Fulfilling the Promise
A Self-Study for the North Central Association Reaccreditation of The University of Iowa
2007–2008
A Note to the Reader: How to Use this Document

This self-study has dual purposes: 1) to demonstrate that The University of Iowa meets the criteria for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; and 2) to make a candid assessment of strengths and challenges related to undergraduate education at The University of Iowa, and set a direction for building on those strengths and addressing those challenges.

For readers primarily interested in gathering evidence related to the HLC criteria, please note:

Section I, the institutional self-study, is organized by the five criteria and their core components.

In Section II, the special emphasis self-study, marginal notes mark selected examples of evidence related to one or more of the core components. An index of these marginal flags is provided in the online version of this document.

For all readers, please note:

The online version of this document is searchable and contains “live” hyperlinks to relevant resources.
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Preface

The University of Iowa (UI) has been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), of which it is a charter member, since 1913. Every ten years, the University undergoes review and evaluation by the NCA’s Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to determine whether it has continued to meet the high standards required for reaccreditation.

As a first step in this process, the University conducts a self-study. The resulting report informs the external evaluators and sets a direction for the University’s future by highlighting strengths and weaknesses in critical areas. Moreover, it serves as a status report for the University’s internal and external constituencies, thus helping the University to uphold its responsibility for accountability to the people it serves.

Ten years ago, we chose to take advantage of the then-new “special emphasis self-study” option, which allows a qualified institution to focus its self-examination on an area of particular, timely importance. At that time, we chose to study how effectively we were using information and communications technology to meet our teaching and learning goals. That self-study, in conjunction with the site visitors’ evaluation, helped us direct our efforts and position ourselves for considerable success in an area of rapidly increasing centrality as we entered the 21st century. This reaccreditation cycle, we hope to benefit once again from the opportunity to make that kind of concentrated assessment in an area of critical importance, this time with a special emphasis on undergraduate education.

As institutional leaders consulted across the University with faculty, staff, and administrators in all eleven colleges, they were convinced the time is ripe for a renewed commitment to undergraduate education. After all, in the words of former Executive Vice President and Provost Michael J. Hogan, undergraduate education is our “core function . . . . Public universities wouldn’t exist were it not for our role in educating undergraduate students and preparing them for responsible participation in their communities.” Using the self-study as an opportunity to examine the many facets of undergraduate education at The University of Iowa provides the critical, evidence-based self-examination that will help us achieve the first goal of our strategic plan: “To create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers."

Section I of this self-study report provides The University of Iowa’s general self-assessment regarding its compliance with the HLC criteria for accreditation. Section II describes the process, and evaluates the results, of the special emphasis self-study on undergraduate education, which the Provost set in motion in summer 2005. Throughout Section II, sidebar notes highlight how the findings of the special emphasis self-study also address the accreditation criteria.

Many individuals—faculty, staff, students, community members—contributed to the self-study and to preparing this report. Some are named within the text that follows, but most are not. The self-study steering committee extends its sincere gratitude to them all.

January 2008
Section I: The Institutional Self-Study

A charter member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The University of Iowa is the state’s most comprehensive institution of higher education, with a national and international reputation for excellence.
Our star shines with a bright light—on Iowa, but also on the world. We wish to remain Iowa’s reliable pole star in the 21st century world of learning, discovery, and engagement . . . Yet as we aim to be stars, we must always remember we are people—people working together, people working for each other . . . While we aim to excel, we also desire to serve.

—Sally K. Mason, University of Iowa President

Introduction

General Overview of The University of Iowa

Founded in 1847 as the state’s first public institution of higher education, The University of Iowa (UI) is a comprehensive, nationally competitive public teaching and research university with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and a range of excellent professional programs. Under the 2006 Carnegie basic classification system, The University of Iowa is a “Research University—very high research activity” (RU/VH). In the other five classifications, the University is in the following categories:

- Undergraduate Instructional Program—Bal/HGC: Balanced arts & sciences/professions, high graduate coexistence
- Graduate Instructional Program—CompDoc/MedVet: Comprehensive doctoral with medical/veterinary
- Enrollment Profile—HU: High undergraduate
- Undergraduate Profile—FT4/MS/HTI: Full-time four-year, more selective, higher transfer-in
- Size and Setting—L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential

The University carries out its academic mission primarily through its 11 colleges: the Henry B. Tippie College of Business, the Roy J. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine, the Graduate College, and the Colleges of Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health. About 80% of the University’s almost 21,000 undergraduate students are enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). The University enrolls almost 5,500 graduate students, most of them formally in the Graduate College, which collaborates with other colleges and directly oversees several interdisciplinary programs and academic units. About 4,000 students pursue professional education each year in the Tippie School of Management, the Carver College of Medicine, and the Colleges of Dentistry, Law, and Pharmacy. International Programs promotes internationalization of the University’s undergraduate, graduate, and professional curricula. The Division of Continuing Education collaborates with other colleges and departments to extend academic offerings to traditional and non-traditional learners both on- and off-campus.

