

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The Self-Study has been valuable. The faculty, students, staff, and administrators all have been part of a process designed to examine the state of the University. We found our organization to be strong and vibrant and the people eager to meet the challenges of the future. The Self-Study identified recommendations for continued improvement. The more urgent issues are summarized here.

ADMINISTRATION

The current division of the University into sectors has its advantages and disadvantages. While the structure is important to the effectiveness of any organization, it is the people who make the University what it is and what it will become.

All employees must be encouraged to improve their skills and learn how to maximize their performance in their areas of responsibility.

Central to any organizational structure must be effective communication. The University must seek to improve communication at all levels within the institution.

The University exists to educate students, to push outward the boundaries of knowledge, and to apply this knowledge to serve the people and the government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the nation. Scholarly work of the faculty is the essence of the University, and the sole purpose of any administrative structure is to support academic work.

Continued progress in supporting the faculty by the acquisition and maintenance of physical facilities, the acquisition of required financial resources, and the employment and training of the necessary support staff must be primary goals. Any organizational structure adopted must be sensitive to the employees of the University and to the needs of the people of the Commonwealth, and be flexible to the dynamic conditions of our society.

The University should implement a comprehensive study of the current organizational structure. As a key element this study should include the services of an external consultant knowledgeable about the organization and structure of academic enterprises and available to a study committee jointly appointed by the Administration and the University Senate.

The Administration should address the perception by the faculty that faculty do not have appropriate input into the

budget process and the distribution of resources within their departments, colleges and University.

The University should develop a model for space utilization, which deals not only with accountability but also with reevaluation and reallocation among units and within units. This also should apply to the inventory and utilization of space for instructional use.

A jointly appointed Administration/Senate committee should develop a set of written policies which clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Athletics Board. This committee should explore procedures for faculty involvement in selection of Athletics Board members. A representative of the Board should report to the University Senate annually on NCAA certification, graduate rates of athletes, and other pertinent information.

Continued effort should be made to utilize the community spirit developed by the athletic programs of the University. This fund-raising potential should be integrated into all aspects of development activity.

Careful analysis of financing for the University-level and college-based development activities should be undertaken with the objective of better coordination of these functions. The structure and function of these development and public relations activities should be studied to clarify priorities, finances, and reporting relationships. In addition, a comprehensive statewide assessment of the various facets of the programs should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the activities.

Better coordination of alumni activities is required, and a central data base to serve both the University Alumni Association and the individual college-based alumni associations is needed.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Undergraduate education means different things to different people, but the underlying theme is that it represents a place and an experience where learning and learning skills can be improved. As part of this process, all participants—teachers and students—change their views of themselves and the world.

The University has a unique opportunity to serve the people of the Commonwealth through the integration of the Community College system and the Lexington Campus.

To enhance the natural progression of students moving from the community college program to a program on the University Campus in Lexington, considerable thought must be given to all aspects of the process so that courses taken and time spent at the community college are applicable to University Campus programs.

Great improvements have been made in the quality and diversity of students being recruited to the University.

This effort must continue with greater emphasis in the future increasing the minority component of the student population. The student record-keeping system has provided a dimension never realized before, and with this in place, the University should focus on becoming more efficient in all aspects of its mission through the creation and proper staffing of an office for institutional research.

The instructional mission of the University can be improved if courses offered in the University Studies Program are staffed by senior faculty members instead of being taught largely by part-time instructors and graduate students. The whole area of part-time instruction must be studied with an eye toward correcting the present inequities experienced by the part-time teachers, and examining the philosophical grounds for how and when part-time teachers should be used.

Student advising at the University is fragmented, and a central advising system is needed to integrate all aspects of student advising. This service will range from preenrollment advising through academic program advising and include career counseling.

The physical environment is important to learning, and the University must continue to provide attractive, functional classrooms and informal areas where students can meet and expand the learning process with peers. Many departments have student lounges where this works, and the University is encouraged to continue this practice and to provide for it where it does not now occur.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

The graduate program at the University is healthy and experiencing modest growth. Because graduate education is an extremely expensive process, special attention to resource allocation must be maintained to continue to improve the program in the future.

Specific attention must be given to graduate student stipends so that they remain competitive and are extended to minorities

and to low-income students concentrated in some parts of the Commonwealth.

While the concept of an extended-campus is important for providing graduate education to all sectors of the Commonwealth, the development of these programs must not come at the expense of existing campus programs and students.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The professional colleges of the University are accredited by other bodies, but selected aspects of their educational programs have been analyzed in this study.

A major Medical Center initiative should be planned and implemented to promote active, problem-based learning in the Medical Center colleges.

The potential for collaborative activities of the College of Law with other professional colleges should be explored. Linkages developed would relate to general issues for professional education.

