusion about the meaning of the C letter grade issued to graduate students. According to the *Graduate School Bulletin*, the letter grade C is the “minimum passing grade.” The *Bulletin* further provides that an “overall GPA of B (3.0)” must be maintained throughout a program of study. Courses may be repeated with the second grade only counted in the GPA, permitting a student receiving a grade of C to improve his or her grade average. Scholastic probation is warranted after twelve semester hours with a GPA less than 3.0. Termination follows (among other conditions) three semesters with a GPA less than 3.0

Grading practice in graduate programs seems to differ from published policies. Some programs terminate after the first grade of C is received; others terminate after the second C is received. In other programs, the graduate student is issued a formal warning after receiving the first C. (Recommendation 11) The Committee recommends that the institution ensure that each graduate program complies with the Graduate School’s grading, probation, and termination policies.

4.3.6 Academic Advising of Graduate Students

The University self-study report (Volume 2, page 63) states that 32 of 47 directors of graduate studies responding to a survey indicate that orientation is offered to all first-time graduate students. In the self-study addendum, the Graduate School reports that by

the spring of 2002 a graduate student orientation entry is to be added to its web page and that all programs are to ensure effective “advising and orientation for new students at the program level.”

Interviews with graduate students, both part-time and full-time, indicate that orientation is not made available to all students. Graduate students in distance education and in a number of on-campus programs appear to receive excellent orientations. Some programs provide orientation on research responsibilities of graduate students without addressing other academic matters; still others appear to provide no formal orientation. (Recommendation 12) The Committee recommends that the institution ensure that each graduate program provides adequate academic orientation for its students. (Recommendation 13) The Committee recommends that graduate orientation and advising programs be evaluated regularly and be reviewed at the program and institutional levels to enhance effective assistance to students.

4.4 Publications

A wide variety of official publications produced by the University of Kentucky as well as the institution’s website were reviewed by the Committee. Publications reviewed included *University Bulletin 2001-2002*; *University of Kentucky Schedule of Classes, Spring 2002*; the *Graduate School Bulletin, 2000-2002*; *Fact Booklet 2001-2002*; and several annual review documents for the various colleges.

The Committee obtained and analyzed information from the Registrar’s Office and the Graduate School regarding the policies, processes, and procedures used to ensure availability to students and the public of accurate and current publications regarding entrance requirements and procedures; admission criteria and policies, including admission of transfer studies; rules of conduct; academic calendar; degree completion requirements; full-time faculty and degrees held; costs and financial obligations; refund policies; and other items relative to attendance and withdrawal. The Committee found that these documents varied with regard to accuracy, consistency, and adherence to the

principles of good educational practice. (Suggestion 5) The Committee suggests that the University assign to the Office of Publications oversight responsibility for accuracy and consistency of publications.

The Committee found the University's website home page difficult to comprehend and navigate. Some print was small and difficult to read. A web coordinator, when asked to demonstrate ease of access from the University home page to other links, experienced some difficulty. Information on the website appeared to be inconsistent in some cases.

Since the *Graduate School Bulletin* is published in hard copy every two years, the website version is considered to be the official Graduate School bulletin. It is updated quarterly and includes all program requirements that have been approved by the faculty. Thus, the website provides current and official documentation of program requirements and other critical information for students and the public. (Recommendation 14) The Committee recommends that the institution take all necessary steps to make available to students accurate, current catalogs, websites, and other official publications containing required information.

4.5 Distance Learning Programs

Specific goals have been formulated for the programs offered through the Office of Distance Learning Programs. However, four programs are not offered through this office, and the distance learning representative does not evaluate the goals. The distance learning office evaluates all programs/courses offered and makes improvements based on data collected from these evaluations.

Ten suggestions within Section 4.5 of the self-study were made by the Distance Learning Technology Center, and progress is being made in addressing identified needs. The Committee encourages further progress in these areas, which should result in the institution's ability to enhance the development, support, and prioritization of its distance learning program and course offerings.

4.6 Continuing Education, Outreach and Service Programs

The University of Kentucky has a long and distinguished history in continuing education, outreach, and service programs available to the residents of Kentucky and elsewhere. The new administration continues that tradition and is adding new initiatives.