Identity Statement

The University of Iowa is a comprehensive research university with particular distinction in the arts, humanities, and sciences, and a wide array of exceptional professional programs. While serving as the state’s most comprehensive institution of higher education, the University also enjoys a national and international reputation for excellence and competes at that level for the best faculty and the most talented graduate and professional students.

—The Iowa Promise: The University of Iowa Strategic Plan, 2005-2010
The General Education Fund (GEF) is the central fund that supports the majority of UI instruction-related expenses. In FY 2008 GEF budgeted revenues total $553 million, split about equally between tuition and fees and state appropriations with a small percentage coming from indirect cost recoveries and interest earnings. Total budgeted revenues (all funds) for FY 2008, including the health sciences center, are $2.4 billion.

The smallest public member of the Big Ten Division I athletic conference and of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC, the academic consortium of Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago), UI also has the lowest tuition among those universities, earning it national recognition as a good educational value. The University is large enough to offer more than 100 areas of study but small enough to give undergraduates the chance to work closely with faculty members on research, public service projects, and other initiatives. The University also offers an attractive balance between strengths in the arts and humanities and in the sciences.

According to the most recent U.S. News & World Report rankings of graduate schools (2007), more than 40 UI graduate and professional programs rank among the top 25 such programs at public universities across the country, with 21 of them among the top 10. U.S. News ranked The University of Iowa the 24th best public university in the country in its 2008 edition of “America’s Best Colleges.” The University is internationally known for the Writers’ Workshop and International Writing Program (UI is known as “The Writing University”), pioneering space research, the creation of speech and hearing science, and innovations in educational testing and measurement, among other strengths. UI also is famous for being the first in the nation to accept creative work in theatre, writing, music, and art as theses for advanced degrees.

The University of Iowa is a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), a select organization of institutions recognized for excellence in research. In FY 2007 UI researchers attracted more than $382 million in external grants and contracts. In a 2005 report, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) ranked UI 13th in NIH awards among all public universities. Health care and the biosciences are particular areas of strength in research.

The UI Health Sciences Center—which includes the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC), the University Hygienic Laboratory, the Carver College of Medicine, and the Colleges of Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health—is one of the most comprehensive health centers in the U.S. and plays a major role in the provision of health care and the preparation of health professionals for the citizens of Iowa and the nation. About half of the state’s physicians and pharmacists, almost 80% of the dentists, and 45% of nurses received their degrees at The University of Iowa.

The UIHC is one of the nation’s largest university-owned teaching hospitals, recording more than 850,000 ambulatory clinic visits and more than 25,000 patient admissions each year. U.S. News & World Report has ranked UIHC among “America’s Best Hospitals” each year since the rankings began in 1990. The most recent issue (2007) ranked eight of the UIHC’s medical specialties in the top 50 in their respective categories.

The University of Iowa has a long tradition of leadership in commitment to diversity. When the University first opened to students in 1855, it became the first college in the country to admit men and women on an equal basis. UI was the first public university in the country to grant a law degree to a woman (1873) and to an African American (1879). Almost 100 years later, UI became the first state university to officially recognize the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Allied Union (1970), and we were the first public
university in the country to offer insurance benefits to employees’ domestic partners, in 1993.

The University of Iowa is governed by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, as described under Criterion 1, below.

See Appendix I-A for the University of Iowa Institutional Snapshot, which contains current data about the University’s student body, faculty, academic programs, and financial resources. Appendix I-B provides the University’s statement on Federal Compliance.

**Accreditation History**

The University of Iowa has been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) since the organization of that association in 1913.

The last NCA comprehensive accreditation review occurred in February 1997.

**Significant Developments Since the 1997-98 NCA Accreditation Evaluation**

**Overview**

Table I-1 provides a snapshot of changes in some key indicators between FY 1998 and FY 2008 (except where a different timeframe is noted).

