

REPORT OF REAFFIRMATION COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION

The University of Kentucky traces its beginnings to 1865 when the Agricultural and Mechanical College was created as an adjunct of the private Kentucky University that later became Transylvania University. The first regent of the Agricultural and Mechanical College said he wanted "to build up a people's institution, a great free university," and his desire was to "make this institution eventually equal to any on this continent."

In 1878 the Agricultural and Mechanical College was separated from Kentucky University and located in Lexington, Kentucky, on land donated by the City of Lexington and the County of Fayette. The County of Fayette also gave \$60,000 for buildings. Thirty years later the Kentucky legislature gave the institution the name of State University and in 1916 changed its name to the University of Kentucky. The institution has had only ten presidents from 1878 through 1992.

The University of Kentucky is the state university and land-grant college for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It consists of three academic sectors -- the Lexington Campus, the Medical Center, and the University of Kentucky Community Colleges. The University is classified as a Research University I by the Carnegie Foundation.

The University System (the Lexington Campus and the Medical Center) enrolls more than 24,000 students and includes seventeen undergraduate and professional colleges and a Graduate School offering over 300 baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and professional programs. The University of Kentucky also features the Cooperative Extension Service, the Agricultural Experiment Station, several quality off-site educational and service centers,

cooperative research programs, and multidisciplinary research centers to carry out its comprehensive mission of instruction, service, and research. The University of Kentucky truly reaches out to all people and areas of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The external grant and contract support for research at the University of Kentucky has grown in recent years. The 1991-92 total was approximately \$90,000,000, compared to \$67,000,000 in 1990-91. The success in securing research grants is a compliment to the quality of faculty and to the leadership of academic and general administrators.

The University of Kentucky seeks to help itself and its academic programs through private fundraising activities. Total private gifts amounted to about \$27,000,000 in 1991. A special campaign is underway to secure \$20,000,000 for library facilities and holdings. Private gifts greatly enhance the quality of academic endeavors.

The growing quality of undergraduate and graduate students of the University of Kentucky deserves recognition. Success is the result of higher aspirations and more effective recruiting. This fact is a compliment to the academic reputation of the institution and its faculty.

The University of Kentucky is governed by a Board of Trustees whose membership consists of a majority of members appointed for six-year terms by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The Board also has one student member and three faculty members who are chosen by students and by faculty. The President of the University is appointed by and is responsible to the Board of Trustees. The President in turn names the Chancellors for the Lexington campus, the Medical Center, and the Community College System along with the several Vice Presidents.

The Board of Trustees gives the University of Kentucky and its administration and faculty a great deal of flexibility, autonomy, and authority in its academic and administrative operations. Clearly, the management of the University of Kentucky is delegated to the President and his faculty and staff.

A Reaffirmation Committee of 27 members representing the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools visited the University of Kentucky on September 13-16, 1992. The Committee was joined and assisted by Dr. G. Jack Allen, Associate Director of the Commission on Colleges. The Committee also had two Commission on Colleges Observers, Dr. Eugene J. Alpert of Texas Christian University and Dr. W. Ted Meador, Jr., of Memphis State University. Three Distance Learning Observers were also with Committee. They were Dr. Ronald Brey of Austin Community College, Dr Bruce Chaloux of the Northern Virginia Graduate Center of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Dr. Al Mizell of Nova University.

The assignment of the Reaffirmation Committee related only to the Lexington and Medical Center sectors or campuses of the University of Kentucky. The Community College System is separately accredited.

The purpose of the Committee was to judge how well the University of Kentucky meets the requirements of the Criteria for Accreditation of the Commission on Colleges and to provide professional judgement about the quality of the institution's Self-Study program as reflected in the Self-Study Report. Based on documents and interviews, the Committee considered strengths and weaknesses of the institution and studied the quality of its programs in light of stated purposes and objectives. The results are 21 recommendations

and several suggestions the Committee feels may help improve institutional effectiveness, programs, management, and operations. Points for applause also are noted in the Committee report.

The Self-Study was done through the work of institutional committees and subcommittees representing faculty, students, professional staff, and administrative staff. The Self-Study was related, in most cases, to the specific provisions of the Criteria for Accreditation. The Self-Study Report is written well. It is easy to read and follow and is organized effectively. It identifies strengths and weaknesses and makes its own recommendations and suggestions. The report is lacking in its prescribed action for further implementation of evaluation and assessment for institutional effectiveness. This point will be addressed in the appropriate sections of the Visiting Committee report on Conditions of Eligibility and Institutional Effectiveness.

The Visiting Committee came away with overall favorable impressions of the University of Kentucky. These impressions are set forth in the Committee report. The aspirations, achievements, commitment, and leadership of the faculty, staff, and administrators are in evidence. With effective planning, careful nurturing of resources, and proper care and support from the Commonwealth's executive and legislative leadership further progress and achievement will be realized. President Charles Wethington, Chancellor Peter Bosomworth, and Chancellor Robert Hemenway along with their faculty and administrative colleagues have set forth their strategic plans related to a worthy institutional purpose.

A special word of appreciation is deserved by the three observers from the Commission on Colleges' Distance Learning Committee. Dr. Bruce Chaloux and his associates were valuable additions to the Visiting Committee. They spent a great deal of time on the University of Kentucky's Extended Campus programs and with the faculty, staff, and students involved with these efforts. The University of Kentucky deserves commendation for its exemplary programs in distance learning. The Visiting Committee and the Distance Learning Committee representatives are grateful for the attention, information, and hospitality given to this special group of observers.

Hospitality, cooperation, support, arrangements, and thoughtfulness for the Visiting Committee were excellent and reflected well the traditions of the University of Kentucky. Special appreciation is due Dr. Loys Mather, the Director of the Self-Study and Professor of Agriculture, and Ms. Regina Gibson, Self-Study Assistant. These wonderful folks and their colleagues made the Committee visit more enjoyable and successful. The September 13 reception at the attractive home of President and Mrs. Charles Wethington and the dinner at the impressive Spindletop were highlights of the stay.

President Wethington, Chancellors Bosomworth and Hemenway, the Vice Presidents, and other senior staff members were extremely helpful and readily available.

Criteria references in the Visiting Committee report are keyed to the section numbers in the Criteria for Accreditation, Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The several Criteria sections of the Committee report were written by Committee members responsible for these sections with the advice and counsel of other Committee members. The report sections under the heading of Educational Programs are

largely the product of the Committee member assigned to the academic area. All recommendations, suggestions, and commendations reflect consensus of the entire Reaffirmation Committee.