

**Affirming the Promise:
Fostering a Nationally Recognized Community of Learners**

**Truman State University Master Plan Update
FY 2003-FY 2007**

**A Report of the
Strategic Planning Advisory Committee
October 11, 2002**

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Introduction

Since its founding in 1867, Truman State University has had a long institutional history of intentional change, but its guiding principles have remained steady: a strong focus on student learning, a commitment to excellence across the institution, and an ethos of accountability and service to its students and the citizens of Missouri. These principles continue to shape Truman and guide its efforts to become an institution nationally recognized for its liberal arts education, for the nationally competitive learning outcomes attained by its students, for its efforts to improve continuously and to be accountable for its performance, and for its initiatives to foster a vibrant community of learners that includes faculty, students, and staff working together for common purposes.

As Truman has moved forward since 1985 with the implementation of its liberal arts mission, much progress has been attained toward these lofty goals. Truman is a charter member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), a national consortium of nineteen public institutions dedicated to the liberal arts, and it is Missouri's only "highly selective" public university as defined by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. In addition, in fall 2000 Truman was awarded a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, America's oldest academic honorary society in the liberal arts, becoming only the second public institution in Missouri and only the fourth university in the state to receive that distinction. Today, Truman's students are competitive with some of the best public undergraduate student bodies in the nation, the University is firmly established as a leading *public* liberal arts university, and its academic program in the liberal arts has been endorsed by the nation's leading liberal arts honorary. By many measures, Truman is fulfilling its new mission very successfully.

Truman is, however, dedicated to a somewhat more ambitious goal – to become nationally recognized as a leading liberal arts university regardless of public/private status which offers its students an education comparable to that available at prominent private sector institutions but at an affordable public sector price. Simply stated, Truman's mission is to provide the citizens of Missouri *financial access* to a superior educational experience that is rooted in the liberal arts tradition and that fosters nationally competitive learning outcomes in its graduates. Although Truman is, by most performance measures, "best of class" among Missouri public institutions, the university aspires to continue its development as a liberal arts university to ensure that its students receive the best educational experiences possible and that the faculty, staff, and students who reside here comprise a strong "community of learners" that supports the personal and professional development of its members. In short, the niche Truman aspires to fulfill is that of a nationally-recognized, residential, predominantly undergraduate liberal arts university.

Chapter I University Master Plan Update Summary

Overview of Planning Process

In 1997 Truman completed a University Master Plan for the ten-year period 1997-2007 with performance indicator projections for the first five years of the plan. The University is now at the mid-point of this plan, and President Magruder appointed the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) to review the University Master Plan, to evaluate the strategic directions in the plan to ensure their continuing appropriateness for the institution's development in a rapidly changing environment, to suggest refinements to the plan as the committee determines appropriate, and to extend performance indicator projections contained in the plan for the period 2003-2007. The committee was co-chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the University Dean for Planning. Committee members included faculty from each academic division, members of Student Affairs, Residential Colleges, Interdisciplinary Studies staffs, and the president of Student Senate plus two division heads. Truman's chief information officer as well as the present and former Faculty Senate presidents were ex-officio members and attended sessions as their time permitted. A list of committee members is provided in Attachment A.

The committee met weekly starting in early September 2001 and conducted a wide variety of activities designed to gather input from as broad a cross-section of the Truman community as possible. These activities included the following:

- ❖ numerous reports by and discussions with campus faculty, staff, and administrators regarding significant planning issues;
- ❖ electronic discussion groups and focus group interviews for faculty, students, and staff;
- ❖ review of the 2001-2002 Discipline Action Plans which focused on master planning issues; and
- ❖ breakout session reports developed at the January Conference.

This report is the result of the committee's efforts to fulfill the President's charge to update Truman's University Master Plan. The SPAC has focused on the task of refining the existing plan – not developing an entirely new plan. The committee believes that the current planning document, *Affirming the Promise*, provides a sound basis for Truman's continuing development efforts, although changing circumstances indicate the need to shift the relative order of priority of the Principal Planning Themes contained in the plan and to adjust the focus and emphasis of some implementation strategies.

Institutional Strengths

As planning committee members reviewed the data from the assessment program and other strategic indicators, a number of important institutional attributes were apparent. On the CIRP survey new freshmen continue to cite Truman's academic quality and

reputation as the primary reasons for choosing Truman. When a random sample of approximately 100 freshmen were interviewed during their second semester as part of the Interview Project, 47 percent cited faculty quality and/or availability when asked what aspects of Truman they would tell friends back home. When surveyed on the Graduating Student Questionnaire, students reported that they wrote often in class and that they were satisfied with their education and with their experiences in learning on their own, in recognizing assumptions, in making logical inferences, and in reaching correct conclusions. Truman graduates also report high levels of satisfaction with many aspects of their majors. Assessment data also show strong performance by MAE students, increasing percentages of students scoring above the 50th percentile on their senior exams, increasing percentages of graduates going on to graduate and professional programs, and a significant increase in the number of interdisciplinary courses in the liberal education core.

The data collected by the SPAC through its various outreach activities this past year extended these findings. There was broad agreement among the faculty, students, and staff regarding both Truman's strengths and the issues that need to be addressed. These strengths were sometimes expressed differently, but they tended to focus on the quality and dedication of the people – faculty, students, and staff – who comprise Truman's community of learners. The University's favorable student/faculty ratio and the associated opportunities for close student/faculty interaction were also identified as core strengths. The quality of Truman's academic programs – or components of the program – was also identified frequently as a strength, *e.g.*, academic reputation, undergraduate student research, and graduate school placement. There were also some differences in perspective within the campus community that tended to reflect additional strong aspects of the Truman experience. For example, the faculty valued the strength of the library while students commented on the number and quality of out-of class (co-curricular) experiences and staff noted the friendly, "people-orientation" of the campus. Computing and information technology were not referenced frequently as a major strength, but the striking changes that have occurred in recent years as well as the absence of significant negative comments suggest that these infrastructure improvements also represent a net plus for the institution. Collectively, these strengths constitute a strong foundation upon which Truman can continue to pursue its goal of becoming a "Nationally Recognized Community of Learners."

Institutional Concerns

Truman's quantitative assessment data point to a number of issues that should receive attention and renewed efforts toward continuous improvement. For example, thirteen percent of the approximately 100 freshman who participated in the 2001 interview project in February were either transferring for sure, or were still considering whether to transfer. Clearly, these decisions are often made relatively early in a student's career – and targeted interventions to address social or academic adjustment issues are required long before a student actually leaves the campus if they are to be effective. Junior test performance has declined and has led to inferences that student motivation is a significant constraint to better performance. Only in math did students perform in a range commensurate with expectations (average score: 76th percentile). Graduating students

completing the GSQ rated the perceived challenge and faculty enthusiasm for general education courses as much lower than courses within the major. They also reported declining satisfaction with their understanding of different philosophies and cultures, below expected levels of concern for students as individuals, and declining satisfaction with their liberal arts courses. (It must be noted, however, that none of the Graduating Student Questionnaire data were gathered from students who had graduated under the new LSP; these students will begin to graduate this year.) Portfolio results and survey responses to questions that comprise a liberal arts culture index in the current University Master Plan remained relatively flat. In addition, students did not report taking advantage of increased opportunities for cultural events, and time-on-task data indicated that 29% of students spent 0-10 hours per week out of class on course-related work while only 26% spent more than 20 hours per week on course-related work.

Not unexpectedly, then, broad agreement on issues requiring attention during the next few years emerged from the SPAC's expanded efforts to acquire input from the Truman community. Concerns regarding the implementation and operation of Truman's new Liberal Studies Program (LSP) tend to head the list of issues to be considered. The implementation of the new core requirement has been one of the most significant achievements of the previous five years which has consumed countless hours of faculty time and which required a review of most courses offered at Truman. The LSP was also cited by the Phi Beta Kappa visiting team as one of Truman's distinguishing features.

Yet, at a practical, everyday level many faculty and students report that the new program structure is too complex, difficult to understand, and a challenge for both students and advisors to navigate. Others have issues regarding the size of the LSP, course availability, and the low degree of choice for some students within the LSP. A clear subtext of these concerns is the relationship of individual majors and their required support to the LSP as well as the extent of faculty understanding of and support for the philosophy underlying the current requirement. For example, the number of credit hours and related requirements of some majors, including their required support, can result in less student flexibility that is sometimes seen as the fault of the LSP's structure when, in fact, the core of the problem lies elsewhere. Double and triple counting certain classes makes some courses more valuable than others, creating frustration among students who are not able to register for the few multiple-count courses available. The faculty's apparent strong allegiance to the major has the potential to decrease the number of courses available in the LSP generally and, more specifically, for writing-enhanced and JINS courses. Resolving these issues – both procedural and philosophical – as expeditiously as possible will be a major agenda for Truman in coming years.

Truman's campus community has equally strong opinions about the University's assessment program. A powerful institutional commitment to assessment, accountability, and continuous improvement is one of Truman's defining characteristics. Yet, there are increasing numbers of faculty, students, and staff who perceive a major disconnection between the current assessment program and the needs of the University. Communication of assessment data is perceived as a major concern among all campus groups even though

assessment data are available in hard copy and on Truman's Web page. Faculty have called for increased use of data and for increased preparation and distribution of focused analyses of the data. Faculty and students report an interest in more course-embedded assessment techniques and in re-examining the linkages between assessments and the curriculum, including stronger links to teaching and the classroom experience. Although several components of the existing assessment program have been revised or are under review, voices are heard calling for additional evaluation of the program. Student motivation, especially among upperclassmen, is a continuing concern across the campus community, and students continue to cite the need for better and more appropriate feedback on results. Assessment is an essential component of the Truman culture, but its continuing vitality will require significant attention in the next few years.

Other campus issues that emerged during the plan update process include continuing efforts to enhance integration of co-curricular/out-of-classroom experiences with the formal curriculum; to improve communication and trust among all members of the campus community; to improve recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students – with particular emphasis on students; to provide more support for professional growth among faculty and staff – including faculty research; to improve faculty and staff salaries; to continue the improvement of Truman's facilities; and to remain sensitive to the role of affordability in the context of Truman's needs and its mission. While recruitment issues tend to focus on numbers as well as the preparation and abilities of students, faculty, and staff, the campus remains strongly committed to fostering a racially and culturally diverse learning community. The University is also very sensitive to the challenges which lie ahead if this goal is to be attained. The energy which has characterized the planning discussions in the past year reflects in part the stresses created by tightening resources, but it is also an indicator of the vitality of an institution that continues to grow in stature as it explores and develops its new mission and as it further establishes its niche within the state and the region.

While issues such as the LSP, assessment, out-of-classroom experiences, diversity, and salaries are important and must be addressed, the campus is becoming more aware of the challenges associated with student recruitment and retention. Truman's faculty, staff, and facilities are sized for approximately 6,000 undergraduates plus a few hundred graduate students, most of whom would be enrolled in the Master of Arts in Education program. Truman has no plans to increase the size of the institution, but rather it is firmly committed to sustaining the quality of the incoming student body as well as the quality of the learning outcomes attained by these students. Since the Fall 1996 term, however, only one freshman class has exceeded 1,500 students. For the last four years, the average has been about 1,450 students, and the Fall 2002 class has followed this pattern. While the students Truman recruits are excellent, overall enrollment targets are not likely to be met given these base numbers, even with marginal improvements in retention. The planning committee believes that the timely resolution of the curricular and cultural issues identified in this planning process on terms that will enhance Truman's reputation as an academically challenging *and* student friendly institution is an essential prerequisite to solving the enrollment concern.

Other Internal and External Considerations

As Truman prepares to continue its efforts to become a “Nationally Recognized Community of Learners,” it does so from a position of relative strength. Truman has been rated by *U.S. News and World Reports* for the last six years as the Midwest’s top public master’s level university, and the University has been identified by the *New York Times* as a “cutting edge” institution and a “small liberal arts version of flagship institutions” like Berkeley and Michigan. Based upon selected performance measures such as graduation rates, student performance on assessments of the major, and teacher education entrance and exit standards, Truman is also the “best” performing public institution in the Missouri system. In addition, Truman has a very low debt burden at this time, which distinguishes it from other public institutions in Missouri and which gives it additional flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

Truman is fortunate to have a strong institutional consensus in support of its liberal arts and sciences mission. The current campus debate regarding how the core curriculum should be structured is a measure of the institution’s vigor and the faculty’s engagement in the future of the institution. In addition, campus discussions on the appropriate role of out-of-classroom experiences reflect an increasing recognition that one of Truman’s defining characteristics is its very high percentage of residential, traditional age students. Historically, Truman has embraced four core supporting values which transcend the institution’s liberal arts mission and which have guided its development; these values continue to define the institution and command broad support:

- ❖ a strong focus on students and student learning;
- ❖ intellectual challenge in a nurturing and diverse environment;
- ❖ affordability which promotes financial access to educational excellence;
- and
- ❖ a commitment to assessment for continuous improvement and accountability.

Truman’s key challenge in the next few years will be to harness the energy and vision of its faculty, staff, and students to construct and sustain an integrated campus culture that is attractive to students and their parents and that is strongly supported by state-level decision-makers because it addresses important state needs. Although Truman enjoys great institutional strengths and certain competitive advantages, its niche within the public higher education system is fragile and the competition for outstanding students, faculty, and staff is exceptionally keen. Furthermore, much of Truman’s past success can be attributed in part to a favorable public policy environment that is subject to change and is largely beyond the institution’s control. This is particularly true as inter-institutional competition intensifies for scarce resources and as the implementation of term limits brings many new legislators to the State Capitol who have no institutional memory and who will bring new perspectives and possibly new priorities to the decision-making process.

For example, Truman's role in the state system as a highly selective institution is sustained by a public policy that encourages institutional diversity within a coordinated system that provides initial access to all citizens but not necessarily all institutions. If this basic premise is rejected, public support for Truman's role could erode. Similarly, recent efforts to alter significantly the state's funding formula for higher education to distribute funds on an enrollment-driven basis would have a very negative impact on Truman's ability to deliver nationally competitive, high-quality educational experiences to its students. The University's commitment to low student/faculty ratios, small classes, and frequent student/faculty interaction results in a cost structure more comparable to master's level education at many public institutions rather than undergraduate education. Truman is a unique institution in many ways, and it is dependent on public policies which recognize and accommodate its distinctiveness. This niche will increasingly be justified through Truman's success in building and sustaining an academic program and campus culture that strongly nurtures student development and fosters demonstrable student learning outcomes that meet state needs.

In this context of meeting its mission and addressing state needs, the Truman community must also understand the complexity of the affordability issue. In comparison to major private sector liberal arts colleges, Truman enjoys a significant price advantage and is clearly meeting its mission of providing financial access to a high-quality liberal arts education. Yet, with the limited state support available to Missouri public institutions, tuitions at all Missouri higher education institutions are rising rapidly, even though these charges already exceed those of public institutions in most contiguous states. Public policy in Missouri assumes a "low tuition" perspective in terms of the financial aid programs available, but in the national context Missouri public higher education is approaching a "high tuition" reality for citizens of the state. Historically, the state and federal governments have addressed the issue of financial access through need-based financial aid programs, but such programs in Missouri have been targeted principally at students in private institutions and have had limited impact on most public sector students. In the current tight budget situation these financial aid programs are falling even further from meeting their intended goal of assuring financial access. The University's ability to pass even modest cost increases on to students without decreasing access to our programs will likely diminish. Truman can anticipate increasing pressure to contain costs and to shoulder additional responsibility for need-based aid programs while demonstrating with hard data the value of its educational product to the state.

*Planning Priorities:
Principal Planning Themes for FY 2003-2007*

Based upon the extensive campus community input as well as its own research and discussions, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee has determined that the Principal Planning Themes identified for the 1997-2002 period remain relevant guides for Truman's continuing development to become a "Nationally Recognized Community of Learners." However, the relative priority of these themes should be adjusted, in the committee's judgment, and the emphasis of initiatives within each area will sometimes require

realignment. The committee's recommended planning priorities for 2003-2007 are the following.