**Table I-1: Changes in Selected Indicators, 1997-98 to 2007-08**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>1997-98</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>18,754</td>
<td>20,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>6,235</td>
<td>5,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>2,882</td>
<td>4,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>27,871</td>
<td>30,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year graduation rate</td>
<td>32.3% (1992 entering cohort)</td>
<td>40.5% (2002 entering cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-year graduation rate</td>
<td>62.6% (1990 entering cohort)</td>
<td>65.5% (2000 entering cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degrees awarded (FY)</td>
<td>3,406</td>
<td>4,219 (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degrees awarded (FY)</td>
<td>1,640</td>
<td>1,395 (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degrees awarded (FY)</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>827 (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total degrees awarded (FY)</td>
<td>5,559</td>
<td>6,441 (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding for sponsored programs (FY)</td>
<td>$215 million</td>
<td>$382 million (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals for external funding (FY)</td>
<td>2,671</td>
<td>3,263 (FY07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of national academies (fall)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority student enrollment as a percentage of total student enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>2007-08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority undergraduate student enrollment as a percentage of total undergraduate student enrollment (fall)</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority tenured/tenure-track faculty as a percentage of total tenured/tenure track faculty (fall)</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority P&amp;S staff as a percentage of total P&amp;S staff (fall)</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women tenured/tenure track faculty as a percentage of total tenured/tenure track faculty (fall)</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual contributors</td>
<td>46,911 (CY97)</td>
<td>68,363 (FY06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient visits to UI Hospitals and Clinics (FY)</td>
<td>643,216</td>
<td>864,409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Institutional Leadership**

The University of Iowa has undergone several transitions in senior leadership over the past ten years. While each new leader has brought a unique perspective, energy, and vision to his or her role and to the University, each has honored the enduring character of the institution, upheld the University’s commitments to its many constituencies, and embraced its ambition to become an even greater resource for the people of Iowa and beyond.

In 2002, Mary Sue Coleman—University of Iowa president since 1995—left UI to become president at the University of Michigan. President Emeritus and Professor of Law Willard “Sandy” Boyd, who served as the University’s president from 1969 to 1981, took the helm in the interim. In 2003 the University’s search for a new president resulted in the appointment of David J. Skorton, UI vice president for research and professor of internal medicine and electrical and computer engineering. In 2006 Dr. Skorton was named president of Cornell University, and Henry B. Tippie College of Business Dean Gary C. Fethke stepped into the interim presidency until the appointment of the University’s 20th and current president, Sally K. Mason, effective August 1, 2007. Figure 1-1 illustrates the current structure of the University’s central administration under President Mason.
Other transitions in senior leadership since 1997-98 include the executive vice president and provost, the vice president for research, and a number of deans. President Skorton eliminated the position of vice president for external relations, re-titled the provost position executive vice president and provost, and gave the vice president for finance and operations (formerly finance and University services) the title of senior vice president. He established a direct reporting relationship between the University athletic director and the president.

In 2006 a new position was created to report directly to the president: special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity. During 2006-07 responsibilities for the new position included leading the reorganization of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Support Service Programs and Opportunity at Iowa (now merged into the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study), and the Faculty Diversity Opportunities Program (which helps departments and colleges hire minority faculty). Continuing responsibilities for the new position include overseeing the reorganized office, representing the Office of the President on matters related to diversity, and providing campus-wide leadership regarding the importance of diversity to the educational mission of a public research university.

In 2007 Interim President Fethke created the position of vice president for medical affairs, to better integrate UI patient care organizations (the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, the Carver College of Medicine, and University of Iowa Physicians). UI had not had a vice president-level position for health care since President Skorton chose not to fill the vice president for health affairs position vacated...
by Robert P. Kelch in 2003. Currently, the positions of vice president for medical affairs and dean, Carver College of Medicine, are held by the same person: Dr. Jean Robillard. In his role as vice president, Dr. Robillard reports to the president. In his role as dean, he reports to the provost.

Strategic Planning

Since the last NCA accreditation review, The University of Iowa has been through two more five-year strategic planning cycles. *New Century Iowa: Bridges to the Next Horizon* was the University's strategic plan for 2000 to 2005, written in 1999 by a strategic planning committee under the leadership of then-President Mary Sue Coleman. Our current strategic plan for 2005 to 2010 is *The Iowa Promise*, written in 2004 by a strategic planning committee under the leadership of then-President David Skorton.

Each plan has upheld the University's aspiration, originally articulated in our 1990 plan *Achieving Distinction*, to become one of the ten most distinguished public universities in the country.