The University has demonstrated its willingness to participate in a forthright assessment of its strengths and challenges in continuing education and to address several suggestions identified in the self-study process. The suggestions are comprehensive and represent a commitment to strengthen structural, programmatic, and operational components of continuing education, outreach, and service. The Committee encourages the University to take appropriate steps to implement suggestions as outlined in the self-study.

4.7 Student Records

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for maintaining and storing student records for all credit and non-credit courses. In accord with University policy, the Registrar defines what constitutes the permanent record of each student. A state-mandated schedule is followed for records retention and disposal.

The Committee obtained information from the Registrar's office indicating that since 1988, student records, excluding continuing education (CE) courses, have been maintained on-line in the computer-based Student Information System (SIS). In June 2001, arrangements were made to add CE credit and non-credit courses to SIS for inclusion in centralized transcripts. Hard copies of off-line (prior to 1988) student records are stored in a secure area at the Taylor Education Building, and microfilm copies are stored in another building. However, documentation was not available to indicate whether or not CE off-line records are kept in a secure vault or fireproof cabinet. Thus, issues remain regarding these records. (Recommendation 15) The Committee recommends that the institution take all steps necessary to ensure the security of all off-line student records, including continuing education, non-credit course records that

existed prior to June 2001 and that are not centralized and some of which are not stored in a secure vault or fireproof cabinets.

The SIS has been refined and updated periodically since 1988. Electronic records are backed up daily on tape and securely stored in a moisture proof and fireproof vault in the King Library. Access to SIS records is limited to faculty and staff and is secured by user identification codes and passwords. Faculty and staff access to SIS is limited to essential data only. Electronic records are stored off campus. A disaster recovery plan exists for on-line records.

Rules of the University Senate define the official use of student records by authorized University personnel without student consent. Information release policies (including confidentiality, student right of privacy, access, and the protocol for a student challenge to the accuracy of records) are published in the *University Bulletin* and *Schedule of Classes*

4.8 Faculty

Characteristic of large research institutions, the University of Kentucky experiences difficulty in classifying those employees identified as “faculty.” Notwithstanding this nomenclature problem, the institution has fixed its 2000-2001 count of faculty at 1,889, exclusive of hospital and auxiliary personnel (17.6% of its total workforce). The faculty is distributed evenly in thirds across the three professorial ranks with four percent clustered at the instructor or lecturer rank. Most (94%) reportedly hold terminal degrees in their discipline. These data are self-reported by faculty members and may not be accurate.

Faculty members classified as “instructional” numbered 1,231 in 2000-2001, approximately the same number as was reported in 1992. Faculty numbers as well as salaries have not kept pace with benchmark institutions. These factors have had

predictable consequences in light of increased expectations of degree and research productivity, new curricula, distance learning, and public and academic services. The institution has experienced difficulty in retaining its more productive faculty. Successful retention of productive faculty has necessitated reallocation of resources. Departure or retirement of faculty in Arts and Sciences opens positions that may not be filled for one year in order that the College may recapture lapsed salaries. To enhance research productivity of untenured faculty, relief from teaching responsibilities is offered. As a consequence of these factors, the institution has employed large numbers of part-time faculty and teaching assistants. Thus, the educational experiences of its students, primarily its undergraduates, have been impacted by instructional turnovers. The following sections address these concerns and other aspects of the educational programs.

4.8.1 Selection of Faculty

The 1992 SACS accreditation review determined that the institution lacked “a clearly defined and documented process for selecting faculty.” The University responded by revising its administrative regulations to include a “Statement for Recruitment and Selection of Faculty” that became effective in 1994. The seven procedural steps for faculty recruitment therein specified are applicable to “each educational unit of the University....” The University’s governing regulations, effective in 2001, stipulate that all appointments “shall be made strictly on the basis of merit” and disclaims discriminatory practices. (Suggestion 6) The Committee suggests that the institution adhere to its published commitment to merit selection of faculty without respect to gender or race. (Suggestion 7) The Committee suggests that the references to faculty selection currently found in the administrative regulations be consolidated to facilitate accessibility.