Faculty development to prepare for using new instructional methods should receive high priority.

A financial resources plan for professional education should be developed and implemented to strengthen the resource base to support instruction and to help coordinate new possibilities for such support.

Indirect-cost policies should be modified to provide extramural funds for educational projects and to ensure that such funds are used to support the instructional mission.

Incentives for educational scholarships should be provided.

Increased emphasis should be given to development of educational partnerships with the private sector.

Any new buildings proposed for the Medical Center and the College of Law should address the small-group classrooms and the informal space needs of students. Master planning should incorporate routine provisions and guidelines to improve and expand current space.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing education programs at institutions such as the University of Kentucky reflect both a commitment to the ideals of the land grant university and a response to contemporary demands that universities accommodate the educational needs of a rapidly changing society. The University's continuing education effort has been uncoordinated for some time, and only recently, with the establishment of the University Continuing Education Council, has an attempt been made to address this problem. This Council has representatives from all sectors of the campus, including both credit and noncredit programs.

The Council should be formally adopted so that it carries the authority of the Central Administration. If the Continuing Education Council is not formalized at the Central Administration level, then another mechanism is needed to coordinate system-wide needs of the University.

The continuing education activity has been extremely successful and demonstrates how the University community can address important needs of society without the full support of the institution.

Many problems that face the various programs on the campus could be removed simply by recognizing the importance of these programs and legitimizing the activities of faculty and staff that perform these educational services.

The next revolution in continuing education is distance education and telecommunications delivery systems.

The University must continue to enhance distance learning opportunities and approach this new wave in education in a coordinated manner.

Special attention will be needed to merge the needs of credit and noncredit continuing education programs and the growing use for extended-campus programs to maximize the delivery of information.

Continuing education programs will continue to grow to meet the ever-changing demands of society, and the University must be sensitive to these needs.

STUDENTS

Providing the proper learning atmosphere for large numbers of students is a challenge to human creativity and perseverance. The administrative structure and the associated management of this part of the University appears to be fragmented, both structurally and physically. This adds to the many frustrations experienced by students as they pursue their respective educational goals.

Serious thought must be given to the better coordination of all student-related activities.

Planning in the future should give consideration to consolidating in a single location student services such as undergraduate and graduate admissions, the Registrar's Office, Student Financial Aid, Residential Life and Housing, the Dean of Students Office, Counseling and Testing, Handicapped Student Services, Career Planning and Placement, and Minority Learning and Recruitment.

Academic advising, counseling, and career development are also uncoordinated, and the linkage between faculty advisors and professional advising ranges from fragmented to nonexistent.

This problem is so critical to the educational process that a task force should be established at the highest level to explore how the various elements of advising, including faculty and professional advising, and the advising done by special units designed to counsel students, can be coordinated.

Continued effort must be exerted to renew the concept of the university as a community for learning. The University should consider an annual conference to explore topics, concerned with improving the concept of learning in all sectors of our society. Students, faculty, University administrators, and business leaders need to meet to exchange ideas on this vital topic.

FACULTY

The faculty of the University must fulfill the tripartite mission of instruction, scholarship and service in a creative and energetic manner that stimulates students, adds to the storehouse of knowledge, and serves the University and the Commonwealth.

To accomplish this mission, senior faculty losses must be balanced by appropriate replacements to ensure that individual departments retain the critical mass necessary to offer quality graduate and undergraduate programs.

Support and expansion should continue for all programs that assist faculty members in improvement of their teaching skills.

Disparities in faculty loads as reported on the Distribution of Effort form within and among colleges must be addressed so that there is equal opportunity for professional development in all units.

Faculty concerns relative to promotion and tenure procedures, recruitment of faculty, evaluation of academic and nonacademic administrators, and curricular planning carried out within the units must be recognized and a mechanism developed to insure that stated policies are equitably discharged.

RESEARCH

The University has made great strides in the last decade as a research university. Recognition as a Research University I by the Carnegie Foundation is one of many indicators that the University is improving as a research institution. The expansion of multidisciplinary centers and institutes is an indication that the faculty and research staff are responding creatively to the increasing complexity of knowledge. In order to maintain this momentum in the future, the University must continue to improve all aspects of the research process.

The establishment of the position of Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies (VP-RGS) and the associated Vice Chancellor positions indicates the level of commitment required to maintain momentum. However, the meshing of these administrative positions and the related areas of authority and responsibility must be monitored closely. Clearly the VP-RGS should continue to be the strong advocate for research throughout the institution, in both traditional departments and in the research centers and institutes.

A better salary structure is needed for full-time, nonfaculty researchers, and a more equitable situation for graduate students would be to classify all assistantships as graduate assistantships rather than divide them into teaching and research assistantships, with the tuition scholarship extended to all assistantships.