Funding

Trends in the University's revenue sources are described under Criterion 2, below. Highlights to note from the past 10 years include:

- In FY 1998 state appropriations accounted for 63% and tuition and fees for 30% of General Education Fund revenues. In FY 2008 state appropriations account for 47% and tuition and fees for 46% of these revenues.

- UI undergraduate tuition remains the lowest in the Big Ten.

The University of Iowa Foundation’s *Good. Better. Best. Iowa!* campaign, launched in 1999 and ended in 2005, surpassed its $1 billion goal by $58 million. (Incorporated in 1956 as a nonprofit IRC Sec. 501(c)(3) organization, The University of Iowa Foundation is legally, organizationally, and operationally separate from The University of Iowa and is governed by an independent board of directors. The Foundation's purpose is to solicit, receive, and manage gifts to support research and educational activities at The University of Iowa.)

- UI faculty, together with staff and students, have been very successful in attracting external funding for research over the last ten years. New records were set in FY 2002 ($341 million), FY 2003 ($353 million), FY 2005 ($360 million), FY 2006 ($366 million), and FY 2007 ($382 million).

- In fall 2007 the National Institutes of Health announced that Iowa would receive a five-year, $33.8 million Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA). The CTSA will support the University’s Institute for Clinical and Translational Science, which was formally approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in December 2006 to expand and enhance “bench-to-bedside” research. The CTSA is the second-largest research award in UI history.

Facilities

From 1998 to 2007, new construction added about 2.9 million gross square feet (GSF) of building space to campus. From 1998 to 2005 the University renovated approximately 1.4 million GSF in campus buildings and 440,000 GSF in University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC) facilities; the UIHC added approximately 280,000 GSF of space.
Not counting the renovation of Kinnick Stadium, which accounts for about 350,000 GSF, new and renewed space 1998 to 2005 totaled about 4.2 million GSF, or about 30% of the existing physical plant. This rate of growth is consistent with an average annual rate (since 1960) of about 250,000 GSF of new space per year.

New or expanded academic facilities since 1997-98 include the award-winning Art Building West (2006), the Adler Journalism and Mass Communications Building (2005), an addition to the Seamans Center for the Engineering Arts and Sciences (2001), and the Biology Building East (2000). The Glenn Schaeffer Library, an 8,500 square foot addition to the Dey House (home of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop), was completed in 2006. Major renovations to the Chemistry Building will be completed in 2008, and renovations of the original Art Building are under way.

The Blank Honors Center was dedicated in 2004, and the Pomerantz Center, which houses the Admissions Visitors Center, Academic Advising Center, and Pomerantz Career Center (all units considered in the special emphasis section of this self-study), was dedicated in 2005. Phase I of a major renovation to the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU), including the addition of the IMU River Terrace, was completed in 2007. The IMU renovation is addressed in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of the special emphasis section of this self-study.

On the health sciences campus, the Medical Education and Biomedical Research Facility (MERF) was completed in 2002, the Carver Biomedical Research Building (CBRB) in 2005, and in fall 2007 the University held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Iowa Institute of Biomedical Discovery, to be built adjacent to MERF and CBRB. The Newton Road parking ramp and chilled water facility was completed in 2002, and a new pedestrian walkway was built over Highway 6 to connect the health sciences campus with the area that will become the site of a new academic building for the College of Public Health. The University held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Public Health building in October 2007.

New facilities since 1997-98 that incorporate a recreational or athletic component include the Hawkeye Tennis and Recreation Complex (2006), the Karro Athletics Hall of Fame (2002), and the Gerdin Athletic Learning Center (2003). A major renovation of Kinnick Stadium, completed in 2006, replaced the aging south end zone stands and included the construction of a new press box. In fall 2006, the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, approved plans to build a Campus Recreation and Wellness Center (CRWC) on the east side of campus. Construction of the CRWC should be complete by spring of 2010.

The University Services Building, completed in 1999, allowed the University to move some business services and make space in central campus buildings available for academic use. The building also serves faculty and staff better by making the Office of Human Resources more accessible. Since 2005, the University has also acquired, remodeled, and fully occupied vacant space in the Old Capitol Mall (University Capitol Centre).

While the University highlighted new construction projects in the first part of the decade, in planning for 2005 forward the emphasis has been on renovation of existing facilities.

Technology, Data, and Decision Support Systems

In 1999 the University implemented a new, integrated human resources information system to provide data ranging from payroll and benefits to performance appraisal and management reporting.
In 1999 the Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) launched the University of Iowa Research Information System (UIRIS) as a pre-award grant administration system that included the UI Routing Form (the mechanism whereby an investigator requests University approval of a sponsored research project) and internal applications for DSP and the Human Subjects Office. The scope of the system was expanded over the next several years. Version 2.0 of UIRIS, launched in 2004, includes applications for internal funding initiatives, contract management, human safety programs, and conflict of interest. Several more applications are in development, and version 3.0 is scheduled for release in summer 2008.