**“Becoming a Nationally Recognized Community of Learners”
Principal Planning Themes and Priorities
FY 2003-2007**

- ❖ Recruiting and supporting a diverse, well-qualified faculty, staff, and student body
- ❖ Deepening an Enhanced, Self-reflective Liberal Arts Culture
- ❖ Nurturing Viable Relationships with External Constituencies
- ❖ Providing Excellent Support to the Teaching/Learning Process

*Recruiting and Supporting a Diverse, Well-qualified
Faculty, Staff, and Student Body*

The core of any learning community is the students, faculty, and staff who comprise it and bring it to life. Truman's first priority must be the recruitment and retention of a diverse, well-qualified student body that meets the Coordinating Board's criteria for a highly selective institution while continuing to foster student learning outcomes that are nationally competitive. In order for these very talented students to succeed, they must be led and supported by equally gifted faculty and staff who are committed to students and student learning and who have the resources and opportunities they need to develop as professionals. A successful learning community will also be characterized by high levels of trust and effective communication that make the exchange of ideas and the implementation of necessary change not only possible but commonplace. Thus, faculty and staff recruitment should reflect not only a healthy diversity of academic and cultural backgrounds, but also a strong commitment to institutional goals, collegiality, and the liberal arts at a predominantly undergraduate, teaching institution.

In an era of global interdependence and conflicting world views, Truman cannot pretend to offer its students a nationally competitive education unless our learning community engages them in dialogue that crosses racial, cultural, and national boundaries. Consequently, Truman's community must reflect the racial and cultural diversity of Missouri and the nation while it actively supports and works to foster an inclusive community that embodies respect for differences among individuals. To sustain this diverse and cohesive community, Truman needs to continue to recognize and accommodate the diversity of student learning styles that well-qualified students bring to Truman.

Deepening an Enhanced, Self-reflective Liberal Arts Culture

Truman must continue to develop and internalize the liberal arts at this institution and to ensure that all new faculty and staff understand the University's philosophy. From this base Truman must review and refine its curriculum to ensure its congruence with both the institution's educational goals as well as the needs and aspirations of its students and their future employers. The University must encourage and assist its students in making connections across disciplines, in developing expertise in their major areas of interest, in engaging in self-reflection regarding their education and life-long learning, and in grounding their diverse educational backgrounds in concrete educational outcomes, *e.g.*, analytical problem solving ability, communication skills, and leadership capacity, for themselves, their families, and society. The University must address and resolve as expeditiously as possible issues related to the structure and implementation of the Liberal Studies Program and, in this context, define the role of the major vis-à-vis the LSP. Truman must also determine effective ways to integrate out-of-class experiences with the formal curriculum and to utilize out-of-class activities more intentionally in the advancement of the University's mission. With the maintenance of nationally competitive student learning outcomes as the ultimate objective, Truman must also maintain a comprehensive assessment program that addresses both institutional effectiveness and student learning while revising its components and rebuilding faculty and student support.

Nurturing Viable Relationships with External Constituencies

Five years ago the external environment was much more stable than it appears today while political and financial support were less of a concern. With the implementation of term limits, Truman's top priority in this area must be the cultivation of a strong relationship with the General Assembly as new legislative leadership emerges. One key element of this task will be to explain carefully Truman's statewide mission and its unique role in the system. A second task will be to work cooperatively with other institutions to address the problem that aggregate state support for higher education as a percentage of state general revenue has been in general decline for many years. In the late 1990s this trend was masked by growth in direct state support; yet, although the current recession is ending, state support for higher education is likely to continue to be problematic for several years at least owing to structural issues in the state's tax system and competing state priorities. These trends will place increasing pressure on tuition and on Truman's ability to raise supplemental funds from alumni, friends, and foundations through its Office of Advancement. External support will become increasingly important to the University over the next five years, and the effective use of assessment evidence to document our success and our commitment to accountability will be essential. Various "stakeholders" in the success of the University must be increasingly recognized, including the establishment of student/parent/alumni recruitment networks as well as networks of prospective employers, graduate, and professional schools vying for the highly qualified graduates the University produces. Finally, Truman must also continue to maintain and even strengthen its ties with Kirksville and the surrounding areas of northeastern Missouri. The continuing vitality of Kirksville will be an essential component in the University's ability to recruit and retain excellent students, faculty, and

staff; in addition, Truman needs to continue to foster strong relationships with citizens in surrounding areas to help increase its support at the state level.

Providing Excellent Support to the Teaching/Learning Process

During the 1997-2002 planning period Truman made excellent progress on developing its library collections, its technology support, and facilities improvement. The current decline in state support has dampened this progress, but the University is in a much stronger position today than it was five years ago. Our challenge in the coming years will be to find the resources to support these gains and to continue to make progress in related areas. Although Truman is unlikely to become significantly involved in distance education for nontraditional students, the University may consider the development of limited e-learning or Web-based instruction as part of its efforts to meet state needs in this region that cannot be met otherwise or to maintain contact with alumni and other constituents of the University. Truman will need to ensure that it employs web-based learning technologies in appropriate ways to enhance the education of its on-campus students. Instructional technology should also be utilized to nurture student learning and to develop teaching excellence in ways that are sensitive to the variety of student learning styles and the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. Truman's implementation of a new student information system will provide the University the opportunity to support the teaching and learning process in critical areas such as advisement and registration. The new system will also facilitate improved access to assessment data, providing faculty and student advisees better opportunities to use the data to improve instruction for groups of students as well as place the performance and opinions of individual students into meaningful, larger contexts. Finally, Truman must also find ways to continue to improve instructional facilities and, with an eye toward student recruitment and retention, to enhance the residence halls and the Student Union.

Chapter II
The Truman Story:
Benchmarking Successful Mission Implementation

Since 1985, Truman has been a case study in intentional, planned change that is unrivaled in Missouri and perhaps even in the nation. The University has focused its mission by restructuring its academic program, dropping programs not central to the mission, and emphasizing out-of-classroom experiences like study abroad and undergraduate student/faculty research which enhance student learning. This re-structuring of Truman resulted in a decrease of more than 100 academic programs while the relative proportion of liberal arts undergraduate majors increased by two-thirds with no significant change in overall enrollment. The following table summarizes data relevant to this change in Truman's mission that has occurred since 1985 when the LAS mission was adopted and since 1997 when the current plan was implemented.

	FY85	FY97	FY01
Number of Programs			
Undergraduate	140	43	43
Graduate	38	9	8
Foreign Language Enrollments	417	2,121	2,304
Percent of Undergraduates in Core			
Liberal Arts Majors	36%	59%	60%
Study Abroad Enrollments	12	308	428
Student/Faculty Cooperative			
Scholarly Projects	96	684	1,199
Full-time Faculty	265	341	375
Student/Faculty Ratio	21:1	16:1	14:1

Truman's educational strategy is to provide an academic environment in which well-prepared, highly-motivated students can interact on a regular basis with each other and with outstanding faculty in small learning communities located both inside and outside the classroom. As a consequence, Truman has invested heavily in full-time faculty without increasing the size of the student body to lower the student/faculty ratio and has fostered learning communities outside formal classes through its Residential Colleges Program and through such initiatives as student/faculty cooperative research. Truman has also recognized the importance of global education and intercultural understanding by requiring all students to study at least one year of a foreign language (bachelor of arts students must take at least two years) and encouraging study abroad opportunities. Foreign language study is a special strength of Truman – the University currently offers course work in eleven (11) foreign languages.

Although many – if not most – institutions presently encourage these kinds of activities, Truman is distinguished by the scope of its involvement. For example, Truman typically has one of the largest delegations of students and faculty making presentations at the annual conference sponsored by the National Council on Undergraduate Research, and

Truman's study abroad program ranks eighth nationally among master's level institutions in terms of total student participation. While much of the change that has occurred on these measures happened prior to 1997, Truman has continued to make progress – particularly regarding study abroad and student research, but also foreign language enrollments which increased 8.6 percent in the last five years. Truman's continuing attractiveness as an institution of choice for well-prepared students will depend in part on its ability to further develop distinctive curricular and co-curricular strengths that add value to the student's college experience.

Excellence and Affordability: Meeting a State Need

Extending the financial access of Missouri students to a high-quality liberal arts experience is central to Truman's mission. One indicator of the University's success in this endeavor is a comparison of national survey results between Truman's freshmen and the freshmen entering the nation's best liberal arts colleges (called "Very Highly Selective Privates" in this study). The following data show that Truman's students, who have comparable academic abilities, are also very comparable to the students enrolled at the nation's best liberal arts colleges in terms of their reasons for choosing a college as well as their aspirations for graduate and professional school. However, Truman students clearly come from less affluent families and are much more likely to have worked for wages in high school. Furthermore, the affordability of Truman is an overwhelming factor in student choice.

	Truman	V.H.S. Privates
Household Income Less Than \$100,000	74.8%	51.6%
More Than 10 Hours per Week		
Working in High School	53.0%	22.7%
Important Reasons for Choosing		
a College		
-- Academic Reputation	83.1%	81.7%
-- Graduates Get Good Jobs	55.9%	55.2%
-- Affordability	55.3%	2.2%
Aspires to a Doctorate or		
Professional Degree	44.0%	52.3%

Note: Survey is conducted by the University of California-Los Angeles.

Collectively, these data suggest that Truman is very successful in meeting its mission goal of providing financial access to Missouri students in the context of head-to-head competition with private sector colleges. The day-to-day experiences of the admission staff also demonstrate, however, that our students are quite price sensitive and are very adept at seeking the lowest cost for their college-going dollar. Furthermore, Truman's tuition level in the public sector context does not automatically translate into a competitive advantage. Comparative data for the 2001-2002 academic year collected by *U.S. News and World Reports* and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education show that Truman's in-state tuition is

equivalent to or exceeds the in-state tuition of the flagship campuses in seven of the eight contiguous states (Illinois is the exception; Truman is roughly tied with Arkansas and Nebraska.) while its out-of-state tuition is approximately double the in-state tuition for the neighboring states of Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska. Since approximately 25 percent of Truman students come from outside Missouri, these figures are significant. Among the public institutions in Missouri, Truman's tuition is exceeded only by the campuses of the University of Missouri system. Similar comparisons for room and board costs produce somewhat comparable results. These data suggest at least two conclusions regarding Truman's ability to recruit students while attaining its mission of providing financial access for well-prepared students:

- ❖ the University's ability to pass higher costs on to students is limited; and
- ❖ Truman must provide objective data from its assessment program and other sources to demonstrate to price sensitive prospective students and parents who expect tangible benefits from their investment that the Truman educational experience is a superior education with many opportunities for close faculty interactions and the likelihood of timely graduation.

**Comparative Tuition for Truman Versus Flagship Campuses in Contiguous States,
 Missouri Public Four-year Institutions, and Selected Missouri Private Institutions
 2001-2002**

Contiguous State Flagship Campuses	Missouri Public Institutions	Selected Missouri Private Institutions
Illinois: \$5,294	UMSL: \$5,116	Washington U.: \$26,377
Arkansas: \$3,880	UMKC: \$5,036	Saint Louis U.: \$19,730
Truman: \$3,832	UMR: \$4,974	Rockhurst: \$15,140
Nebraska: \$3,830	UMC: \$4,887	Westminster: \$14,870
Kentucky: \$3,735	Truman: \$3,832	William Jewell: \$14,750
Iowa: \$3,522	Southwest: \$3,748	Drury: \$11,960
Iowa State: \$3,478	Lincoln: \$3,638	Truman: \$3,832
Tennessee: \$3,362	Northwest: \$3,600	
Kansas: \$2,884	Southeast: \$3,525	
Kansas State: \$2,835	Central: \$3,510	
Oklahoma State: \$2,779	Western: \$3,224	
Oklahoma: \$2,713	Southern: \$2,866	
	Harris-Stowe: \$2,850	

Source: U.S News Survey for out-of-state and private institutions; CBHE for Missouri publics.

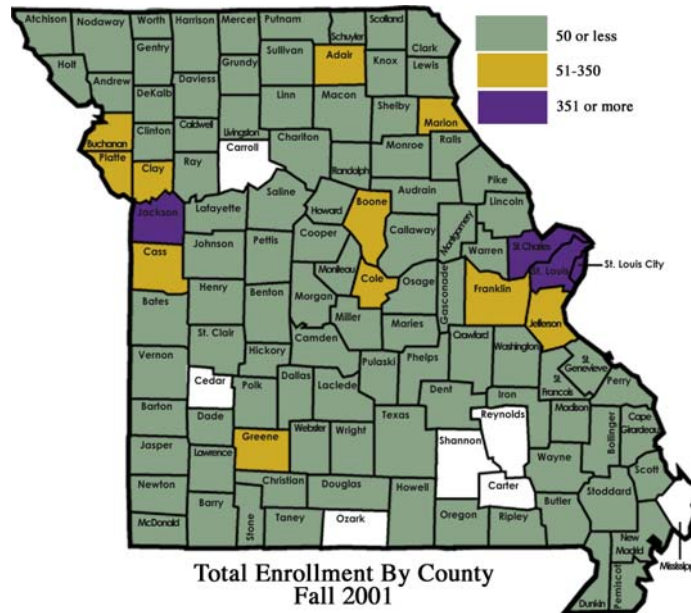
**Comparative Room and Board for Truman Versus Flagship Campuses in
 Contiguous States, Missouri Public Four-year Institutions,
 and Selected Missouri Private Institutions
 2001-2002**

Contiguous State Flagship Campuses	Missouri Public Institutions	Selected Missouri Private Institutions
Illinois: \$6,086	UMSL: \$5,220	Washington U.: \$8,216
Oklahoma: \$4,903	UMR: \$5,060	Saint Louis U.: \$6,920
Iowa: \$4,870	UMC: \$5,043	Rockhurst: \$5,400
Oklahoma State: \$4,856	UMKC: \$4,950	Westminster: \$5,120
Truman: \$4,736	Southeast: \$4,842	Truman: \$4,736
Iowa State: \$4,654	Truman: \$4,736	Drury: \$4,519
Nebraska: \$4,564	Central: \$4,410	William Jewell: \$4,390
Tennessee: \$4,490	Northwest: \$4,150	
Arkansas: \$4,454	Southern: \$3,800	
Kansas: \$4,348	Lincoln: \$3,790	
Kansas State: \$4,240	Harris-Stowe: n.a.	
Kentucky: \$3,980	Southwest: n.a.	
	Western: n.a.	

Source: U.S News Survey for all institutions.

Recruiting Outstanding Students Statewide

Truman’s ability to recruit increasingly well-prepared, outstanding students is illustrated by the data table following this section. Average ACT scores have increased from approximately the 60th percentile in 1985 to about the 92nd percentile in 2001. Average high school grade points have also increased significantly, and more than a quarter of Truman’s Missouri freshmen have a “Bright Flight” scholarship. While these gains were occurring, the percentage of Missouri students from outside the historic service region increased as well as the overall percentage of students from the state of Missouri. Marginal declines in the numbers of students from out-of-state and from the St. Louis metropolitan area in the last recruitment season could have a significant impact on the University if they continue. The really good news in these data is that since 1985 the percentage of minority students recruited to the University nearly tripled. Although much more work needs to be accomplished to improve and support diversity on the Truman campus, the gains have been significant. Clearly, the attractiveness of Truman to well-prepared Missouri students has increased as the University’s quality has increased. Finally, Truman now serves students throughout the state, as illustrated by the following map, which further validates its statewide mission.



While Truman’s success in building an excellent freshman class is a tribute to the institution’s continuing development, the University is experiencing constantly increasing competition for these outstanding students which has made the task of reaching numerical recruitment targets very difficult. The figures shown below are the *average* for Truman’s freshmen; yet, many of these “average” students are receiving very attractive financial packages from other institutions – both public and private – which Truman cannot match for all of its “typical” students. Notwithstanding these difficulties, Truman is clearly committed to maintaining the academic ability of its student body and will not – indeed cannot – compromise on this issue without risking the loss of its status as a unique institution in the Missouri public higher education system.

	Fall 1985	Fall 1996	Fall 2001
Average ACT Score	22.2	26.4	27.0
Average H.S. GPA	3.39/4.0 *	3.6/4.0	3.74/4.0
Percent of Missouri Freshmen w/ “Bright Flight” Scholarship	6.2% **	23.2	28.5%
Home States Represented	18	30	25
Missouri Enrollment Outside Historic Service Area	48.8%	76.7%	71.7%
Percent from Missouri	69.6%	71.7%	74.0%
Percent Freshmen Minority	3.0%	8.1%	8.9%
Percent All Undergraduates Minority	2.9%	7.4%	7.1%

**Fall 1989 Data – earliest available*
***Fall 1987 Data – “Bright Flight” program started*

Attaining Nationally Competitive Learning Outcomes

Truman takes great pride in the accomplishments outlined in the preceding text, but many of these facts represent input measures. As an institution that believes in accountability, Truman remains committed to the attainment of nationally competitive learning outcomes as the most important measure of its success. The following table displays selected performance data for Truman students.