A governing regulation effective in 1998 requires that unit chairs consult on all appointments with the tenured members of the unit and with all full-time, non-tenured faculty at or above the rank of assistant professor employed for two years. Once the unit

has selected its candidate for appointment, a rather involved intra-University screening process becomes operative as presented in a flow chart in the administrative regulations

Candidates selected, as well as all other appointed faculty and teaching assistants, must evidence proficiency in the English language. This competency is achieved with a TOFEL score of 550 and an oral presentation to the unit faculty. In the case of teaching assistants, a Teaching and Learning Center committee grades the oral English proficiency of international students, and the Graduate School awards are contingent on demonstrations of language proficiency.

4.8.2 Academic and Professional Preparation

4.8.2.1 Associate

Not Applicable

4.8.2.2 Baccalaureate

Committee members checked faculty files in the College of Agriculture, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Human Environmental Sciences, the School of Journalism and Telecommunications, the College of Fine Arts, the College of Architecture, the College of Education, and the College of Social Work. Files and credentials were sufficient in these units with the exception of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Journalism and Telecommunications. Problems noted below may exist in other units as well.

The Committee was unable to determine in all situations whether or not faculty teaching credit courses leading to the baccalaureate degree had appropriate credentials. Many SACS credential information forms showed neither the name of the discipline in which the degrees were obtained nor, if the master's degree was obtained in a subject not in the teaching discipline, whether 18 graduate semester hours had been obtained in the teaching discipline.

In some instances, justification for noncompliance with the formal credentials requirement was lacking or failed to afford evidence of "outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline." (Recommendation 16) The Committee recommends that the institution take all necessary steps to ensure that faculty members teaching at the baccalaureate level hold a master's degree with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline or hold a master's degree in the teaching discipline or provide justification on an individual basis of outstanding professional experience and continuing contributions to the teaching discipline in lieu of formal academic preparation.

The Committee was unable to determine whether some faculty who teach in interdisciplinary programs have appropriate credentials to teach in the area. (Recommendation 17) The Committee recommends that the institution maintain appropriate documentation and justification of the academic and professional preparation of faculty members teaching in interdisciplinary courses and programs.

In a number of instances, the files for full-time and part-time faculty were incomplete and did not fully document academic preparation or professional work experience. The 1992 SACS reaffirmation committee noted this deficiency. In hindsight, the 1992 committee's recommendation was not stated as clearly as it might have been and as a result, the institution decided to collect complete files only for those faculty appointed after July 1, 1992, rather than from all of those actually then employed as well as those subsequently appointed. Thus, in the School of Journalism and Telecommunications, the files lacked official transcripts for nine of 43 full- and part-time faculty who were appointed both prior to and after July 1, 1992.

The institution on January 17, 2002, revised its policy to read: "The Standard Personnel File contains the Notice of Academic Appointment and Assignment, curriculum vitae, and transcripts of academic work leading to advanced degrees." (Recommendation 18) The Committee recommends that the institution maintain for each full-time and part-time faculty member evidence of academic preparation such as official transcripts and, if appropriate, evidence of competence, professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, certification and other qualifications which serve to support the outstanding professional experience as a substitute for formal academic preparation.

4.8.2.3 Graduate

The Committee found the graduate faculty to be generally highly qualified in teaching and research notwithstanding the institution's financial constraints. (Recommendation 19) The Committee recommends that the institution seek the resources necessary to attract and retain qualified faculty in order to continue to provide high quality graduate programs and to progress toward its goal as a top 20 research institution.

Eligibility for graduate faculty status is clearly outlined in the *Graduate Bulletin*. However, the process has been revised effective December 11, 2001, and therefore needs to be widely distributed to the faculty. (Suggestion 8) The Committee suggests that a complete and updated description of the process and criteria used for appointment of graduate faculty be publicized and widely disseminated to all faculty.

Documents provided to the site visit team indicated that the majority of faculty hold degrees in an appropriate discipline in which they are currently teaching. The data provided did not make it clear that the faculty teaching doctoral level courses hold a terminal degree. (Recommendation 20) The Committee recommends that the institution document that faculty teaching courses at the doctoral degree level hold the earned doctorate in the teaching discipline or in a related discipline or provide justification, on an individual basis, of evidence of competence or academic credentials other than the doctorate in the discipline.

4.8.2.4 Distance Learning Programs/Activities

Faculty teaching in distance learning programs are regular members of the University faculty and meet all criteria related to faculty. In addition, the University provides distance learning students with structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty. Typically, students meet with advisors at their respective locations and/or communicate with faculty via phone, fax, or e-mail.