In 2000 the University Libraries inaugurated InfoHawk, an online catalog system to replace the former text-based system, OASIS.

In 2003 the Manage Academic Revenue System (MARS)—the product of two years of development by staff in Information Technology Services (ITS), the Office of the Registrar, and the Cashier’s Office—went into production. MARS is a web-based system designed to provide accurate and timely tuition and fee information for the purposes of assessment, billing, reporting, analysis, and management.

One recommendation of a 2003 “E-Learning Assessment Project” was that the University should adopt a single, centrally supported course management system. Following an extensive process of evaluation, in 2005 the University chose Iowa Courses Online, or ICON, to replace the two previously used systems, WebCT and Blackboard. Information Technology Services first implemented ICON in fall 2005, and retired WebCT and Blackboard at the end of the fall 2006 semester. ICON is described in greater detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

In the summer of 2002 the Office of the Provost and the offices of Admissions, Continuing Education, Student Financial Aid, the University Registrar, and Information Technology Services formed a steering committee to explore strategies to replace the University’s 30-year-old student information system. After an intensive review, the committee determined that the most appropriate strategy would involve a hybrid approach—using purchased software components for specific functionality and integrating them with internally developed modules. The project has been dubbed “Project MAUI,” for “made at The University of Iowa.” The first components were implemented in fall 2006, and the fully integrated system is expected to be complete by 2011. Project MAUI also is described in greater detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Academic Programs

In 1999 the University established the College of Public Health—its first new college in 50 years—in response to the clear message that research faculty in the field of public health were considered essential if the University was to advance in biomedical and health science research. Also, the University recognized that the national and global importance of public health and the federal funding available had risen sharply in the last decade. Since the College’s first year, its faculty and graduate student body have more than doubled in size, and external funding for research has tripled (to $39.7 million in FY 2007). The College is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health.

Over the last ten years the University has also created several new undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs, all in response to emerging needs, opportunities, and changes in disciplines.
The Doctor of Nursing Practice program, approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in June 2007, was created to respond to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing decision to move the level of preparation required for advanced nursing practice from the master’s degree to the doctorate by 2015.

B.A. and B.S. degrees in Informatics, approved in June 2007, offer undergraduate students a broad interdisciplinary option at the intersection of computer science with the humanities, the arts, and the natural, biological, health, and social sciences. The creation of the undergraduate program followed on the September 2006 approval of the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Informatics.

The interdisciplinary M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Human Toxicology, approved in September 2006, were created to prepare individuals to study chemical, biological, and radiological toxicants in the environment—an area of expertise for which there is growing demand, and that draws on fields in which UI has particular strengths.

The Master’s in Medical Education, approved in June 2006, responded to an Association of American Medical Colleges report that called for “preparing a cadre of teaching faculty” who would “develop, implement, and evaluate teaching strategies” that would bring medical education in line with substantial changes in the nature of medical practice over the last 50 years.

The M.S. in Clinical Investigation, approved in September 2005, is an interdisciplinary training program in patient-oriented clinical research for physicians, pharmacists, nurses, dentists, and other health professionals. The program was created to respond to requests from health professionals for focused training in clinical research methods, and to prospective employers’ expressed expectation that clinical researchers will have formal training demonstrated by a graduate degree.

The Bachelor of Applied Studies degree (B.A.S), approved in June 2005, allows graduates of community college applied science programs to complete baccalaureate degrees via distance education.

The B.S. in Anthropology, approved in May 2004, was established to complement the existing B.A. degree, foster interdisciplinary interaction, and better meet the needs of students who might wish to pursue post-graduate study or employment in the sciences.

The clinical doctorate in Audiology (Au.D.), approved in March 2003, revised the professional M.A. track in audiology to meet standards set by the national accrediting body, the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, which mandated a clinical doctorate as the entry level degree.

The B.A. in Performing Arts Entrepreneurship, approved in March 2003, created an interdisciplinary option for multi-talented student artists who hope to pursue leadership roles in arts innovation.

The B.A. in International Studies, approved in November 2002, consolidated a number of small programs and created better coordination across units so that students could design truly multidisciplinary programs.