	<i>FY86</i>	<i>FY97</i>	<i>FY01</i>
Freshman to Sophomore Retention	75%	82.4%	83.7%
Graduation Rate	44%	59.8%	64.1% *
Senior Test Scores -- Greater than 50th %ile	55.0%	69.0%	75.0%
Education Grads Meeting CBHE Exit Standard	N.A.	96.0%	100.0%
Graduate/Professional School Placement Rate	10%	36.5%	41.6%
Job Placement Rate	80.4%	60.4%	55.8%

** CBHE figure (which includes transfers who graduate at another Missouri public institution) is 72%.*

These figures show that Truman's performance on a variety of outcomes measures has improved significantly since the inception of the liberal arts mission. In fact, although it is not Truman's purpose to compare itself with other Missouri institutions (because the University's mission is distinct), these figures equal or exceed those of the other public institutions in the Missouri system for undergraduate education. Although Truman is a leading institution in the Missouri context for baccalaureate education and teacher education preparation, a more appropriate set of comparisons would involve other public and private liberal arts institutions nationally. Unfortunately, with the exception of retention and graduation rate information and to some extent graduate/professional school placement rates, comparable, institution-level performance information for universities outside Missouri is not easy to obtain.

Based upon available information, some comparisons can, however, be drawn. With respect to graduate/professional school placement, Truman compares very favorably with leading national institutions even though Truman has not attained its goal for this measure. For example, using *U.S. News'* 2001 rankings, Truman's one-year placement rate not only exceeds the average figure (25.0%) reported for all of the top ten national liberal arts colleges (two institutions did not report data), but it exceeds the individual figure reported for each of these institutions. Similarly, Truman's reported placement figure exceeds the average for *U.S. News'* top ten national universities (31.8%) while its performance is lower than only two of the top ten institutions (Cal Tech and MIT) with two institutions not reporting data.

The data for graduation rates indicate that Truman is currently performing at a reasonable rate – indeed, the best among Missouri public institutions. However, Truman has yet to attain its goal of a 75% graduation rate, but it is getting close when in-state

transfers from Truman who graduate from another public institution are counted. (The latter statistic is used by the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education as a measure of graduation rate.) Yet, the University's performance is well below the figures recorded for leading private liberal arts colleges and even some COPLAC institutions, *e.g.*, State University of New York-Geneseo (78 percent), Mary Washington College in Virginia (74 percent), and St. Mary's College of Maryland (72 percent). These latter data suggest that, while Truman has made good progress on this issue, there continues to be room for improvement.

Satisfying the CBHE's "Highly Selective" Expectations

As Missouri's only "Highly Selective" institution, Truman is challenged to meet the Coordinating Board's highest performance expectations. Overall, the University has responded to these challenges exceedingly well. Excepting graduation rate and freshman success rate, Truman has met all of the CBHE's other expectations for a highly selective institution: freshman completion of a high school core curriculum, freshman admission standards, and the avoidance of any remedial instruction. Truman has now been in compliance with the CBHE's expectations regarding freshman admission standards for five years, for the high school core curriculum for six years, and for remedial classes since before the standard was adopted. For the two measures on which Truman has fallen a little short, the institution has improved since the goals were adopted and each measure needs to improve by only three percentage points to reach the goal. In addition, Truman's record on graduation and freshman success rates is the best among the public institutions. The data in the following table show Truman's steady improvement on these measures since they were adopted in 1992. Truman is a "best of class" institution in Missouri's system.

	Highly Selective Goal	Truman FY 1992	Truman FY 1997	Truman FY 2001
<i>Admission Criteria</i>				
Freshmen Completing High School Core Curriculum	100%	59%	100%	100%
Freshmen Meeting “Highly Selective” Criteria	90%	83%	89%	90.1%
<i>Success Rate</i>				
Freshmen Earning at Least 24 Credits With at Least a 2.00 GPA	90%	84%	88%**	87%
<i>Remedial Course Work</i>				
Number of Remedial Courses Offered for Credit	0	0	0	0
<i>Graduation Rate</i>				
Truman Freshmen Graduating from Any Missouri Public	75%	67% *	66%	72%

* Figure is for FY 1995 which is the closest year to 1992 available.

** Figure is for Fall 1998

Next Step: Fostering a Nationally Recognized Community of Learners

Since the inception of its liberal arts mission in 1985 and during the first five years of the current planning period, Truman has made great progress as an institution and as a learning community. Not only has Truman undertaken the task of developing an excellent undergraduate liberal arts learning environment, but it is a national leader in defining the model for a public liberal arts university. Yet, it is also clear that Truman has not yet realized its full potential. The next step is to foster a nationally recognized community of learners in the liberal arts tradition. The planning initiatives outlined in the remainder of this report are designed to help Truman meet this goal.

Chapter III

Building a Nationally Recognized Community of Learners: Focused Planning Initiatives

A significant result of the very inclusive planning process that Truman has undertaken to refine its University Master Plan has been the designation of broad priorities for institutional development during the next five years – identified as Principal Planning Themes -- as well as the identification of Focused Institutional Responses corresponding to these priorities and any associated subtopics. These priorities and institutional responses have been the result of the work of the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, including broad input from the Truman community during the 2001-2002 academic year.

In the sections that follow, each of the principal planning themes identified in the planning process is addressed in priority order. Associated with each theme and any major subtopics will be sample goals adopted by the Faculty Senate in 1995 appropriate to the theme and subtopic as well as proposed Focused Institutional Responses intended to lead to the achievement of the planning theme. The Faculty Senate goals were adopted independent of the current planning process, and they collectively constitute the faculty's long-term vision for the University. Following the Focused Institutional Responses adopted for each Principal Planning Theme or its associated subtopics is explanatory text plus proposed Indicators of Performance that will be used to assess institutional progress on these themes. This section is structured in the following fashion:

- Principal Planning Theme in Priority Order
- Theme Subtopics as Appropriate
- Representative Faculty Senate Goals
- Focused Institutional Responses for 2003-2007
- Explanatory Text
- Indicators of Performance

Principal Planning Themes 2003-2007 Priorities

- ❖ Recruiting and supporting a diverse, well-qualified faculty, staff, and student body
- ❖ Deepening an Enhanced, Self-reflective Liberal Arts Culture
- ❖ Nurturing Viable Relationships with External Constituencies
- ❖ Providing Excellent Support to the Teaching/Learning Process

A. Recruiting and supporting a diverse, well-qualified faculty, staff, and student body

1. Recruiting, supporting, and graduating a well-prepared, highly qualified student body

Faculty Senate Goal: To maintain a university-wide effort to attract and retain a diverse group of high-ability students in each academic discipline who have demonstrated the capacity to succeed in the baccalaureate programs.

Faculty Senate Goal: To attract to each graduate program a diverse group of high-ability liberally educated students who have demonstrated the potential to succeed.

Focused Institutional Response, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall recruit, support, and graduate a well-prepared, highly qualified student body that reflects the diversity of Missouri and is predominantly undergraduate, residential, and traditional college-going age through the following actions:

- *continuing to recruit an outstanding, diverse student body that meets the Coordinating Board's criteria for a highly selective institution with a breadth of academic interests sufficient to assure a cost-effective, critical mass of students in each discipline at both the undergraduate and graduate levels by
 - (a) *continuing to identify and publicize appropriate ways for faculty and staff to collaborate with the Office of Admission to reinforce effective recruitment, particularly in disciplines which can accommodate additional enrollment;*
 - (b) *continuing conservative and creative practices to keep student costs as low as possible consistent with Truman's desire to provide an excellent educational environment;*
 - (c) *enhancing Truman's attractiveness as a receiving institution for transfer students, particularly well-prepared "A+ Program" students, by providing appropriate transition and support services;*
 - (d) *continuing to monitor the competitiveness of Truman's scholarship programs, both merit and need-based, and optimizing financial aid programs to enhance student diversity and to continue to attract low-income, high-ability students; and*
 - (e) *enhancing Truman's attractiveness to prospective students and parents by continuing to develop the distinctive aspects of the Truman experience, such as, the residential college environment, research opportunities, campus cultural events, study abroad programs, internships, service learning, and opportunities to be involved in student activities; and**

- *improving undergraduate retention and graduation rates to the level required by the Coordinating Board's criteria for a highly selective institution while concurrently enhancing student learning outcomes by*

- (a) *continuing to enhance the transition of every student into the Truman community by evaluating how current programs [the Residential Colleges, Extended Freshman courses, Scholastic Enhancement Experience (SEE) Program, McNair Program, and related programming] meet the needs of students;*
- (b) *analyzing assessment data and other available information to develop intervention strategies such as improved academic support appropriate for significant populations of Truman's student body more at risk for leaving the university, e.g., first-generation, low-income students;*
- (c) *enhancing Truman's efforts to improve the sophomore-to-junior transition, without diminishing the university's attention on the critical freshman year;*
- (d) *reviewing current scholarship retention policies and publicize appeal procedures more broadly; and*
- (e) *maintaining and improving learning and teaching enhancement programs, including Services for Individuals with Disabilities.*

Our students are the *raison d'être* of Truman. Without the truly excellent students who come to this University to learn and to develop their intellectual and personal abilities to the fullest, this institution would cease to exist as we know it. In terms of both physical facilities and faculty, Truman is "right-sized" for approximately 6,000 students. Yet, the competition for these very well-prepared students is increasingly intense from both public as well as private colleges and universities. Notwithstanding Truman's strong academic reputation and high rankings in various national college guidebooks, affordability and low net cost remain critical factors in college choice for many students and parents.

Following the recruitment of an unusually large freshman class for the Fall 1997 term – the year the current planning document took effect, Truman's total enrollment peaked in Fall 1998 at 6,353 students. For the most recent fall term (2002), Truman's on-campus enrollment declined to 5,867 students, and if present trends continue unabated, the Fall 2006 enrollment is projected to stabilize at 5,782 students, or 8.99% below the Fall 1998 level. These trends have occurred in a period when Missouri's overall number of high school graduates as well as the number of students participating in higher education have increased. Although large numbers of these students are choosing community colleges, the increase in the number of high school graduates is expected to continue for several more years. At the same time Graduating Student Questionnaire data for recent years show a modest decrease in the percentages of students satisfied with Truman's concern for them as individuals as well as a small increase in the number of students who report that they definitely would *not* return to Truman if they could make that choice again. Those students who cherish their Truman experience are very powerful ambassadors for the University to younger friends and family members, while dissatisfied students and graduates can have an equally strong negative impact. Given the limited number of highly-qualified prospective students available and the typically aggressive recruiting efforts of other institutions for these students, Truman must become even more attentive to the concerns of its students. Given the expected changes in the enrollment pool, the potential exists to increase student enrollment if the underlying issues related to recruitment and retention can be identified and addressed.

Compromising on the high quality of its students to maintain numbers is not an option for Truman. In order for the University to assure its unique niche within the higher education system in Missouri and the Midwest, it must continue to recruit students who satisfy the Coordinating Board's criteria for a highly selective institution. Truman must also ensure that the education and opportunities available to these students is both attractive and competitive. The Truman community must develop a clearer, more widely shared sense of itself – *e.g.*, how the liberal arts are actualized at Truman, how this institution is distinctive, and how the University prepares its student for their next step in life – in order to articulate this vision more successfully to prospective students and their parents. This challenge is not a task for the Admission Office alone, but rather the University as a whole. All faculty and staff must also work as both individuals and as disciplines and offices to communicate the Truman message to prospective students, to ensure that current students are valued as individuals, and to support students in their development as both scholars and individuals. Prospective students and parents, as well as graduates, must be convinced that Truman is superior institution that places students and the teaching/learning process at the top of its priorities.

Truman is a residential university serving principally traditional, college-age students. Its niche is based upon the University's ability to provide these very well-prepared students close student/faculty interactions and opportunities to engage in life changing experiences – such as research, study abroad, internships, athletics, artistic performance, service learning and student leadership activities – in a nurturing environment that fosters and expects academic excellence. Truman must be able to demonstrate with appropriate evidence that this type of residential experience with multiple opportunities to develop the “total person” is superior to the many other options available. Although Truman is in many respects a leader in offering students enhanced educational opportunities, numerous other institutions are now providing these opportunities successfully to at least some of their students. Truman must continue to exercise its leadership by ensuring that large proportions of its students have access to these experiences and that these opportunities are integrated into the curriculum as seamlessly as possible.

Truman has a successful history of both anticipating and responding to changes in the student market as well as the strategies needed to be successful. These creative and adaptive responses to a changing environment must continue. Specifically, Truman must continue to aggressively contain costs and to foster efficiencies whenever possible and consistent with the University's learning goals. Truman must also continually review its financial aid packages and policies for renewal to ensure their competitiveness, including the balance between merit and need awards to optimize the University's ability to recruit and retain a very strong and diverse student body. The institution's curriculum must continue to be reviewed periodically to ensure its currency with both students and employers as well as its attractiveness to prospective students with interests in the liberal arts. Truman must also continue its efforts to provide modern, attractive academic, co-curricular, and residential facilities to support the type of living and learning environment sought by Truman students and faculty.

Given apparent changes in the student market and public policies that encourage student transfer, Truman must explore ways to be more attractive as a destination of choice for well-qualified transfer students, especially those who participate in Missouri's A+ Program. Success in this area will require recognition of the fact that these students have different needs from first-time freshmen and will need support services appropriate to their circumstances. The University should also continue to explore the possibility of other pockets of potential new students as the opportunities present themselves. Even limited expansion of Truman's enrollment pool beyond the traditional, eighteen-year-old, first-time freshman has the potential to make a material impact on enrollment and possibly contribute to the attainment of the University's diversity goals.

If Truman is to maintain an enrollment of 6,000 students, the University's graduate programs must play a somewhat larger role than they do currently – especially the Master of Arts in Education and those graduate programs tied to state licensure requirements with an undergraduate program as a foundation. The relationship of these programs to the undergraduate experience should be reviewed carefully to ensure a tight, constructive link that will facilitate student progression, strong enrollments, and enhancement of Truman's high-quality undergraduate programs. In addition, existing graduate programs may need to consider structural refinements to foster increased student participation. All graduate programs must also ensure that they sustain a critical mass of students to assure a high-quality experience for their students and to provide a sound financial basis for the program.

Truman has made great progress toward racial and cultural diversity on campus, but its goal of 10 percent of the student body being comprised by students of color remains elusive. Truman's resolve remains strong, but it is also apparent that greater success recruiting students is only part of the picture; retention is an equally important part of the equation not only for minority students but for all students. Greater institutional diversity and improved graduation rates are both based on higher retention not just in terms of the traditional freshman-to-sophomore progression, but also progression throughout the undergraduate experience – especially the sophomore-to-junior transition which is critical for many students. One of Truman's core values is “academic challenge in a diverse, nurturing environment.” In order to enhance diversity and increase Truman's graduation rate, increasing attention needs to be focused on actualizing a “nurturing environment” in the Truman context. Truman must understand and respond more effectively to the fact that different students have different learning styles. Assessment data must be used to identify the needs of subpopulations of the student body with distinct academic and social requirements and to foster the development of appropriate intervention strategies. The University must also be sensitive to the needs of the increasing number of students with disabilities who enroll and need support provided by the Services for Individuals with Disabilities Office. Students are more likely to be attracted to and to remain in an environment that is clearly sensitive to their educational, physical, and emotional needs.

The end of these many efforts is, of course, an enhanced realization of Truman's mission – more student learning for more students. Truman's success will be measured by

the attainments of its students, and our goal is nothing less than nationally competitive learning outcomes for all students regardless of racial or cultural heritage.