4.8.3 Part-Time Faculty

The institution's self-study report, in addition to other documents, identified a full-time faculty count of 1,889 (in AY 2000-01) with "instructional faculty" accounting for 1,231 (65.2%) of those positions. UK employed 440 part-time/temporary faculty members in AY 2000-01. The Committee identified some concern at an over-dependence on part-time faculty members at selected levels of academic program delivery and in certain colleges. Reliance on individuals other than full-time faculty appears especially acute when the proportion of sections delivered by part-time instructors and teaching assistants is combined. The availability of an adequate number of full-time faculty to teach continues to represent a major dilemma as the University seeks to enhance faculty research productivity and seeks to meet the demand of enrollment growth without adding additional full-time faculty resources. (Recommendation 21) The Committee recommends that the institution take all steps necessary to ensure an adequate number of full-time faculty to avoid an over-dependence on part-time instructors in the delivery of academic programs. (Suggestion 9) The Committee suggests that the University develop a consistent definition of part-time

faculty to provide clarification of temporary and joint appointments and faculty with assigned overloads.

A review of part-time faculty credentials revealed that they meet the same requirements for professional, experiential and scholarly preparation as their full-time counterparts teaching in the same disciplines.

While opportunities are provided for appropriate orientation, supervision and evaluation of part-time faculty members, such practice appears to be uneven across the colleges. (Suggestion 10) The Committee suggests that the institution develop and implement policies and procedures for required orientation, supervision, and evaluation, of all part-time faculty members.

4.8.4 Graduate Teaching Assistants

The Committee identified an over-dependence on graduate teaching assistants at selected levels of academic program delivery and in certain colleges. The percentage of lower division sections taught by graduate teaching assistants in the fall of 2000 amounted to 44% in Arts and Sciences; 52% in Business and Economics; 35% in Communications and Information Studies; and 38% in Education. At the same time, the Committee recognized the need to provide appropriate graduate teaching assistantship opportunities for pre-professionals and to support graduate programs at the University.

The availability of an adequate number of full-time faculty to teach will continue to represent a major dilemma as the University seeks to enhance faculty research productivity and to meet the demand of enrollment growth without adding additional full-time faculty resources. (Recommendation 22) The Committee recommends that the institution take all steps necessary to ensure the number of graduate teaching assistants is properly limited in order to avoid a continuing heavy dependence on graduate teaching assistants in the delivery of academic programs.

Following careful review of the schedule of classes, selected rosters, and personnel files across campus, the Committee determined that the University does not meet the criterion that all graduate teaching assistants at the institution must have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline. Among the programs identified as not meeting this criterion are English and Spanish in the College of Arts and Sciences. (Recommendation 23) The Committee recommends that the institution take all steps

necessary to ensure that all graduate teaching assistants who have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit and/or for assigning final grades for such a course, and whose professional and scholarly preparation does not satisfy the provisions of Section 4.8.2 of the *Criteria for Accreditation*, have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training, and be evaluated regularly.

4.8.5 Faculty Compensation

According to an AAUP study, the nine-month median faculty salary at UK is \$9,000 lower than at peer institutions. Two years of data show a widening gap between peer schools and UK. There is an additional burden this year of out-of-pocket expenses for health insurance that essentially offset the merit raises. A University committee, however, has been appointed to address the health insurance issue.

The average salary for females on nine- and twelve-month appointments is approximately \$10,000 lower than for their male counterparts. The disparity is observed at the professor and the assistant professor ranks but not at the associate professor rank. It is the Committee's understanding that a commission on women has been studying gender issues and is expected to devote some attention to the gender-related salary disparity issue.

There appears to be significant salary compression due to the need to provide market salaries for newly recruited faculty, whether at an advanced rank (professor) or at the assistant professor rank. Considerable resources are required to correct such salary compression. (Suggestion 11) The Committee suggests that the University develop and implement a plan for the infusion of new resources in order to provide compensation for faculty consistent with the University's aspirations.

4.8.6 Academic Freedom and Professional Security

The University has adopted and made available to all faculty members a statement of the principles of academic freedom as established by the institution, ensuring freedom in teaching, research, and publication.

The University provides through various documents available to the faculty expectations of proper professional, ethical, and collegial conduct.