Master’s and doctoral degree programs in Community and Behavioral Health, approved in November 2002, were created to address the lack of graduate level programs in Iowa dealing with community and behavioral health or addiction.
studies from a public health perspective.

The Master’s in Nursing and Healthcare Practice, approved in June 2002, was designed to respond to a recommendation of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and to address a shortage in nurses able to engage in sophisticated health management and clinical decision-making. (In June 2007, the Board of Regents approved the University’s request to suspend admissions to this program, the goals of which will be met instead by the Clinical Nurse Leader sub-track of the Masters of Science in Nursing program.)

The B.A. in Women's Studies, approved in March 2001, created a new interdisciplinary major option founded on strengths of UI faculty.

The B.S. in Radiation Sciences, approved in March 2000, allows practicing technologists to earn a baccalaureate degree, increasingly required for career advancement and more recently for entry into the profession.

The Ph.D. in Second Language Acquisition, approved in September 1999, was created as a multidisciplinary program in an area of high demand that also supported the goal to improve the climate for diversity.

M.S. and Ph.D. programs in Translational Biomedicine, approved in July 1999, were created in response to a dramatic decline in the number of physician-scientists (M.D.s who perform clinical research) and an emerging emphasis of the National Institutes of Health. The program trains students holding M.D. degrees to perform hypothesis-driven research, using principles from the basic sciences, to address clinical problems.

The B.S. degree in Applied Physics, approved in October 1998, was designed to prepare graduates to enter scientific and technical positions in industry.

The Master of Computer Science, approved in July 1998, was created to complement the M.S. degree, in response to demand for a terminal degree designed for persons entering business or industry.

The Ph.D. in Physical Therapy, approved in April 1998, responded to a national shortage of doctorally prepared faculty to teach in physical therapy programs. In September 2002 the Board of Regents approved changing the University’s Master of Physical Therapy to a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree, which had become more attractive to potential employers. The University therefore now offers an entry-level D.P.T. degree and advanced M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in physical therapy.

During this time, the University terminated undergraduate degree programs in health occupations education; social studies; and literature, science, and the arts, as well as a master’s program in quality management and productivity. Admission was suspended to the graduate program in Russian language and literature.

Other changes affecting the University’s academic programs include:

In 2001 the University changed the name of the College of Liberal Arts to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, to recognize the full breadth of the College's educational mission.

In 2000-01 the University inaugurated a new academic term: Winter Session. The Winter Session is three weeks in duration, starting in late December and ending just
prior to the beginning of spring semester. Undergraduate and graduate/professional courses are offered, and approximately 500 students enroll. Winter Session allows students the opportunity to focus on one class and accelerate their time to degree. Students can also use this time period to take advantage of study abroad opportunities.

In 2005 the University College was created as the administrative umbrella under which academic credit would be administered for programs that do not “belong” to a single college, such as the University of Iowa Honors Program, the Office for Study Abroad, and College Success Initiatives.

Many additional changes affecting undergraduate programs are described in detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Response to Issues Raised in the Last Evaluation

The report of the 1997-98 NCA accreditation evaluation of The University of Iowa identified no formal issues of concern that would affect the University’s accreditation.

The consultant-evaluators did provide, in their consultative capacity, suggestions and advice for progress—both related to meeting the criteria for accreditation as an institution, and with regard to the special emphasis self-study, which dealt with the application of information and communication technology to teaching and learning in a research university. The University acted on almost all of the team’s advice and realized positive results.

Table I-2 below lists the challenges the 1997-98 consultant-evaluator team identified, and—briefly—how the University has dealt with them. Tables I-3 and I-4 list the advice and suggestions offered in the 1997-98 report (for the institution as a whole and with regard to the special emphasis, respectively), and how the University followed up on each of those suggestions.

Table I-2:
Challenges Identified by the 1997-98 Consultant-Evaluator Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While many of the physical facilities are excellent and well maintained,</td>
<td>The University has made maintenance of facilities one of its budget goals and has allocated additional resources to this budget category in the FY 2006 to FY 2008 timeframe. As noted above, UI’s planning emphasis has been on renovation of existing facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there remains a significant backlog of buildings, laboratories, and other</td>
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<tr>
<td>facilities that are in need of renovation and/or repair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>While the University has submitted an acceptable plan for the assessment</td>
<td>UI has renewed its commitment to formal outcomes assessment over the last two years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>of student academic achievement to the NCA, the implementation at the</td>
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<tr>
<td>department, school, or college level is uneven. There appears to be a</td>
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<tr>
<td>question as to the degree of institution-wide commitment to assessment.</td>
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</table>
As the institution progresses with its information technology and other technological upgrades, significant attention should be given to the personnel and maintenance funding requirements that will be necessary to optimize its use.