**Recruiting, Supporting, and Graduating a Well-prepared,
Highly Qualified Student Body**
Indicators of Performance

1. Number of first-time, full-time freshmen
2. Number of transfer students with more than 24 credit hours
3. Number and percentage of minority freshmen
4. Percentage of freshman class meeting highly selective criteria
5. Average ACT score of freshman class
6. Total number of undergraduate and graduate students
7. Total number and percentage of minority students
8. Percentage of freshmen meeting CBHE's freshman success criterion (24 earned credits with at least a 2.00 GPA)
9. Percentage of freshman and sophomore scholarship students receiving renewals
10. Retention rates for freshman-to-sophomore and sophomore-to-junior transitions for all students, minority students, and at-risk populations
11. Graduation rates for all students, minority students, transfer students, and at-risk populations
12. Percent distribution of student completion rates by semester
13. Percentage of students scoring above the 50th percentile on an exit assessment in the major
14. Percentage of graduates entering graduate or professional school within two (2) years of graduation
15. Percentage of graduates employed full-time
16. Percentage of graduates entering the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and other similar volunteer activities
17. Student satisfaction with selected dimensions of the Truman experience

2. Supporting an outstanding, student- and learning-centered faculty

Faculty Senate Goal: To recruit and retain a diverse faculty with impressive academic credentials, solid experience in the liberal arts and sciences, dedication to the support and cultivation of student progress, and a strong commitment to continuing scholarly and professional development.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall support an outstanding, student- and learning-centered faculty who understand and support the institution's liberal arts and sciences mission through the following actions:

- *continuing to recruit excellent faculty who are committed to excellence in teaching, who are well-qualified in their fields, who have successfully experienced the joy of learning as a student*

and as a practicing professional, who appropriately model the active scholar and the life-long learner, who understand and support the liberal arts and sciences mission, and who are committed to the principle of collegiality and the task of building a community of learners;

- *enhancing the diversity of faculty, with particular attention to increasing the proportion of underrepresented populations;*
- *maintaining and supporting a strong program of faculty development opportunities;*
- *enhancing the scholarly environment on campus by encouraging the scholarly activity of faculty and expanding student/faculty collaborative projects;*
- *maintaining an institution-wide student/faculty ratio of 15:1 with the understanding that differences among disciplines shall reflect an appropriate balance between the requirements of each discipline and the mission of the institution;*
- *continuing the institution's efforts to attain university-wide faculty teaching responsibilities consistent with its highly selective status as well as recognizing and rewarding faculty contributions to student learning outside the classroom in the context of an equated 12-hour load expectation that is clearly defined and well-understood among faculty members;*
- *continuing efforts to monitor and address the competitiveness of faculty compensation;*
- *continuing efforts to encourage broad participation by faculty in the life and governance of the university to help ensure an appropriate pool of experienced leadership talent within the university; and*
- *fostering the integration of new faculty members into Truman's academic community through enhanced orientation and mentoring programs.*

The bare essentials for outstanding student learning outcomes are motivated, well-prepared students and committed, inspired faculty who love teaching as their primary professional endeavor. Truman is indeed fortunate to have an outstanding faculty who complement its excellent students so well. These men and women work diligently to ensure that our students receive a splendid education while they also support Truman's community and participate in their disciplines professionally. The future of the institution depends upon their collective ability to maintain a challenging curriculum in a nurturing environment that is attractive to students while meeting the needs of the citizens of Missouri. Truman must continue to find ways to attract, retain, and support the best faculty possible.

The recruitment of new faculty is one of the most important tasks the University undertakes. Truman seeks not only faculty who are outstanding in their professional disciplines but who are also committed to teaching students and who have an appreciation of the liberal arts. The educational environment that Truman is building not only encourages but requires close faculty engagement with students. Truman's efforts to enrich

its liberal arts culture and enhance the student learning environment have led to the selective addition of new faculty to help service LSP courses, to support the Residential Colleges, and to foster increased student/faculty research. In addition, Truman has also experienced a significant number of retirements while some other faculty have sought new challenges at other institutions. Altogether Truman has hired approximately 175 new full-time faculty (both tenure-track and temporary) in the five years 1997-2002. Overall, about thirty percent of the full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty have been hired since the existing University Master Plan and the new LSP were adopted. This statistic alone helps explain the importance of recruiting faculty who have values and professional goals consistent with the University's mission. It is also important that these new faculty are provided appropriate and effective orientation and acculturation activities, including information regarding the philosophy and rationale for the University's core Liberal Studies Program.

Given the significant percentage of new faculty at Truman, the University should strive to foster more opportunities for conversations among faculty not only within disciplines but especially across disciplines and across divisions. Governance councils, university committees, planning workshops, portfolio reading, and faculty development lunches provide many quality opportunities for these conversations, but the University needs to encourage broad participation and needs to structure additional opportunities. While faculty networks within disciplines greatly enhance the development of teaching and scholarly work within the discipline, cross-disciplinary networks are also necessary to support the development of collegiality, interdisciplinary thinking, the liberal arts culture, and farsighted leadership on faculty committees and councils. The University should, in addition, be careful to ensure that continuing faculty have comparable opportunities to review their understanding of Truman's curriculum, to enhance their social and professional networks, and to participate with newer faculty in discussions that help sustain our liberal arts and science culture.

The competition for outstanding faculty who are committed to teaching is very keen in most disciplines. Yet, Truman has had good success in its recruiting efforts in attracting graduates from strong programs. More than 80 percent of Truman's new faculty received one or more of their degrees from a major research university (Research I or II in the Carnegie classification), although only one in seven attended a major liberal arts institution (Baccalaureate I in the Carnegie classification) – another statistic supporting the importance of strong faculty orientation and development programs to ensure that the faculty are knowledgeable about Truman's focus and have the resources they need to be successful in the classroom. Many of these new faculty hires had received significant academic honors, including at least 7 Phi Beta Kappa members, demonstrating that Truman's goal of hiring faculty who exhibit a strong love of learning is being addressed. These recruitment efforts have also resulted in a somewhat more diverse faculty with the percentage of minorities increasing from 10.1 percent to 11.2 percent between Fall 1997 and Fall 2001 while the percentage of female faculty increased from 32.9 percent to 37.6 percent in the same period. The former figure is below the intended goal of 14.3 percent, but the latter figure actually exceeded the goal by 1.2 percentage points. Faculty recruitment requires continuing attention, but future efforts will build on a strong base.

In the recent past Truman has provided significant support for faculty development, and the mission of the faculty development office has been expanded to include support for emerging instructional technology use by the faculty. Truman has also established a Center for Teaching and Learning to further support faculty in the instructional process. Truman needs to continue these efforts to foster continual faculty development in the art and practice of effective teaching in a non-threatening, collegial, and self-reflective environment. Truman has also provided significant support for both curricular and research grants as well as sabbaticals. In the past year, however, all faculty grants and sabbaticals were eliminated as a consequence of reductions in state support. Truman continues to encourage student/faculty collaborative research, but some faculty have noted that while student/faculty research is an important, worthy activity, it relates more to the teaching function than professional development and growth for the faculty member. Although a significant reduction in research support is a reasonable strategy for dealing with a short-term financial problem, the committee believes that it is not an appropriate strategy for coping with a longer-term problem at an institution with Truman's mission. As a consequence, Truman must find ways to rebuild the resource base for faculty research and curriculum development. In addition, the University will continue to support a strong Office of Faculty Development.

Many faculty believe that their salaries and benefits are not competitive with colleagues at institutions with similar missions. One component of Truman's previous Mission Enhancement initiative was to increase the competitiveness of Truman's faculty salaries with other major liberal arts institutions as well as other institutions that appeared on similar external rankings. As part of this Mission Enhancement funding proposal, Truman collected average salary figures by rank using FY 1997 AAUP data for selected groups of institutions which shared characteristics with Truman or which appeared on particular ranking lists with Truman. Based upon these data, average Truman salaries lagged those provided to the faculty at these institutions by a significant amount. Although the average cost of living in Missouri generally and northeastern Missouri is significantly less than national averages, Truman requested Mission Enhancement funds to help close this gap as a means to facilitate the recruitment and retention of faculty and to reward faculty for their outstanding efforts. A follow-up comparison of Truman salaries with the same institutional groups using FY 2001 AAUP data shows essentially little or no improvement in the University's *relative* position based on average salaries by rank. This result was not anticipated since faculty who have served at Truman between FY 1997 and FY 2002 have enjoyed significant increases: an "average" full professor received a 24.6 percent increase; an "average" associate professor received a 27.0 percent increase; and an "average" new assistant professor in FY 1997 received a 34.9 percent increase, including the typical promotion increase he or she would have received in FY 2002. Further improvement in faculty salaries – particularly in comparison to similar institutions such as the Council on Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) members – is, nevertheless, needed and remains a Truman priority.

Often overlooked in discussions of salaries is the value of fringe benefits that contribute significantly to total compensation. Total benefits for the typical faculty and staff member are approximately equal to 25 percent of salary and include such expenditures as health insurance, state retirement, and social security. In addition, the University also subsidizes faculty and staff access to such amenities as the Student Recreation Center, the Child Development Center, and Internet access. In recent years the University's costs for health insurance alone have been increasing at an average annual rate of more than 12 percent. These benefits contribute significantly to the well-being of all paid staff and increasingly have an impact on the resources available for salaries.

The extensive qualitative data collected by the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee over this past year reflects a concern perceived by some faculty about an emerging culture of "busy-ness" that limits opportunities for reflection, that restricts time available for students and colleagues, and that makes professional development and research difficult. The implication is that faculty time is spread too thin. (Yet, interestingly, recently available data from the Fall 2001 faculty survey shows that Truman's typical faculty member spends no more time and sometimes slightly less time than colleagues at other institutions on committee related activities.) The faculty also report that there is a great deal of confusion regarding Truman's intent for its "equated 12-hour" faculty workload, how it is defined, and how it should be applied.

The clear implication of these reports is that Truman needs to engage in a conversation that focuses on faculty responsibilities and expectations. Some of this sense of "busy-ness" may derive from Truman's commitment to a lean administrative structure that results in faculty participating more directly in the day-to-day operation of the University than might be typical at other institutions. On the other hand, Truman's faculty are in a better position to guide and influence the University through this involvement than might be possible at other institutions. A reduction in these activities could eventually require the hiring of more administrators, resulting in fewer resources for instruction and fewer opportunities for faculty involvement. An alternative to this strategy might be to intentionally create times during the week when neither classes nor regular meetings are scheduled so faculty will have time to attend guest lectures or engage in reflective activities. The University's overall objective should be to facilitate meaningful faculty interactions and to encourage a strong focus on supporting the institution's core mission of student learning and development.

In the context of the issue of faculty activity, an analysis of course loads for the current semester and credit hours produced for the 2001-2002 academic year shows that the median number of individual students served by a full-time faculty member in the current semester is approximately 63 while the range of individual students served by the middle 50 percent of full-time faculty is from 51 to 76. These data clearly suggest that students and faculty are benefiting from a very positive environment that provides many opportunities for close interaction. Meanwhile, a statistical computation of FTE students to FTE faculty for 2001-2002 shows that the University-wide average is less than 14:1 with individual disciplines ranging from less than 5:1 to more than 18:1. Although Truman's target student/faculty

ratio is 15:1 for the University as a whole, *it is both expected and appropriate that differences among disciplines and divisions will exist based upon the requirements of each area of study.* These data suggest, however, that workloads across the institution may be out of balance in some cases and that this situation is exacerbated by the recent decline in enrollment. Resolution of this very complex problem – which will include attention to student recruitment, retention, and distribution of faculty – is necessary to address faculty perceptions of the work environment while ensuring greater equity across the institution among faculty as well as efficient use of resources.

As noted previously, Truman's mission is to provide financial access for its students to a nationally competitive education in the liberal arts tradition. Attainment of this objective will be dependent in great part on supporting and organizing the University's faculty to achieve these ends both effectively and efficiently. Truman must also ensure that as an institution it is sensitive to the needs of spouses and family members to help recruit and retain outstanding faculty. Progress on these objectives will require a partnership among the faculty, the administration, and the students that is based upon mutual respect and trust and that utilizes the established governance processes appropriately.

Supporting an Outstanding, Student- and Learning-centered Faculty *Indicators of Performance*

1. Number of full-time faculty
2. Percentage of full-time faculty who are a member of a minority group
3. Percentage of full-time faculty who are female
4. Percentage of full-time faculty with a degree from a major liberal arts college (Baccalaureate I)
5. Average full-time faculty salaries
6. Number and percentage of full-time faculty supporting the liberal arts culture through independent research, funded or peer-reviewed research, student/faculty collaborative research, Residential College Program, study abroad, internships, and advising student organizations
7. Annualized student/faculty ratio
8. Faculty satisfaction with selected aspects of life at Truman

3. Supporting an outstanding, student- and learning-centered staff

Faculty Senate Goal: To attract a highly competent, diverse group of administrators and staff members who are committed to liberal education and a lean administrative structure and who foster an intellectual, supportive, and nurturing environment for students, faculty, administration, and staff.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall support an outstanding, student- and learning-centered staff who understand and support the institution's liberal arts and sciences mission through the following actions:

- *emphasizing the hiring of staff with a strong commitment to students, the principle of collegiality, and the task of building a community of learners;*
- *ensuring that all staff understand the University's mission and that new staff orientations include information on Truman's public liberal arts mission and how staff can contribute to that mission;*
- *enhancing the diversity of staff, with particular attention to increasing the proportion of underrepresented populations;*
- *continuing efforts to monitor and address the competitiveness of staff compensation;*
- *providing appropriate career development opportunities for administrative and support staff and considering appropriate means to identify and recognize substantive differences in staff employment responsibilities; and*
- *continuing efforts to encourage broad participation by staff in the life of the university by establishing a President's Staff Advisory Committee and administering an annual survey of staff opinion to foster staff participation in campus decisions affecting them.*

The concept of staff at Truman is very broad and encompasses a wide range of individuals – from senior administrators on the President's Staff to professionally trained middle managers to highly skilled hourly employees who work in our offices and maintain our facilities. All of these persons have an important role to play in making Truman successful and in fostering the development of students. Many work directly with students as a direct part of their occupations while others interact with students while supervising office workers or advising student organizations. Given this diversity of roles and responsibilities, it is difficult to address the needs of this group in any detail because their needs and interests are very different. Yet, there are several cross-cutting issues that Truman needs to address which affect all staff.

The recruitment and support of all staff require careful attention. Depending on the responsibilities of the position, the market for potential employees might be national, regional, or local, but in all cases Truman should seek new personnel who are committed to students and who are sensitive to the teaching and learning mission of the University. All staff should also be included in appropriate orientation programs regarding Truman's liberal arts mission and how all staff can help support that mission so they can respond appropriately to questions and issues raised by students, colleagues, and friends in their home communities.

Successful staff recruitment and retention will also require that Truman continues to monitor compensation packages to ensure they are competitive within the appropriate local, regional, or national market and that all staff have access to development opportunities to foster their career growth. Efforts to recruit a diverse staff that reflects the diversity of our local, regional, and national communities must also

continue. Our students need to see and experience a University staff that mirrors to the extent possible the richness of Missouri and America. Given the lack of racial diversity in the local northeast Missouri region, there will be limits to what Truman can expect to achieve on this dimension among the staff recruited from this area, but there are other salient dimensions of diversity that can enrich a student's experience at Truman. For example, the 2000 national election showed that one of the most significant dividing lines in America is the split between rural and urban citizens in terms of how they view many issues. Since the majority of Truman's students come from urban and suburban areas, the opportunity to interact with staff from the surrounding rural communities can be an invaluable experience.

During the recent planning process the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee received significant comment from many staff that they often did not feel connected to the University's decision-making process when issues affecting them were being addressed. While Truman has typically tried to obtain such input on a more informal basis, there is growing recognition within the University community that these efforts need to be formalized in some way. As a consequence, the SPAC believes that an initial step in this direction should be the establishment of a President's Staff Advisory Committee comprised of representatives of the staff who will meet regularly with the President, or a designee, to discuss issues of mutual interest.

If Truman is to be successful in achieving its mission, the entire University community must work together as a team. Truman's staff are an integral part of that team, and they have a crucial role to play as the institution moves forward. As with faculty, institutional policies and procedures that are sensitive to the needs of spouses and family will also play a role in long-term staff satisfaction and effectiveness. Staff must also have the support that they need to accomplish their tasks within the context of Truman's larger vision.