To provide a more adequate funding base for graduate assistantships, the University should request line-item funding for research assistantships and initiate a high-profile capital campaign to support endowed chairs and graduate and postdoctoral fellowships.

Research equipment has a short life-span and a replacement policy taking into account both state and external funds must be established with an adequate maintenance program to insure maximum utilization. Other research support services must continue to improve if the overall research function of the University is to grow stronger.

PUBLIC SERVICE

The University of Kentucky is a land grant university charged with the tripartite missions of instruction, research, and service for the citizens of the Commonwealth. At the heart of the service mission is public service, those activities which bring effective teaching and research to bear on the resolution of contemporary state problems and key issues.

Because there is some confusion about what constitutes public service within the service mission, the University must develop and implement a clear and unequivocal public service policy across all units, and provide administrative leadership to implement that policy. This policy would be better accepted by all University employees if an appropriate recognition policy could be established that would be related to merit, salary, promotion, and tenure decisions. In order to serve the public, increased public input should be sought relative to the overall service mission.

LIBRARIES

The University Libraries are an important part of the University's mission. Over the last decade, they have experienced the impact of the knowledge explosion and are faced with increasing space problems and increased costs. These problems, coupled with restricted funds, have caused a reduction in the University Libraries' composite ranking among the research libraries of the nation and an associated drop from sixth to ninth place among the eleven benchmark institutions.

The future looks brighter because the University has begun planning for the expansion of library space with the erection of a new building while retaining the current facility. In addition, several steps have been taken to create a book endowment fund, which has received significant contributions from private and public sources. Even with its current problems, the library system has been able to cope through increased automation and a dedicated staff.

To keep this program developing during the transition years, better compensation is required for the library staff. An increase in staffing levels is also needed.

COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Significant progress has been made in the computing environment at the University in the past decade. The main concern for the future is that the promise of this progress be realized and that direction and momentum be sustained.

To maintain momentum, input from the academic community via an empowered and informed advisory committee, including the Director for Academic Computing, is essential

for the promotion, implementation, and strategic planning of computing services.

The computing network must be maintained across campus for the provision and seamless integration of various types of electronic mail and administrative functions. Increased access to the network must be provided from offices, dormitories, and off-site locations at reasonable cost.

STAFF

There are approximately five nonfaculty employees for every faculty member at the University. The importance of this segment of the University population cannot be overestimated, and the management procedures required to recruit, maintain, and reward a highly skilled work force must be sensitive to their creative potential. The University should provide a working environment that allows the staff to contribute to the decision-making processes.

While 75 percent of the staff who responded to the Self-Study survey expressed satisfaction with their working environment, 25 percent were not satisfied.

If the University is to continue toward excellence, it must address the concerns of dissatisfied employees.

The University has not completely addressed the problems of women and minorities, and a continued effort must be made to provide an equitable work place for all categories of employees. We have made some progress, but special reports, plus the Self-Study, indicate there is more to be done. A university should be a model of understanding, collegiality, and equity for the larger society. Steps should be taken to remove all vestiges of sexism or racism in order to create a hospitable and friendly working environment which respects all persons.

New and creative mechanisms for communicating the essence of management philosophy and policy to the staff as required. At the same time, staff response to the philosophy and policies must make it back to the originating managers.

The key to a creative and productive work force is the opportunity for the continued intellectual growth of all employees; a university setting should be particularly conducive to this.

Greater encouragement of staff to participate in the academic educational programs offered by the University should be made, and support for nonacademic programs should be a part of each employee's annual educational program.

A currently cumbersome set of personnel policies and procedures for nonfaculty staff inhibits not only the personal growth of employees but also is detrimental to the effective management of research and educational programs.

A thorough re-evaluation of the administrative structure is required, and appropriate changes should be made to correct this critical problem.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

In an institution of the size and complexity of the University of Kentucky, continued self-assessment and planning are required if the mission is to be fulfilled. Planning has always been an important part of the leadership process, but the formalized approach to measuring effectiveness is new and, as a result, the majority of the faculty and staff are unfamiliar with the process.

In the future, all administrators will have to communicate better to the faculty, staff, and students the nature, purpose, and results of the strategic planning and the measurement of effectiveness processes. This can be achieved through the active involvement of all members of the University community in goal setting, strategy development, and outcomes assessment. This can be achieved only through strong leadership and organizational support for all units in their planning and assessment activities.

To assist in the future management of strategic planning and measuring institutional effectiveness, a centralized office for institutional research should be established to coordinate system-wide institutional research resources and activities. Adequate resources must be provided for the needed personnel and development of the required databases. Consideration should be given to establishing an advisory committee of users.