Human Resources undertook a major effort to update the personnel classifications of professional IT staff on campus. This effort resulted in a more logical and consistent categorization of the University’s technical professionals. As IT has matured, new funding models that anticipate staffing, replacement, and other operational needs have been implemented for major IT services. The University has completed its first campus-wide IT strategic plan.

The quality and strength of the University may be weakened by an inability to retain faculty who are recruited and offered attractive opportunities to move to other institutions.

The University undertook the Faculty Vitality initiative in the FY 2006 to FY 2008 timeframe to address the competitiveness of faculty salaries (described below). The University offers attractive benefits.

At the time of the 1987 NCA review, concern was expressed about the University Library by that team. The current NCA team notes that staffing continues to be inadequate at a time when there are many new staff-intensive initiatives.

The University addressed competitive salary issues for the professional librarians through a one-time reallocation of the acquisition budget. The University has not been able to add faculty or staff in the General Education Fund over the past decade due to tight budgets and decisions to focus incremental budget allocations to improve the salaries of existing personnel.

The pending policy change regarding membership in the College of Liberal Arts faculty assembly that could affect curricular decisions by faculty in the College of Education was discussed by the NCA team. The team suggests that this issue be given careful consideration by the institution.

In 1998 two changes were made to membership in the Faculty Assembly. The number of appointed representatives from the College of Education was reduced from two to one, and the number of elected representatives that any one voting group could elect from any one unit was limited to four. In a later revision, the total number of elected representatives from each voting group was reduced from fifteen to six with no more than two coming from any one unit. The College of Education agreed to these changes and they were passed in a referendum of all faculty.