Supporting an Outstanding, Student- and Learning-centered Staff *Indicators of Performance*

1. Number of full- and part-time staff
2. Percentage of staff who are a member of a minority group
3. Selected measures of staff satisfaction drawn from annual survey
4. Average staff salaries by appropriate job classification
5. Number of full-time staff supporting the liberal arts culture through advising student organizations, mentoring students in work and service-learning experiences, and participating in educational and programming efforts that promote student learning and development
6. Ratio of full-time faculty to full-time staff

B. Deepening an enhanced, self-reflective liberal arts culture

1. Enhance Truman's liberal arts culture

Faculty Senate Goal: To incorporate within the university community the values, policies, and practices, and relationships characteristic of a liberal arts and sciences institution.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman shall foster the values and relationships characteristic of a liberal arts and sciences university:

- *by reaffirming and actualizing the meaning of the liberal arts at Truman for faculty, students, and staff;*
- *by increasing opportunities for community building dialogue among faculty and staff by providing a common area for meals, by establishing a class-free "common" hour during the week for community building purposes, by continuing special events such as the Summer Workshop and January Conference, and other appropriate mechanisms;*
- *by fostering opportunities for students to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of the liberal arts at Truman at various stages in their career here beyond Truman Week and the first year on campus;*
- *by emphasizing the hiring of faculty with strong liberal arts backgrounds and ensuring that the orientation of new faculty includes information on how Truman's public liberal arts mission is realized at this University;*
- *by encouraging and actively fostering increased opportunities for faculty teaching and student learning in interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary/ cross-disciplinary settings, including broader collaboration in instructional methods and materials so students can apply interdisciplinary methods in a variety of courses; and*
- *by reviewing and updating Truman's formal, written mission statement to reflect the growing maturity of the University's mission and liberal arts culture.*

Truman was established 135 years ago as a private institution with a regional mission to train young Missourians in the northeastern corner of the state as teachers for the public schools and as business men and women for an emerging commercial economy. The University has undergone numerous changes since then, but it has always maintained a strong focus on student learning, a commitment to institutional excellence, and a resolve to serve the citizens of Missouri. Truman's liberal arts mission is often described as "new," and in the context of the institution's total history it is a recent development. However, the liberal arts mission was established seventeen years ago in 1985, and it has undergone significant development over this period. Since Truman's liberal arts culture is still "young"

and the University is still developing traditions that affirm its status as a liberal arts institution, it is sometimes easy to overlook the progress that has been attained. Yet, Truman is recognized as a leading liberal arts institution in the public sector, and the recent conferral of a Phi Beta Kappa chapter to the faculty attests to its progress as a liberal arts institution among all universities with similar purposes.

During its data gathering activities of the past year, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee has heard expressions of concern from some faculty members regarding their perception that Truman lacks a strong liberal arts culture or that the University has not yet developed a philosophical basis for its future development as a liberal arts university. Some of these faculty even assert that Truman has not yet attained an institutional understanding of the meaning of the liberal arts for this campus. The SPAC views this debate as (1) evidence of the strength of the faculty and their engagement with the future of the University and (2) as an indicator of the need for Truman to more effectively acculturate new faculty into the values of the institution as well as (3) the need to more intentionally foster a stronger intellectual community of learners through both formal and informal cross-disciplinary networks of faculty.

Since nearly a third of Truman's tenured and tenure-track faculty have been hired in the last five years – after the new Liberal Studies Program proposal was debated and approved, it is not necessarily surprising that some faculty are uncertain that Truman has a clear statement of philosophy and purpose for the liberal arts. Yet, Truman has developed such a statement that is based upon the work of several faculty committees and that culminated in the *Report of the Liberal Arts and Sciences Task Force to the Undergraduate Council*. The *Report* begins with a statement of philosophy and a proposed synthesis for a public liberal arts and sciences institution that includes the following comments (pp. 9 and 11).

“... [Truman] should develop a program that balances the liberal arts and general education traditions, that preserves the predispositions, tendencies, and virtues of each. The program must acknowledge the different goals of the liberal arts tradition while endorsing its rationalist assumptions, its logical methods, its concern with abstract ideas, its presentation (including critique) of ‘universal truths,’ and its development of the intellect through such methods and experiences. Simultaneously, the program must incorporate the elements of the general education tradition, including advances in cognitive psychology and the uses of psychological methods in education, a concern with experimentation and problem solving, intellectual skills for addressing the problems of present and future societies, and the development of the individual as a whole.

“There are many paths to educational goals, and this program of Essential Skills, Modes of Inquiry, and Interconnecting Perspectives is the curricular foundation for ...[Truman]. It explicitly addresses the various intellectual traditions to which contemporary liberal arts education is heir, and it looks toward the success of students in the future.”

The findings of the *Report* are summarized in the “Prologue” of the current University Master Plan. This “Prologue” also contains the core liberal arts outcomes of Truman’s educational program: “Upon graduation our students will:

- ❖ have command of **essential intellectual skills** such as written and oral communication, quantitative analysis, and computer literacy;
- ❖ be **broadly educated**, exhibiting an appreciation of the interconnectedness of knowledge and thereby demonstrating the capacity to integrate and synthesize knowledge and information across disciplines;
- ❖ manifest a high level of **mastery of a major area of study** as corroborated, whenever possible, by objective, nationally-normed assessment measures;
- ❖ have a growing **understanding of the moral and ethical challenges** within social, professional, and personal decisions by encountering well-established classics and by having meaningful educational experiences both within and outside the classroom;
- ❖ have undertaken **free personal intellectual exploration or research**;
and
- ❖ be prepared for **effective living in a democratic society.**”

Affirming the Promise, Pages 4-5

Although these statements are readily available – in the past year all new faculty have even received a wallet card containing the core outcomes statement and Truman core supporting values, they have apparently not been widely internalized by many faculty or students and staff. It seems clear that Truman must – as a community of learners – review and affirm its underlying philosophy and educational goals and then ensure that all new faculty, students, and staff are provided ample opportunities to learn about these elements of Truman’s culture through various orientation and programmatic activities. It is all too easy for even experienced, liberally-educated faculty and staff to fall into the habit of looking at the University solely through the lens of their discipline or office to the detriment of Truman’s liberal arts mission and culture. For students these acculturation opportunities should not be limited to freshman week or even the first year on campus; similarly, for new faculty this introduction to Truman must extend beyond the first few formal days of orientation on campus and should occur in several venues at the discipline and division levels as well as the University level. Even veteran faculty would benefit from periodic opportunities to reflect on Truman’s liberal arts mission with their colleagues.

The apparent absence of an understanding among at least some of the faculty of Truman’s underlying philosophy of the liberal arts is an important example of the need for better communications on campus among faculty, students, and staff. Thus, the planning committee believes that community building and the development of additional opportunities for faculty conversations across disciplines and divisions should be a major focus of Truman’s collective efforts over the next several years. These efforts should

include such strategies as providing faculty and staff a common area for meals on campus (as the Georgian Room was once used) as well as establishing a weekly “common” hour when classes and meetings would be avoided so community enhancing activities such as lectures and convocations could be scheduled with a minimum of conflicts for faculty and staff. Just as it is important to provide such opportunities for faculty and staff, access to these activities by students could also be enhanced through creative refinement of the class schedule and the calendar. Truman should also continue to support long-standing traditions such as the Summer Planning Workshop while seeking to develop new ones like January Conference.

Successful faculty recruitment is, of course, a prerequisite for successfully building a vibrant liberal arts culture. Truman is very fortunate to have such talented, dedicated professionals to lead our students through their educational programs. Yet, the SPAC noticed with interest that for all full-time instructional staff hires since 1997 (both tenure-track and temporary) only one-seventh of these faculty had earned a degree at a Baccalaureate I college (the Carnegie classification that includes most nationally recognized, prominent liberal arts colleges) while more than 80 percent had received a degree from a Research I or II university (the Carnegie classifications that include the largest research universities). Although this comparison is not really equivalent because only a small fraction of college graduates can attend a Baccalaureate I college, while Research I and II universities produce a much larger proportion of doctorates nationally, the relative proportion of faculty hires highlights the challenge and importance of recruiting faculty committed to teaching and the liberal arts as well as orienting them to the Truman philosophy.

As Truman’s liberal arts culture continues to develop, the University community should more intentionally highlight indicators of progress, foster environments that promote these activities, and then assess the results with the goal of closing the feedback loop to strengthen our learning community. For example, since one of Truman’s core outcomes is to produce students who are broadly educated with an appreciation of the interconnectedness of knowledge and who have demonstrated the capacity to integrate and synthesize knowledge across disciplines, Truman should consider ways to provide ample opportunities in the curriculum for students to experience and demonstrate this type of learning. Similarly, since one of Truman’s core supporting values is to provide intellectual challenge in a *nurturing* environment, the University should try to understand much better – and address – why the number of graduating students who perceive that they are not adequately appreciated as individuals has risen slightly in the last few years. Notwithstanding rising doubts about assessment at Truman among some faculty, staff, and students, the planning committee is persuaded that the wise use of assessment and the further development of our liberal arts culture are inexorably linked.

Finally, the SPAC believes that Truman’s formal, written mission statement should be reviewed and updated as a priority activity that has the potential to enhance the University as a community of learners. Since its adoption, Truman has matured significantly as a liberal arts institution. Such phrases as “*tolerance of difference and diversity*” (emphasis added) should be updated to reflect the institution’s deeper understanding of the importance of diversity to its mission. Similarly, the term “affordability” does not appear in the

statement and the centrality of assessment for continuous improvement is not highlighted. A somewhat refined statement of Truman's mission would seem to be timely.

Enhancement of the Liberal Arts Culture at Truman ***Indicators of Performance***

1. Proportion of students who successfully demonstrate interdisciplinary thinking in their senior portfolios
2. GSQ data on how often students applied the knowledge gained in one discipline to learning in other disciplines
3. Student satisfaction regarding their overall impression of the liberal arts and sciences courses
4. Student satisfaction with Truman's concern with them as an individual
5. Student satisfaction with opportunities to interact with faculty outside of class
6. Frequency of student discussions outside of class regarding social, cultural, or academic issues
7. Student self-reported data concerning time-on-task and participation in cultural or intellectual activities outside of class

2. Refined Liberal Studies Program

Faculty Senate Goal: To offer a strong liberal arts and sciences curriculum that provides each student with a sound foundation and breadth of requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes regardless of intended area of specialization.

Faculty Senate Goal: To graduate undergraduate and graduate students who demonstrate well-developed essential and higher order skills such as communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, self-reflection, leadership, and integration of the various modes of inquiry within problem-solving experiences.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall foster a coherent, integrated liberal arts and sciences curriculum:

- *by reviewing and refining the Liberal Studies Program as expeditiously as possible to resolve such issues as (1) the complexity of record keeping and the difficulties created for students and advisors caused by section-specific approvals for writing enhanced requirements and the communicative mode of inquiry; (2) double and triple counting of classes that make some courses more desirable to students than others, creating frustration among students who are not able to register for the few multiple counting courses available; (3) course availability, especially LSP writing enhanced and JINS courses that meet student as well as faculty interests; (4) pass/fail and credit/no credit grading options within the LSP; and (5) perceived lack of flexibility for students in meeting course requirements for the LSP, the major, and required support courses;*

- *by examining course placement practices related to the LSP – especially in foreign language and mathematics – to ensure that students are placed in courses which take maximum advantage of learning in high school and that are consistent with long-term knowledge retention of students who take courses at Truman;*
- *by carefully exploring the relationship of all majors to the LSP to ensure (1) that all disciplines are appropriately contributing to the delivery of LSP instruction and (2) that majors are challenging students to meet liberal arts knowledge and skills;*
- *by ensuring that all advisors and students have convenient access to accurate information about the LSP requirements and how they can be met; and*
- *by refining as soon as possible Truman's formal assessments of the Liberal Studies Program to produce quality data for improvement and accountability and to foster the development of a fully integrated liberal arts and sciences culture that nurtures values and behaviors consistent with Truman's vision of the liberal arts.*

Few topics are likely to produce more passionate conversation among faculty, students, and even staff than Truman's new Liberal Studies Program (LSP) that was adopted in 1997 after many years of study and debate. While the curriculum has its defenders – and the Phi Beta Kappa site visitors commented directly and favorably on it as a distinguishing feature of Truman, there are many faculty and students who will speak at length about its perceived shortcomings. It is also clear that while many members of the Truman community have concerns about the LSP, many others are not eager to undertake a major revision given the current curriculum's newness, the years required to develop it, the extraordinary energy its implementation has consumed, and its perceived strengths. Unfortunately, this debate is largely uninformed by hard data regarding its efficacy as an educational program because students are only just now beginning to graduate under its requirements.

Notwithstanding the absence of evidence regarding the LSP's performance in practical terms as an educational curriculum, two trends are very clear: (1) the implementation of the new curriculum has resulted in several problems that must be resolved quickly; and (2) student satisfaction with Truman's core liberal arts program is low and has actually declined during this transition period. With respect to the latter statement, the Graduating Student Questionnaire data are unequivocal: the percentage of students reporting "Very Satisfied" with their major courses is more than twice as high as those reporting "Very Satisfied" with their core courses; similarly, three times as many graduates are likely to report they are "Very Satisfied" with faculty enthusiasm in courses for the major than in core courses. Clearly, these are issues which need to be addressed.

The list of concerns typically begins with statements expressing the view that the LSP is "too complex," "too large," "too inflexible," or that it is hampered by "limited course availability." Some of these problems reflect the hopefully temporary growing pains of implementing a new curriculum, while others result from the choices made by the faculty

and administration as implementation proceeded. For example, in some cases the perceived complexity of the curriculum has been created by a willingness to approve courses on a “by section” or “by instructor” basis as satisfying writing enhanced or communicative mode requirements. This decision alone makes navigating the curriculum much more difficult than necessary for students, faculty advisors, and even the registrar’s office. The availability of writing enhanced and JINS courses has been and continues to be an issue, although this situation is improving. Part of this problem has, however, been associated with the course approval process as well as the tendency of some disciplines and divisions to give preference to providing courses in the major in preference to the LSP. The practice of double and even triple counting some courses as meeting multiple LSP requirements has benefited some students by reducing the number of required courses but has greatly frustrated many more because the number of seats in these classes is limited. These concerns are not trivial as individual issues, and collectively they have a significant impact on how the current LSP functions for both students and faculty. They can and should, however, be addressed *and resolved* as quickly as possible through the faculty governance process to remove these obstacles to students successfully navigating the LSP.

The issues of size and flexibility of the Liberal Studies Program are more complex and reflect, to at least some degree, differences among the faculty regarding their approach to the study of the liberal arts as well as the size and prescriptiveness of individual majors and their required support courses. In many cases a student’s experience of the LSP’s flexibility is also driven by the relationship of the major to the core requirement. The current LSP is smaller than the program it replaced (41-62 hours versus 49-50 hours plus 22-25 other liberal arts requirements determined by the majors), but it is also larger than the core programs of many liberal arts colleges. The issue of size is particularly acute for students in some programs with specialized accreditation requirements; many of these same students also find their choice of courses within the LSP to be restricted by their major. University policy directed at the LSP would provide little relief for these students given the specialized accreditation expectations.

In other instances, however, the issues of size and flexibility reflect more fundamental differences among the faculty regarding their philosophy toward the liberal arts. Nationally, core programs run the gamut from essentially unrestricted student choice of core courses to more restricted, structured approaches like Truman’s. As noted previously, our current program represents a deliberate choice to strike a balance between cultural preservation and promoting creative individualism while also acknowledging aspects of the general education movement of the 20th century. This attempt to capture the best of all three traditions is not without its costs, however. Some faculty and students see the size and structural requirements as assuring appropriate breadth across disciplines while others see it as restricting a student’s freedom for intellectual exploration. These philosophical issues tend to be played out in comments questioning the need for a student to complete all modes of inquiry, suggesting more generous test-out policies based on learning attained in high school, and expressing concern about the amount of course work some students need to complete Truman’s mathematics requirement. Some faculty are also concerned about the role of interdisciplinarity in the core curriculum, whether it is sufficient, and whether it is

appropriately supported. Finally, others are concerned that course development has not been sufficiently sensitive to the intellectual interests and needs of students.