There is some concern that review committees for promotion and tenure at times make judgments on productivity that are counter to the documented job description/effort report established for the faculty member. All institutional policies regarding employment are published and distributed to the faculty. The policies and procedures for promotion, for awarding tenure, for providing adequate notice of nonrenewal of a probationary appointment, and for termination of appointments, including those for cause, are clearly set forth in the faculty handbook and administrative regulations. (Suggestion 12) The Committee suggests that care be taken in the process of reviewing the productivity of the Special Title Series faculty to ensure that such reviews are consistent with the documented effort assigned to these faculty.

4.8.7 Professional Growth

The University provides a number of professional growth opportunities for its faculty. For example, faculty are encouraged to “become members and to participate in meetings of national, international, regional and state organizations and associations in their own fields” (*Faculty Handbook*). The University also provides to faculty in-service training on technology, teaching, and research issues as well as personal enrichment programs. Educational leaves are available for faculty to pursue advanced degrees, and scholarly fellowship leaves permit faculty “to pursue a program of research”. A summer fellowship program for junior faculty funds released time for scholarly activity. The Vice President for Research distributes seed money for faculty to implement promising research initiatives that bear the prospect of attracting extramural funding. Sabbaticals and other special leaves for faculty development are available and utilized in all colleges.

4.8.8 The Role of the Faculty and Its Committees

The responsibility for the quality of the educational programs resides with the faculty. The institution's governing regulations describe the composition of the faculty senate and procedures for the conduct of its functions. The University Senate rules specify that the Senate determines the broad academic policies of the University, approves all new academic programs, makes recommendations to the President on the establishment, alteration, and abolition of educational units in the University, adopts policies for the institutional calendar, determines the conditions for admission and for degrees other than honorary, and recommends to the President candidates for degrees.

Other important faculty bodies include academic area committees, the Graduate Council, the Continuing Education Committee, and the ad hoc Committee on Student Evaluation of Teaching. The governing regulations delineate the responsibilities of colleges and departments in establishing rules and committees necessary for conducting academic and administrative processes. Though not standardized, each college has committees that address the curriculum, student promotion, faculty promotion and tenure, and planning.

Ample evidence was found that development of the institution's strategic plan was the product of broad-based faculty involvement as was its implementation and the assessment of outcomes.

4.8.9 Faculty Loads

Faculty loads are assigned through the "Distribution of Effort" form whereby the faculty member, in consultation with the department chair or unit director, negotiates the percentage of effort in teaching, research, and service for the upcoming year. This planning process is formalized in a document filed in the appropriate dean's office and is used as part of the performance review at the close of the academic year.

In order to protect faculty members from assuming external responsibilities that may compromise assigned duties, a policy on consulting and overload is provided. In addition, the effort distribution process

protects the faculty member from capricious assignment of duties beyond that negotiated during the planning period.

As noted in the self-study document, many references are made to the *Faculty Handbook* as being a source of policies and procedures information; however, a review of the handbook found it lacking as a reference document. The Committee agrees with the suggestion in the self-study that the *Faculty Handbook* be revised so as to describe clearly all policies and procedures pertaining to faculty appointment and promotion. Creating an electronic version of the handbook would be consistent with this suggestion.

4.8.10 Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation

Faculty members are evaluated regularly according to the policy governing faculty performance review. Non-tenured faculty are reviewed annually; tenured faculty members are reviewed biannually.

Completion and timing of the distribution of effort and the annual review process are burdensome for faculty and administrators. The annual/biannual review occurs at the end of a calendar year while the distribution of effort is based on an academic year. Perhaps a coordination of these two important processes is warranted.

Appointment, tenure, and promotion criteria are described in the administrative regulations document and are posted on the institutional website. Interviews provided evidence that faculty are aware of the criteria and understand the policy.

4.9 Consortial Relationships and Contractual Agreements

A number of cooperative and joint degree programs are offered with other Commonwealth universities. Examples of areas in which degrees were awarded recently include geology, biology, musicology, physics, and rehabilitation sciences. The diploma carries the names of both institutions.

The approval process is full and complete for faculty and students. The faculty are on the graduate faculty at UK and the regional university.

There is one joint doctoral degree program with the University of Louisville whereby a student can obtain a Ph.D. in Social Work. A joint admissions process admits ten students per year for each site.

Faculty – student interaction occurs with distance learning technology.