There is neither sufficient time nor space in this report to reflect the richness and passion of these debates regarding the Liberal Studies Program, so the foregoing discussion is meant to be illustrative only. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee views this debate as an indicator of the vitality of the liberal arts at Truman as well as the engagement of the faculty in the future of the University. Furthermore, there are several well-argued, distinctive positions regarding these philosophical issues, although some approaches are more likely to be more appropriate for Truman than others. The SPAC is concerned, however, that these issues must be addressed and resolved on a priority basis through the faculty governance process – particularly those problems that are more implementation and logistical in character – because continuation of present levels of frustration will negatively impact our community. In addition, the SPAC suspects – but cannot demonstrate – that these unresolved issues regarding the LSP are having negative effects on student recruitment and retention. The SPAC does not believe it has a special role outside the governance process to resolve these questions, but it does offer these comments to help frame the ensuing discussion.

- ❖ Students and student learning should, of course, be at the center of Truman's considerations. Recognizing that no student can anticipate all of her/his future educational needs and that life-long learning is a necessary goal, what changes or adjustments to the LSP are appropriate to assure that our students have the intellectual, problem-solving, and information organization skills they will need to meet their personal goals and to be contributing citizens in the 21st century?
- ❖ With respect to Truman's role in the Missouri system and its mission as a public liberal arts university, how should the LSP be structured to reinforce Truman's unique niche as a highly selective, liberal arts institution?
- ❖ With respect to the academic curriculum as a whole as it is experienced by the student, what is the appropriate relationship of the major and the LSP? How does each major contribute to and support the broad goals of the Liberal Studies Program?
- ❖ With respect to learning outcomes, how can the LSP be objectively assessed to ensure it is meeting its goals and that Truman is accountable to its students and the citizens of Missouri for the University's performance?

Truman's students deserve a Liberal Studies Program that is challenging, that is delivered in a nurturing environment, and that is reasonably easy to understand and navigate. Truman's faculty and staff deserve a program that they can explain and defend to students as

well as one they can reasonably administer. Truman deserves a program of which it can be proud and through which it can further its development as a liberal arts university. These objectives can – and must – be addressed as expeditiously as possible.

Refined Liberal Studies Program *Indicators of Performance*

1. Assessment results from the evaluation of student learning in the LSP, including assessments of essential skills, modes of inquiry, and interconnecting perspectives that are derived from student portfolios as well as direct objective measures
2. GSQ data on student satisfaction with core courses, faculty enthusiasm for core courses, and the learning that occurred in core courses
3. Faculty survey data on satisfaction with the curriculum
4. Percentage of faculty teaching LSP courses

3. *Strong Major Fields of Study*

Faculty Senate Goal: To provide each student an in-depth major area of study that facilitates mastery of disciplinary concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes; that furthers the goals of liberal education; that ensures nationally competitive graduates; and that prepares the student for post-baccalaureate study or for immediate entrance into the professions.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall foster a coherent, integrated liberal arts and sciences curriculum that is noted for strong outcomes in the major:

- *by ensuring that all undergraduate and graduate degree programs produce graduates who are nationally competitive and fully prepared for further study or successful entry into a career;*
- *by continuing to improve student learning outcomes in the major and student satisfaction upon graduation;*
- *by limiting new program development to areas of institutional strength that grow directly from and enhance the liberal arts mission of the university;*
- *by ensuring strong linkages and cross-connections between individual majors, the LSP, and the intellectual abilities and skills Truman graduates are expected to acquire; and*
- *by ensuring an appropriate balance between requirements in the major and the LSP.*

Truman is an institution that is well-known for the quality of its graduates and their ability to compete successfully with graduates of other institutions as they move on to the next step in their careers – whether that is graduate or professional school, the job, or other activities. As a public institution Truman must also address accountability expectations for

student performance that may be significantly higher than those encountered by similar private sector institutions. The evidence provided by Truman's assessment program shows that its students have enjoyed great success: in the most recent academic year more than 40 percent continued their education in graduate or professional school while most of the remainder secured employment. In addition, nearly 80 percent scored at or above the 50th percentile on an objective assessment of performance in the major. Educational quality in the major is not a significant concern for Truman at the university-wide level, although Truman must continue to maintain strong student performance.

Several of the important issues that Truman must address regarding its majors are outlined in the previous section under the broad heading of the relationship of the majors to the Liberal Studies Program. For a number of faculty and disciplines, it seems clear that the major comes first in their hierarchy of concerns. Although this perspective is somewhat understandable since only discipline faculty are clearly responsible for their students' learning outcomes in the major while all faculty are at least partially responsible for LSP outcomes (*i.e.*, someone else can pick up the slack if there is any), Truman will be unable to realize its educational goals unless all disciplines find ways to support the LSP. Some faculty in the more professionally oriented disciplines report that the tendency to focus on the major is exacerbated by the perceived attitudes of some colleagues that they "don't belong" or that their potential contributions to the LSP (for example, through a JINS course) are not valued. In order for Truman to realize its full potential, these attitudes must be addressed. All disciplines have a role to play in achieving the University's liberal arts mission. Furthermore, the faculty in *all* majors should periodically review their course curricula to ensure that LSP learning objectives are reinforced through study of the major.

Other key issues that the faculty will need to provide leadership on in the coming years include providing strong assistance to the Admission Office with student recruitment, aggressively supporting University retention efforts by fostering increased opportunities for close student/faculty interactions, developing ways to more seamlessly integrate out-of-classroom and off-campus learning experiences into the formal curriculum, and ensuring that faculty resources are wisely and effectively utilized to support core institutional values. Although student recruitment is a responsibility shared by everyone, incoming student expectations increasingly focus on the faculty role. Truman has defined for itself a narrow educational niche that requires high levels of faculty involvement with students both inside and outside the classroom. Since the "typical" (*i.e.*, median) faculty member is seeing about 63 students a semester and three-fourths of the faculty are seeing approximately 75 or fewer students, the potential to offer a rich, support environment is very possible. Nationally, liberal arts universities are increasingly involved in such activities as student/faculty research, internships, study abroad, and service learning. Although Truman has been active in these areas, the University must not only continue but must increase its efforts if it is to maintain a competitive advantage with other institutions.

Concurrent with fostering the advantages of close student/faculty interactions will be the necessity to ensure a critical mass of students in all disciplines – especially those at the graduate level – and to balance student/faculty workloads across the disciplines. Variation

among disciplines in terms of student/faculty workloads is expected to occur across majors, but Truman needs to ensure that there is a better balance in the future than presently exists. Ideally, these issues can be addressed through increased recruitment and retention, but faculty also need to review and consider periodically how the curriculum is structured and delivered. It also seems likely that enrollment growth at the graduate level will be most likely to occur in those disciplines such as education, accountancy, and communication disorders which are tied to state licensure requirements and which have strong linkages with our programs at the undergraduate level. In order to maximize the opportunities available, faculty may need to review both undergraduate and graduate requirements to ensure a close connection and a smooth transition for students.

Truman does not anticipate significant new program development during the next five years at either the undergraduate or graduate levels. If any new programs are brought forward, they will need to be developed from existing resources, should grow from institutional strengths, and should directly enhance the University's liberal arts mission as well as its attractiveness to potential new students. Truman's focus over the next several years will be to continue to enhance the strengths of its existing programs and to assure the efficient use of scarce resources. Coupled with this perspective will be continuing emphasis on the integration of appropriate instructional technology into the curriculum, including the development of e-learning or Web-based opportunities to enrich the experiences of enrolled students and to help address unmet state and regional educational needs.

Strong Major Fields of Study ***Indicators of Performance***

1. Number and distribution of majors by discipline
2. Number and distribution of graduates by discipline
3. Percentage of students scoring above the 50th percentile on an exit assessment in the major
4. Percentage of graduates entering graduate or professional school within *two* (2) years of graduation.
5. Percentage of graduates employed in fields related to their major.
6. GSQ data regarding student satisfaction with the major in terms of challenge, faculty enthusiasm, preparation, advising, and overall satisfaction.

4. Expanded Out-of-classroom and Off-campus Opportunities and Their Integration with Truman's Liberal Arts and Sciences Culture

Faculty Senate Goal: To enhance the role of co-curricular activities at the university and divisional levels in meeting the university's intellectual, social, and personal development goals for students.

Faculty Senate Goal: To establish a culture throughout the curricular and co-curricular environment that helps develop students who possess the intellectual, social, and personal characteristics consistent with Truman's mission.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall foster the continued development of its liberal arts culture and the living/learning environment of its students:

- *by continuing to support a significant program of out-of-classroom and off-campus experiences that is intentionally designed to foster and enrich Truman's distinctiveness as an institution as well as its liberal arts culture, paying particular attention to student differences based on gender, ethnicity, and developmental needs;*
- *by developing and communicating a clearer vision of the role that out-of-classroom and off-campus experiences can play in the development and acculturation of Truman's students;*
- *by enhancing the participation of Truman students in out-of-classroom and off-campus experiences such as study abroad, collaborative research, internships, and service learning through better integration with the classroom based curriculum, better advising regarding the benefits of the choices available, and appropriate development opportunities for faculty and advisors;*
- *by ensuring that scholarship and campus employment opportunities are optimized to enhance liberal learning and to foster personal and professional development;*
- *by defining and recognizing appropriate incentives for faculty and staff to support out-of-classroom and off-campus experiences; and*
- *by significantly improving the flow of information on campus about major events and activities as well as the coordination of the activities through improved calendaring procedures and information dissemination.*

Truman has long recognized the importance of co-curricular experiences in developing its liberal arts culture. Truly, the potentially unique aspects of a Truman education include not only a superior academic environment but also the wide variety of co-curricular learning opportunities that are possible in our traditional, residential university experience. National higher education trends clearly indicate that residential, traditional college-aged students will remain a narrow and highly competitive segment of the higher education market. If we cannot maximize the educational impact of our out-of-classroom experiences, we may not only diminish our ability to attract students to Truman, but we may also fail to advocate effectively the importance of the total college experience to state-level decision-makers who are attracted by the perceived economic efficiencies of distance learning and other nontraditional college experiences. The success of activities outside Truman's classrooms will be a critical component of the University's ability to recruit and retain outstanding students as well as to justify the institution's niche in the state system as a highly selective, liberal arts university.

The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee made a deliberate attempt to collect attitudes regarding the co-curriculum from the various segments of Truman's community. Faculty opinions were collected from discipline action plan reports, focus group summaries, and January Conference breakout sessions. Student and staff opinions were also gathered in focus groups and January Conference breakout sessions.

Students consistently emphasized the importance of a wide variety of co-curricular activities. In their portfolio submissions students often report that co-curricular activities are their "most personally satisfying" experience at Truman. Students believe that they benefit from these various involvements in many ways, including: increased personal satisfaction with Truman leading to retention; establishment of important faculty, staff and peer connections; reinforcement and application of classroom learning; achievement of balance in personal lives and educational experiences; and development of important skills and characteristics. In addition, numerous students express some dissatisfaction with the support they receive from the Truman community regarding these experiences. Specifically, students are concerned about faculty support of and involvement in co-curricular activities. Students also believe certain out-of-classroom activities should be included as a more significant part of the curriculum. They cite many frustrations regarding the administration of and academic recognition for experiences such as study abroad and service learning.

Staff expressed support for co-curricular experiences and the value of these experiences to achieving Truman's mission. The staff also noted the frustrations expressed by students regarding the complexity of the bureaucratic details associated with study abroad experiences – as opposed to the positive nature of the experiences themselves. Staff members involved in working with students in co-curricular activities report the intrinsic value of these mentoring contacts to their enjoyment of and satisfaction with their own work as well as the apparent benefits to the students themselves. The importance of scholarship and campus work experiences in the achievement of academic goals was also noted by the staff as well as their observation that the University does not always utilize students in the most meaningful ways.

Faculty members generally recognize the importance of co-curricular activities in meeting student academic and retention goals. However, faculty are more generally supportive of co-curricular experiences that are more directly extensions of classroom activities such as study abroad, research, internships, and service learning. Many faculty express their desire to have these activities better integrated into the curriculum. Faculty are also concerned that students appropriately balance their time in co-curricular activities. Some faculty also cite student self-reported time-on-task data which suggest that only 20-30 percent of the students study more than 20 hours per week outside of class. Although faculty recognize that their personal involvement in these activities is critical, they expressed concern that faculty participation in co-curricular activities is not appropriately recognized and is not distributed among the faculty in an equitable manner. Many faculty believe they are already over-extended and additional expectations for involvement in the co-curriculum might result in burnout.

Students, faculty, and staff strongly recognize the importance of service learning and support expansion of these opportunities. One of the most unexpected results of SPAC's data gathering efforts was the fact that all three groups highlighted the value and potential of service learning even though that option was not mentioned in any of the prompts.

Although there is a general lack of consensus among the members of Truman's community regarding what activities are properly considered "co-curricular," the great majority of people are content to include most out-of-classroom or off-campus activities in this concept – although the comfort level is higher with activities that are more clearly extensions of classroom behaviors. This is especially true for faculty. Most of these out-of-classroom activities would benefit from closer coordination and integration with the formal academic curriculum, but this is especially important for activities such as study abroad and internships that have potential credit implications for students. While an effective program of co-curricular activities is necessary for Truman to remain in the forefront of liberal arts institutions and to serve its students well, the University needs to develop, communicate, and implement a clearer vision of the role that out-of-classroom activities can play in the liberal arts culture and experience at Truman if this potential is to be realized. Students also need additional support and mentoring to take advantage of these out-of-classroom experiences, and the institution needs to establish better ways to reward participation in out-of-classroom experiences as well as to help students, staff and faculty make informed and intentional decisions regarding their involvement. Service learning opportunities merit a closer examination on campus, and the planning committee notes that scholarship and work-study hours may be the most prevalent type of service learning at Truman and, as such, are a convenient way to begin the evaluation of this opportunity.

Integration of Expanded Out-of-classroom and Off-campus Opportunities *Indicators of Performance*

1. Students participating in study abroad, collaborative research, internships, and service learning opportunities each year
2. Student participation in Truman's annual student research conference as well as off-campus conferences and development activities
3. Student participation in athletics and student organizations, including extent of involvement
4. GSQ student satisfaction data regarding out-of-classroom experiences and their significance to student educational experiences
5. Faculty and staff participation in supporting out-of-classroom activities

5. A Vigorous, Participatory Assessment Program

Faculty Senate Goal: To maintain a self-reflective culture that seeks continuous improvement.

Faculty Senate Goal: To focus on teaching and learning as the university's primary activities that provide a common sense of purpose for all members of the university community who will carefully monitor learning outcomes as they seek to continuously improve student learning processes and the supportive systems that enhance them.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: *Truman State University shall reinforce the role and vitality of a vigorous, participatory assessment program that fosters both continual institutional improvement and public accountability through the following actions:*

- *assuring continual quality improvements in the teaching and learning experiences of students and faculty by*
 - (a) *reviewing and affirming a vision for assessment at Truman and its role in our liberal arts culture;*
 - (b) *fostering the balanced use of qualitative and quantitative measures;*
 - (c) *focusing data collection and analysis on issues directly relevant to faculty – and student – needs and interests;*
 - (d) *providing timely and accurate analyses of data in a readily accessible format;*
 - (e) *making data available in a form that enables faculty, staff, and students to conduct independent analyses as desired, e.g., establishing an accessible “data mart” as part of the student information system implementation;*
 - (f) *improving the quality and effectiveness of advising by assuring faculty and advisors have the tools and information necessary to use individual assessment information in the student advising process;*
 - (g) *demonstrating the use of assessment data in the university's decision-making processes as well as documenting and reporting changes and initiatives derived from assessment data;*
 - (h) *clearly identifying and communicating the issues identified and addressed through assessment data as well as the actions taken based upon these data;*
 - (i) *expanding the orientation process for new students, faculty, and staff to include a thorough introduction to the history and role of assessment at Truman;*
 - (j) *offering faculty and students research grants and/or academic credit to conduct analytical assessment studies; and*
 - (k) *providing student learning opportunities through increased student and faculty involvement in the assessment program; and*
- *fostering continuous improvement, review, and evaluation of the assessment program itself by*

- (a) restructuring the Vice President's Assessment Advisory Committee to include a complementary committee with appropriate support that analyzes data and prepares selected studies of various assessment topics for the Truman community;*
- (b) addressing the issue of student motivation as quickly as possible by developing incentives for strong student performance, e.g., small scholarships for students scoring above the 50th percentile and including assessment performance in scholarship renewal procedures;*
- (c) making compliance with assessment processes as seamless as possible, e.g., embedding assessment activities into classes whenever practical;*
- (d) periodically reviewing the efficacy of each assessment component in the context of the institution's evolving liberal arts culture;*
- (e) developing an appropriate survey process to gather assessment information periodically from both faculty and staff;*
- (f) expanding the scope of assessment at the graduate program level;*
- (g) encouraging and increasing scholarly activity regarding assessment within the academic community;*
- (h) implementing a comprehensive assessment information management system based upon the improved student information system; and*
- (i) extending systematic assessment processes to all major administrative programs and offices to ensure continuing quality improvement and the satisfaction of students, faculty, and staff.*

Assessment is so much a part of the institutional fabric that comprises Truman that it is difficult to think of one without the other. When Truman launched its assessment program in the early 1970s under the leadership of its former president, Dr. Charles J. McClain, assessment was the primary vehicle for institutional improvement and served as a mechanism to help the University develop a more distinctive mission. Truman first gained national recognition for its comprehensive assessment program in the early 1980s, and this achievement was a significant factor in Truman's selection to become Missouri's public liberal arts university when the state sought ways to diversify the system. Truman's assessment program continued to mature as the liberal arts mission was implemented, and the program positioned the University to capitalize on Missouri's Funding for Results Program (FFR) throughout the 1990s. At one point assessment and the FFR program were generating half of Truman's new unrestricted funds each fiscal year. In summary, then, there is a long institutional history at Truman of good things flowing from the University's assessment program.

Truman's continued development as a liberal arts institution of national rank will be propelled in part by a strong assessment program. An effective assessment program will help keep the focus of both faculty and students on the attainment of outstanding learning outcomes. In addition, the public and decision-makers in Jefferson City are likely to place stronger than ever emphasis on an institution's demonstrated capacity to positively impact students, particularly as resources remain tight.

It is, therefore, very significant that increasing numbers of faculty and students perceive a disconnection between the current assessment program and the needs and interests of the University. These individuals perceive that the program has not evolved to address changing conditions, that too many data are collected and then not analyzed or not analyzed appropriately, and that the assessment data findings are not communicated sufficiently or not used to make significant decisions. There is also a growing concern that student motivation to perform well on objective tests has declined significantly and that results are not always reliable. In fact, student leaders report growing dissatisfaction among students with the assessment program because they see little connection or benefit to their experiences. At the same time, others among the faculty and staff are calling for greater use and availability of assessment data for student advising and instructional improvement.

Interestingly, these concerns about the assessment program are occurring at a time when significant change has occurred and other elements are under review. Assessment data are now published as a three-part Assessment Almanac that exists on the Web and in hard copy. The locally-developed Institutional Student Survey has been replaced by the national CSEQ survey, the freshman component of Truman's long-standing value-added testing assessment of its liberal studies core program has been suspended while new options are evaluated, and the Sophomore Writing Experience has been suspended while a new writing assessment is developed. In addition, the Assessment Committee has committed itself to a major reorganization that will result in a separate group of faculty, staff, and students that will conduct focused data analyses on topics of broad interest to the Truman community with the appropriate professional support.

While it might be easy to dismiss the concerns that have been expressed as a case study in an institution's failure to communicate effectively with all of the members of its community, such an approach would be missing the point. The fact is that student engagement does indeed seem to be waning – although voluntary compliance remains high. Many of today's students seek and appreciate a clear, short-term link between an activity and a perceived benefit, so a system of modest incentives would probably be productive. Part of the message is also that many of the current faculty want to see a closer connection between assessment and their daily professional experiences. Many of these same faculty do not believe they have the time or experience to analyze the assessment data themselves and would like to receive summary interpretations of the data prepared by knowledgeable colleagues that they can review. Somewhat similarly, Truman's assessment program has focused overwhelmingly on the academic process with minimal attention to the effectiveness of major support functions; many staff would now like to see a stronger link between the University's assessment program and their responsibilities.

A report summarizing the findings of a recent evaluation of Truman's assessment program by an outside consultant touches on many of these issues. This consultant noted that Truman has "highly evolved" assessment measurements for institutional effectiveness that are "exemplary" in many aspects. Yet, this reviewer expressed concern that the use of assessment for student learning improvement at the discipline level "has not kept pace with

best practice in assessment” and that Truman should continue to review and strengthen its assessment processes to enrich the quality of assessment use for improvement at the level of the discipline, classroom, and individual professor and student.

These various considerations clearly indicate that Truman needs to complete a thorough review of its assessment program. Just as the University’s culture has evolved with the growing maturity of the liberal arts mission, so has the institution’s needs and expectations for its assessment program changed. Some of the assumptions that have supported the program in the past may need to be updated to reflect the expectations of a new generation of faculty, staff, and students. What has not changed, however, is Truman’s overall commitment to assessment for improvement and accountability. Good things can and will continue to flow from well-designed assessment.

A Vigorous, Participatory Assessment Program *Indicators of Performance*

1. GSQ data on student satisfaction regarding the assessment program
2. Faculty and staff – including academic advisors – survey of satisfaction and support for assessment as well as use of assessment data (To be developed)
3. Documented evidence of changes and improvements made as a result of assessment data
4. Number of faculty and staff involved as implementers of assessment activities

C. Nurturing viable relationships with external constituencies

Faculty Senate Goal: To enhance the university and its services to constituencies external to the campus community through strengthened relationships with alumni and friends and through partnerships with other educational organizations and appropriate community groups

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall nurture appropriate external linkages to the state of Missouri, the higher education community, and the citizens of the surrounding region to further enhance its role as a public liberal arts university through the following actions:

- *maintaining positive, cooperative relationships with the Missouri General Assembly, the Governor, and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education;*
- *continuing to enhance and strengthen the Office of Advancement as a means of significantly increasing the financial and political support of the University’s alumni and friends, with particular attention to the following:*
 - (a) *enhancing and strengthening its relationships with alumni and other friends of the university;*

- (b) continuing and expanding the university's dialog with the businesses, industries, graduate and professional schools, and other organizations that employ or receive our graduates to provide a means for all academic disciplines to be informed about the knowledge, skills, and competencies our graduates will need to be successful in their "next step;" and*
 - (c) undertaking the identification of major fundraising priorities for Truman to ensure that advancement activities support the University's core mission.*
- *consistent with its mission, continuing to cooperate with other institutions to meet the needs of students and the citizens of Missouri, especially in the northeastern region of the state, that cannot be met at Truman; and*
 - *promoting the role of internships, service learning, and volunteerism in strengthening relationships with external constituencies.*

One of Truman's principal challenges in the current planning effort is to anticipate changes in the external environment, to analyze their potential impact on the university, and to develop responsive strategies that either reshape the external environment or help Truman to accommodate the changes. In 1997, when Truman completed its last major planning process, its external environment was relatively stable and appeared to be generally favorable. Today the political environment is significantly more turbulent, and the challenges are more difficult. The 1997 planning document suggested that a decentralized higher education governance system, state fiscal support, and performance-based funding incentives would all remain rather stable. In addition, as a result of Truman's entrance into its Mission Enhancement funding cycle, Truman predicted an increase in the proportion of the state's contribution to its operating budget. Expected changes included increased competition for high quality students, decreased distinctiveness for the university's assessment program, and state higher education emphases such as distance education and vocational education that would not necessarily reinforce the University's mission.

Five years later, the scenario anticipated at the beginning of the planning period has largely proven correct. Statewide governance, fiscal support, and performance funding all remained positives while student recruitment, distinctiveness of assessment, and general state priorities remained more of a challenge. As Truman looks five years into the future, the challenges of the previous period seem likely to remain, while the positives of governance, fiscal support, and performance funding are likely to – or already have – slipped into the challenges column. Today two of the most obvious of these volatile conditions are the state's changed economic conditions and the uncertain attributes of the General Assembly when term limits become fully implemented in the House in November 2002 and in the Senate in November 2004.

The state's fiscal situation is worse than the current downturn in the economy and is likely to take longer to recover. The state's budget projections indicate that the situation will

remain problematic for several years. Once the economy recovers, budgets are not likely to return to conditions experienced in the mid and late 1990s for the foreseeable future owing to structural limitations on both the revenue and expenditure sides of the state budget. This conclusion is based on the fact that Missouri's decisions in the late 1990s to grant generous targeted tax credits and to reduce the sales tax on food have lessened the amount of money Missouri will collect in revenues. Furthermore, Missouri, like many states, faces higher costs in areas such as Medicaid, social services, the education foundation formula, economic development, and prisons. State employees have gone without a pay increase for two consecutive fiscal years while Truman's faculty and staff salaries will be frozen in FY 2003. As the legislature is forced to make difficult choices, higher education is seen by many policy makers as a cut that has fewer short-term negative consequences than other areas. Thus, Truman will have to contain and reduce costs, acquire additional resources from friends, alumni, and other private sources, or raise tuition and fees. The most likely outcome will be some combination of these strategies as well as changes in how Truman accomplishes its everyday business of providing teaching and learning opportunities to its students, *e.g.*, reconsider administrative structures and policies.

One concrete consequence of the Missouri's current fiscal condition is that the public four-year institutions will probably continue to receive a lesser share of the state's resources than they have traditionally received. Specifically, the percent of state resources going to higher education has declined from 17 percent in 1989 to an estimated 11 percent in FY 2003. For Truman, the state's contribution to its education and general budget has not matched its planning goal of an increase from 58 percent to 60 percent. While appropriations for FY 2002 would have amounted to 60 percent of the University's education and general budget if fully funded, once the FY 2002 withholdings are calculated, the state's share drops to less than 55 percent.

The state's political support of higher education is also in jeopardy as a result of term limits and several recent political trends. Over the past twenty-five years, higher education has relied heavily upon the efforts of the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) to promote higher education's interests in the General Assembly. The state's universities and colleges have worked with CBHE staff and the Coordinating Board to develop new statewide initiatives, to institute a statewide system of differing institutions meeting the needs of the state, and to bargain for their share of the state's higher education budget. The CBHE's support of Truman, its mission, and its funding needs have been important factors to the institution's dramatic success. Truman has also been central to the integrity of the CBHE's initiatives because of its leadership in assessment, accountability, and mission focus. Notwithstanding this past successful working relationship between the higher education institutions and the Coordinating Board, the coordination function is increasingly being questioned by both selected institutions and legislators. Some calls have been heard for the elimination of the coordinating function, and a number of legislators are very skeptical of the Mission Enhancement and Funding for Results processes, which have been the primary vehicle through which higher education has received increases to its appropriation. This skepticism exists even though these policies helped foster significant improvement in Missouri's higher education system, particularly at Truman. It is in Truman's long-term

institutional interests for Missouri to have a strong, respected state-level advocate like the CBHE which can help balance local and state educational interests.

Another political and financial trend of concern to Truman is the increased number of legislators who would like to see a return to enrollment-based funding for higher education. In its purest form this funding approach would have the effect of ignoring mission differences among institutions, would reward quantity over quality, and would seriously jeopardize Truman's ability to meet its mission. While the enrollment-based funding approach is unlikely to be completely successful as long as budgets are very tight, it is likely that this political effort on behalf of institutions that perceive themselves to be underfunded will remain over the next five years. Truman will need to argue successfully that its mission requires it to be funded in a category separate from the other non-doctoral universities in Missouri. *The success of this approach will depend in great part on the University's continued ability to sustain and objectively demonstrate with data outstanding learning outcomes that exceed the other public institutions in the state.*

State legislators and other University constituents – including potential funding sources like foundations and businesses – will seek evidence of accountability from the institutions it supports. Under tight budgets, this information becomes even more vital to maintain support and resources for the University. Some of Truman's assessment data is extremely public in nature because of statewide reporting from the Coordinating Board and the Funding for Results Program. With long-term legislators, Truman's general assessment reputation and its self-reporting of positive evidence of its educational program – as well as areas needing improvement – have been major contributors to its stature in the higher education system. With the implementation of term limits, Truman will have to redouble these efforts to demonstrate educational success using assessment data to maintain its academic reputation with new legislators who have not had the opportunity to watch Truman's changes over time and who may be fundamentally unfamiliar with the institution. This situation obviously adds to the urgency for Truman to resolve some of the issues related to its assessment program, including the willingness of students to invest themselves in the process.

In broadest terms the goal of Truman's Office of University Advancement is to inform and to build relationships between Truman and its many institutional constituencies: alumni, parents, students, faculty, staff, employers, corporate and foundation entities, and other friends of Truman. The results of these efforts include increased public and private support for Truman, both in terms of good will and financial resources. As a public liberal arts university with an alumni base of growing prominence, these relationships will become even more important to the University in the future – particularly in the political and financial context Truman anticipates in the next several years. Development of a more extensive network of alumni and friends willing to support the institution not only financially but also politically will be essential – satisfied students will continue to be an asset long after graduation. Among the specific objectives and activities University Advancement intends to pursue to help Truman attain its goals are the following:

- Build stronger relationships with Truman's alumni and friends through effective communication, alumni chapters, and volunteer networks;
- Continue to focus Truman's fund-raising efforts on projects that support the University's core mission; and
- Through relationship building and innovative fund-raising efforts, continue to increase gifts to the Truman State University Foundation, including a series of major gift efforts and/or a capital campaign to increase major and planned gifts.

As Truman continues to work with its various constituencies, it must not overlook the preparation and contributions of recent alumni. The best case that Truman can make to future donors is the success of its recent graduates as they pursue advanced studies or as they enter the workforce. In recent years Truman's graduates have been very successful in gaining admission to prestigious graduate and professional schools and in passing licensure requirements in fields as diverse as accountancy, education, and nursing. Furthermore, increased recruiting by employers indicates that Truman graduates are strongly sought. In order to ensure that Truman students continue to enjoy this competitive advantage, the faculty and the University Career staff must continue to work closely with representatives of graduate and professional schools as well as corporate recruiters to ensure that our students have the skills to succeed in their "next steps" after graduation. These recent alumni also have a story to tell, and the University must find systematic ways to learn more about those Truman experiences that have helped make these young women and men successful in their chosen fields.

Truman anticipates that institutional advancement will become an increasingly high priority for the University. The resources that must be invested to provide that extra margin of quality that will distinguish Truman from its peers will increasingly be derived from the activities of the Advancement Office and the Truman Foundation. In order to move an aggressive agenda forward successfully, the Advancement Office will need to acquire the resources and support commensurate with its goals and the University's expectations.

Finally, through the next few years Truman must also continue to build upon its excellent relationships with the Kirksville community, the Kirksville City Council and the Adair County Commission as well as the other communities in northeastern Missouri. Although Truman cannot always provide the educational services needed in this region owing to its focused mission, Truman has in the past and must continue in the future to support partnerships that provide options for the needs of northeastern Missouri to be met. Truman is currently participating in and supporting such cooperative ventures as the Kirksville Telecommunications Community Resource Center (TCRC), the Northeast Regional Professional Development Center, the Northeast Small Business Development Center, and Missouri Enterprise. Truman also provides support as requested to the local Moberly Area Community College residence center. As a public institution vital to the future of this area, Truman must continue to seek creative ways to help meet the educational

and economic development needs of northeastern Missouri. A significant option that can be expanded would be increased Truman involvement in local internships and service learning opportunities that benefit the local population and businesses. The future vitality of Kirksville and northeastern Missouri will have a direct impact on the future of Truman. They must continue to work together effectively to achieve their mutual goals.

Nurturing Viable Relationships with External Constituencies
Indicators of Performance

1. Level of state support for Truman
2. Number and type of internships, service learning activities, and service projects in which students engage
3. Engagement of faculty and staff in local, regional, and state civic organizations
4. Membership in Truman alumni chapters
5. Amount of annual, major, and corporate gifts to the Truman Foundation.
6. Number and amount of new planned gifts to Truman
7. Employer and graduate/professional school satisfaction with graduates

D. Providing excellent support for the teaching/learning process

1. Assuring Appropriate Informational and Instructional Technology Resources

Faculty Senate Goal: To provide as a highly selective public institution the prerequisites for a superior liberal arts and sciences education by attracting outstanding students, faculty, administration, staff, and other necessary resources.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall assure adequate informational and instructional technology resources for faculty, staff, and students sufficient to support student learning outcomes at a high level through the following actions:

- *ensuring the collections and services provided by Pickler Memorial Library are the best available at public liberal arts colleges while also supporting appropriate cooperative arrangements with other libraries in Missouri and throughout the nation; in addition, ensuring that faculty, students, and staff are fully aware of the resources and services available through the library;*
- *promoting the integration of advanced instructional and informational technology appropriate to a liberal arts and sciences institution throughout its curriculum by:*
 - (a) *providing incentives and increased access to appropriate opportunities for faculty to integrate new technologies into their courses;*

- (b) providing the classroom technology that meets the faculty's requirements for delivery of courses and assignments as well as the administrative support necessary to offer instruction effectively in these media;*
 - (c) providing appropriate support, including instructional design expertise and faculty development training opportunities, to faculty who need assistance implementing an idea or project related to instructional technology;*
- *continuing to update and refine the university's comprehensive plan for academic computing and its schedules for the cost-efficient acquisition, use, maintenance, and replacement of its instructional technology to assure a high-quality technological infrastructure;*
 - *continuing to support assessment by providing systems and software for the effective collection, storage, and use of assessment data;*
 - *continuing to implement the new information management system in a smooth and efficient manner; and*
 - *developing Truman's web site as an easily accessible forum for communication and the exchange of information.*

In the five years since the current University Master Plan was adopted, Truman has made tremendous progress providing support to the teaching and learning process through strengthened library collections and services as well as greatly improved information technology support. The library collections have been enhanced both in terms of traditional materials as well as electronic media, and these efforts have positively impacted the University's support of not only classroom instruction but undergraduate research as well. During this period Truman has also completed and enhanced its campus network, has provided Internet connections in all faculty offices, classrooms, and residence hall rooms, has provided modern computers to all faculty and has upgraded instructional technology in many classrooms as renovations have proceeded, has engaged a professional technical management firm to assist University efforts to improve its services, and has completed a comprehensive technology plan. These efforts have established a very strong basis for future development of information technology at the University.

A good library is essential to any institution with aspirations to excellence in teaching and learning. Truman's library is an excellent facility which was expanded and remodeled in the late 1980s, but its collections were developed for a very different institution. A major objective of Truman has been the further development of the library's collections to better serve the needs of a leading liberal arts university and to serve as a resource for the other institutions in Missouri. Given the extensive cooperative research conducted by Truman's students and faculty, the further development of the library has been essential. University funds have been used to update the catalogue system as part of MOBIUS and to achieve the following collection development goals.

- *To strengthen Truman's collections in the liberal arts and sciences* – Purchases in music, literature, ecology, botany, general science, fine arts, foreign language, history, philosophy and religion reflect this goal.
- *To support undergraduate research through the purchase of major research collections* – Purchase of the American Periodical Series, the Black Newspaper Collection, the JSTOR collections, and other newspaper and microfilm collections reflect this goal.
- *To purchase quality scholarly resources in electronic format* – Purchases of JSTOR and FirstSearch databases reflect this goal. Electronic resources enable students and faculty to do full-text searches of large bodies of scholarly material, much of which was not previously owned by Truman.
- *To enhance the library's periodical collections* – Purchase of periodical titles in all three years reflect this goal.
- *To address areas of deficiency in the library's collections* – Purchases in the area of African-American, South Asian and Native American culture and history reflect this goal. In addition, purchases of music scores were made to specifically address deficiencies cited in a reaccreditation study done several years ago.

The current budget crisis has required the University to discontinue monograph purchases for the FY 2002 fiscal year, although electronic media and periodical resources were not significantly reduced. Although this strategy was a necessary short-term response to an unexpected problem, there is broad understanding on campus that alternative reallocations must occur as part of a longer-term strategy to cope with what appears to be a continuing state funding problem. Maintenance of a strong library is a major institutional priority.

No institution can afford to fall behind in the area of computer and instructional technology if it hopes to serve its students well and remain competitive in a meaningful sense. In the mid 1990s Truman was at risk of falling victim to this problem. Few computer classrooms existed on campus; the network was aging; and instructional technology was still largely in the era of the television, VCR, and slide projector. The University was also having difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified technical expertise. After careful consideration, Truman took the step of partially contracting out the management of its computer services and support to a private vendor, CollegisEduprise – a relationship which has worked out very well for the institution. Concurrently, Truman established a locally funded technology account and augmented it with significant Mission Enhancement funding.

Today Truman is a very different institution technologically due largely to these initiatives. Truman presently supports four open computer labs housing 182 machines (plus

another 74 machines in eight residence halls), 14 computer classrooms housing 337 machines, and 13 additional specialty computer labs housing another 220 machines. All classrooms and faculty offices (as well as all on-campus student rooms) are wired for the Internet, and at least 60 classrooms are equipped with computerized data projectors. Truman has also significantly expanded its computer support and faculty development activities to ensure that this extensive resource base is well-maintained and that the faculty have the skills to utilize the equipment. Although Truman still has much unfinished work in this area, the Mission Enhancement program has had a significant impact on the campus.

As Truman moves forward in the next five years, technology will play a prominent role in the lives of students, faculty, staff and external constituencies of the University. The higher education literature tells us that technology will be pervasive and that it will drive change in the delivery of courses, in our understanding of teaching and learning, and in the ways that we work within the academy. Owing to past investments in technology, the University is positioned to break new ground in the way it uses technology to fulfill the mission of the University. The following action statements reflect Truman's intentions for technology development on campus and are drawn from the University's *Technology Strategic Plan*.

- Make support for teaching and learning the number one priority by continuing the enhancement of faculty development-based teaching, learning and instructional technology programs (e.g., the TLTC) that will utilize instructional design professionals to support the work and growth of students, faculty and staff and by using web-based information resources to enrich the educational experiences of Truman students.
- Maintain technology infrastructure at a high level by continuing network infrastructure development (bandwidth, access and security), preparing the network for mobile/wireless computing and communication, and by establishing and maintaining standards and guidelines for the cost-efficient acquisition, replacement and use of information technology.
- Support assessment by implementing systems and reporting software that will aid in the analysis of assessment data as well as using electronic and web-based tools, such as electronic portfolio software, as platforms for collecting, storing and sharing assessment information.
- Continue to implement new computer information systems in a smooth and efficient manner by realizing the full potential of Banner and related information systems to enhance communication on and off campus; to support and improve information and transaction services to students, such as recruitment, registration, bill payment, degree progress lookup, etc.; to improve support for advising; to support University planning efforts; and to support faculty, staff and students so that they may work in the most productive ways.

- Continue to develop Truman's web site as a forum for communication and exchange of information by ensuring that the site is easily accessible and contains accurate and timely information.

Assuring Appropriate Informational and Instructional Technology Resources *Indicators of Performance*

1. Library acquisitions and usage
2. Utilization of instructional technology in the classroom (Measure to be determined)
3. Faculty support and utilization of faculty development services
4. Student and faculty satisfaction with instructional technology services and support
5. Others to be determined

2. Providing Suitable Physical Facility Resources

Faculty Senate Goal: To maintain and improve the resource base, aesthetic milieu, and facilities needed to provide an exemplary teaching-learning experience.

Focused Institutional Responses, 2003-2007: Truman State University shall assure adequate physical facility resources which provide a safe, effective environment in support of student learning through the following actions:

- *continuing to develop and maintain facilities in a planned and coordinated fashion to support existing activities and to accommodate new academic and institutional initiatives;*
- *providing attractive and functional housing and improved activity spaces for students that meets the needs of students attracted to a highly selective liberal arts institution; and*
- *enhancing the physical attractiveness of the campus and its grounds –consistent with Truman's mission as an affordable, public liberal arts and sciences institution – by developing a comprehensive plan for the maintenance and enhancement of the campus grounds and by developing a program for fostering the public display of art both within and outside campus facilities.*

Truman is fortunate to have a very attractive campus – visitors have commented that the central quadrangle reminds them of a classic New England liberal arts college. The University's facilities are well-maintained and deferred maintenance is not a problem at this time, although declining state support could create a change in future years. Truman has also benefited from two major capital projects in the last five years – one that is nearly complete and one that is just getting started. The Ophelia Parrish fine arts facility is

currently partially occupied and will be fully occupied for the Fall 2002 term. This \$19.0 million project will unite all of Truman's art, music, and theater programs at one location for the first time and will provide superior instructional facilities as well as small to medium sized performance facilities for the entire campus community. Truman has also received \$22.4 million for the expansion and renovation of Magruder Hall, the University's science facility. The implementation of Truman's liberal arts mission resulted in very significant growth of its science programs. Yet, the University's main science facility is a structure built in 1955 with an addition that was completed in 1965. Although several small-scale renovations have occurred in the past ten years, the existing facility is essentially functionally obsolete for the current mission. The revised structure will nearly double the size of the existing facility and will provide increased opportunities for modern science instruction as well as student/faculty collaborative research. Subject to the availability of adequate private funding, this facility will house a state-of-the-art multimedia center that will support instruction not only in astronomy and other sciences but also in a variety of other disciplines including art, music, literature, and history. When these two facilities are fully occupied, they will make a tremendous improvement in the teaching/learning environment on campus.

When these projects are combined with the recently renovated Violette Hall and the new Student Recreation Center, it is clear Truman has made some very significant gains in its instructional facilities. However, Truman still has two very important needs affecting the delivery of its academic programs – the renovation and expansion of McClain and Baldwin Halls which serve the Social Science and Language and Literature Divisions and the renovation of Pershing Building which supports several programmatic areas including Health and Exercise Sciences and athletics, as well as providing classroom space and vital large room capacity for major University events. These two projects are Truman's top priorities for state support during the next planning period.

Truman has also made some relatively significant investments in its student housing in the past five years by completing the replacement of all furniture in student rooms, wiring all residence halls for the Internet and providing each student with his or her own connection port, remodeling bathrooms in two major halls, and remodeling selected facilities to accommodate an expansion of the Residential College Program. Notwithstanding these very considerable accomplishments, Truman believes that additional improvements in student auxiliary services will be needed before these facilities become a significant strength of the University. Specifically, Truman must ensure that regular maintenance and furniture renewals continue on a regular cycle. In addition, the University is considering the development of more extensive renovations in selected residence halls to make them more comfortable, retrofitting all housing facilities with automatic sprinkler systems, improved dining halls, selected remodeling of the Student Union Building – including mechanical system improvements, and perhaps the development of some additional new residential housing as part of a public/private partnership. Truman continues to be interested in working with the City of Kirksville and others to foster improvements in a rapidly declining neighborhood north of the campus and to improve the Franklin Street corridor. None of these projects will qualify for state support and will have to be addressed through local resources as well as gifts and grants.

Providing Suitable Physical Facility Resources
Indicators of Performance

1. Continued development of academic and auxiliary facilities
2. Increased student, faculty, and staff satisfaction with facilities and attractiveness of the campus and its grounds on appropriate surveys
3. Others to be determined

Chapter IV **Conclusions:** **Primary Priorities**

Truman's goal is to offer well-prepared students financial access to an outstanding education comparable to that available at prominent private sector liberal arts colleges but at a public sector price. The agenda outlined in this report is an aggressive one designed to enhance Truman's service to its students and to the citizens of Missouri by building on its very considerable strengths and by addressing its weaknesses before they become a major issue. In order to identify its priorities for the next five years, Truman has been guided by its four core institutional values as well as the following considerations and aspirations.

- The continued recruitment of an outstanding, diverse student body that reflects the richness of Missouri and that meets the Coordinating Board's criteria for a highly selective institution as well as the recruitment and support of an outstanding faculty and staff are essential to the attainment of Truman's mission.
- The continued development of Truman's liberal arts program and culture, including the effective use of assessment, will be a prerequisite for the further growth and maturity of the University as a nationally recognized liberal arts and sciences institution.
- The enhancement of long-term student success as measured by the attainment of outstanding learning outcomes, high retention and graduation rates, high graduate and professional school attendance, and excellent career placement must continue to be a distinguishing characteristic of Truman to assure the University's niche within Missouri's system of public higher education.
- Continued attention to the necessity to control costs and to assure the relative affordability of the University – consistent with Truman's ability to preserve the quality of its education and the student support environment – will be an on-going expectation of students, parents, and the general public.
- As a public university Truman has both the privilege and the obligation to be engaged with the public and their representatives in identifying and meeting the needs of Missouri's citizens as well as demonstrating the institution's accountability for the effective use of the resources entrusted to it.

Based on extensive discussions within Truman's community and among its various constituencies, Truman has identified the following unranked list of major institutional priorities which flow from the considerations listed above and which follow the Principle

Planning Themes identified in this planning process. As a consequence, the following initiatives will be targeted for early attention in Truman's current planning implementation processes:

- Student recruitment and retention, including the continuing diversification of the student body;
- Continued development of the liberal arts culture, especially refinement of the Liberal Studies Program and appropriate integration of out-of-classroom learning experiences;
- Review and refinement of the assessment program to ensure its continuing relevance to a maturing liberal arts culture;
- Enhanced attention to shaping and influencing the external environment through continuing interactions with the legislature and enhanced development activities;
- Continued attention to effective resource use and maintenance of affordability consistent with institutional mission
- Continued strong support for faculty and staff as members of the Truman learning community, including competitive salaries, benefits, and professional development opportunities; and
- Improved physical facilities with the Baldwin/McClain and Pershing Building projects topping the list for state support and various residence hall and Student Union project possibilities topping the auxiliary facilities list

Chapter V

Epilogue: Our Hopes and Dreams for the Future – Truman State University in 2007

If we, as a campus community, successfully implement the strategic plan outlined in this document, we will have created an institution that will provide outstanding educational preparation to its students for life in a new century. Only in a superficial sense, however, are we planning for the year 2007; our actual task is to devise an institution that will prepare our students to live well and to preserve our democratic traditions in a time few of us will see.

It is our hope that at the conclusion of the projected planning period in the year 2007 Truman State University will have a reputation for excellence that extends well beyond the state of Missouri. Recognized as a premier public liberal arts and sciences (LAS) university both regionally and nationally, the institution will be noted as having developed a distinctive LAS culture, assembled an exemplary faculty and student body, and fostered the attainment of student learning outcomes that compare favorably with the best institutions in the nation while effectively maintaining a commitment to affordability. It will be clearly evident that the institution has attained the vision adopted for it in 1995:

As an affordable public university, Truman State University dedicates itself to provide students of demonstrated high ability a challenging liberal education which expands their abilities, opportunities, and expectations and prepares them to excel with a sense of responsibility and fulfillment.

As the academic community which comprises Truman State University in 2007 looks back on the accomplishments of the university since the inception of the liberal arts and sciences mission in 1986, we are confident that extraordinary progress will have been made. Although the university will always strive to improve itself and to find ways to better serve its students and the citizens of Missouri, the Truman academic community will take pride in the fact that the educational ideal espoused by Cardinal John Newman in 1852 will be well within its grasp; that is, to provide an

. . . education which gives students a clear conscious view of their own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches students to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares them to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows them how to accommodate themselves to others, how to throw themselves into their state of mind, how to bring before them their own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. They are at home in any society, they have common ground with every class; ... they are able to converse, they are able to listen; ... they are ever ready, yet never in the way. (John Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 1852)

Appendix A

Strategic Planning Advisory Committee Membership

Co-chairs: Michael McManis, University Dean
Garry Gordon, VPAA

Division Heads: Jim Bailey, Business and Accountancy
Heinz Woehlke, Language and Literature

VPAA Office: Marty Eisenberg, Residential Colleges
David Christiansen, Interdisciplinary Studies

Student Affairs: Lou Ann Gilchrist, Dean
Bertha Thomas, Multicultural Affairs

Student Senate

President: Matt Brooker (AY 2001-2002)
Ryan Walkiewicz (AY 2002-2003)

Faculty:

Business: Sandra Fleak
Education: John Hoffmann
Fine Arts: Julia DeLancy
HPP: James Padfield
Lang. & Lit.: Dennis Leavens
Math & CS: Ruthie Dare-Halma
Science: Russ Baughman
Social Science: Pat Burton

Admin. Staff: Kay Anderson

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Ex-Officio Members

Present and Former

Faculty Senate Presidents: Randy Smith
Candy Young

Chief Information Officer: Richard Coughlin

Faculty Support: Stuart Vorkink

Staff Support: Erika Woehlke