### Table I-3: Suggestions and Advice from the 1997-98 Consultant-Evaluator Team Related to Overall Compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The special emphasis on information technology should not overshadow the basic educational mission of the institution.</td>
<td>The University agreed and has not neglected other areas of importance to its core mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some students, faculty, and administrators have a pejorative view of the library and its administration; too much “library money” going into the virtual library; some students expressed dismay at the limited library hours and high copying costs.</td>
<td>The former University Librarian retired in 1999 and a new one was hired in 2000. The Libraries have conducted ongoing formal assessments of various programs and user satisfaction surveys over the last seven years, and results indicate that most users are generally pleased with library services. Demand for electronic resources has increased. Neither funding nor layout of the Main Library has permitted access to the library at all hours, but hours have been adjusted to better serve user needs, and online reference services have been introduced. Printing costs have not emerged as an issue in recent user studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suggestion</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>UI needs to develop reserves to reward and retain its productive faculty; the endowed chair policy might be made more flexible.</td>
<td>The highly successful <em>Good. Better. Best. Iowa!</em> campaign allowed the University to create 155 new deanships, chairs, professorships, and faculty fellowships. The University undertook the Faculty Vitality initiative in the FY 2006 to FY 2008 timeframe to address the competitiveness of faculty salaries (described below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The engineering building program may not be adequate to remedy space problems for that college.</td>
<td>In 2001 the University completed a four-year project to modernize the engineering building, including a new addition and renovations to the existing structure. The Seamans Center for the Engineering Arts &amp; Sciences is a dramatically improved learning environment for the College's students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students are not completely aware of available computer resources.</td>
<td>ITS has created a number of outreach and advertising efforts to make students aware of available resources. Approximately half the incoming freshmen class takes the course &quot;Online@Iowa&quot; that introduces students to IT concepts and services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The UI Foundation will need to work closely and effectively with all internal constituencies to maximize its effectiveness as it launches a major campaign.</td>
<td>The <em>Good. Better. Best. Iowa!</em> campaign surpassed its $1 billion goal by $58 million.</td>
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<tr>
<td>As the UI contemplates creating a school of public health, it is important to consider carefully which health sciences should be involved, and whether the program should be free-standing or embedded in the College of Medicine.</td>
<td>The free-standing College of Public Health (CPH) established in 1999 has grown dramatically and achieved great success, particularly in attracting research funding. CPH faculty collaborate extensively with faculty in other colleges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The budget for the associate provost for health sciences may need to be augmented as new initiatives are developed.</td>
<td>The position of associate provost for health sciences was eliminated. The University now has a vice president for medical affairs. The provost works with the Health Sciences Policy Council to coordinate health science-related issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The team expressed concern that a disclaimer at the beginning of the University's <em>General Catalog</em> gave the impression that the University could alter a student's degree requirements at any time.</td>
<td>The content of the disclaimer statement has not changed, but UI policy holds that once the major requirements for a <em>General Catalog</em> year are set they may not change (in a way that would add a requirement that did not exist previously, or that would remove a previously existing course option) for the cohort of students who declare the major in that year. Continuing students generally have the option, if requirements change after they have declared, to graduate under the old or new requirements. See the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Student Academic Handbook for a description of the policy, which is implemented automatically via the University's degree audit process.</td>
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<td>Suggestion</td>
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<td>Streamline the entire campus governance of IT and bring the structure to</td>
<td>The position of chief information officer was created. The University has completed a campus-wide IT review and its first-ever campus-wide strategic plan for information technology.</td>
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<td>a focus at the executive level.</td>
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<td>Complete the campus wiring project as soon as possible.</td>
<td>The project is complete.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider making a thorough assessment of the connectivity of dormitories.</td>
<td>Ethernet wiring was completed in all residence halls in January 2001.</td>
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<td>Consider central funding rather than a la carte pricing for campus-wide</td>
<td>The funding model has been changed.</td>
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<td>services, and other funding models for distributed services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider enlarging the basic LAN suite; provide appropriate tools for</td>
<td>The basic LAN suite has been expanded and web authoring tools included.</td>
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<tr>
<td>instructional development, including web authoring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Find alternative means to provide reasonably priced, robust, up-to-date</td>
<td>All students in residence halls have Ethernet access to the internet. Nearly all students who live off campus have internet access through private providers (commonly their cable or phone providers). Students also have free access to a dial-up modem pool.</td>
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<tr>
<td>remote internet access.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resist substituting expanded Instructional Technology Center (ITC) access</td>
<td>Student remote access is now available. ITC equipment is refreshed in a timely manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>for satisfactory student remote access; concentrate on timely refreshment</td>
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<td>(three-year cycle) in the ITCs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider deciding on a faculty desktop replacement cycle, costing it out,</td>
<td>Colleges have responsibility for managing the replacement cycle for faculty desktop computers, typically on a three- or four-year cycle.</td>
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<td>and dedicating funds.</td>
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<td>Consider using classroom technical support as a prototypic case for</td>
<td>UI has recently examined governance and taken a substantial step forward with the first ever campus IT strategic plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>streamlining the campus governance of information technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address the critical lack of appropriate local technical support staff in</td>
<td>At the time of the 1997-98 review, this problem was particularly critical in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. CLAS has expanded its technical support staff.</td>
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<td>certain disciplines.</td>
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<td>Proceed with plans to migrate to a new Integrated Library System.</td>
<td>The new state-of-the-art Integrated Library System was introduced in 2000 and has been further enhanced throughout the last seven years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue partnerships to improve web interface design.</td>
<td>Web design has matured and best practices are readily available. A group of campus webmasters meets monthly to discuss best practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestion</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desktop installation staff should systematically inquire of faculty and staff what information resources they intend to use, and install the correct clients initially.</td>
<td>“Clients” have become much less of an issue in the web era. Most desktops are now installed with a standard image that meets the needs of all users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim toward consolidating servers in the Libraries.</td>
<td>The Libraries moved a number of services to virtual machines to accommodate an increasing number of applications on fewer physical hardware devices. This move permitted standardization on one model of hardware, simplifying support while increasing redundancy and reliability. All servers moved to the enterprise Active Directory for a common infrastructure and to permit Information Technology Services (ITS) enterprise administrators to provide backup support in an emergency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to emphasize partnership and collaboration, on and off campus, to leverage the cost of information resources and enrich the research environment for faculty and students.</td>
<td>The Libraries have worked closely with the colleges and other campus entities during the past seven years on a number of initiatives, including purchasing new resources, upgrading branch libraries, fundraising, and making various campus collections more accessible to users. Under the leadership of the University Libraries, a digital project offering electronic access to collections of materials pertinent to Iowa history and culture is under development with libraries and museums around the state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider greater funding of library subscription databases to provide remote access to more library resources.</td>
<td>Even during years of system-wide budget reductions, the University has provided 5% increases each year to support library subscriptions/licenses and to maintain purchasing levels for print publications. Better group pricing for electronic resources through the Committee on Institutional Cooperation and Iowa’s Regent universities, along with a policy to eliminate duplicate print subscriptions to journals when a suitable electronic version is available, have helped the Libraries cope with demand for new electronic databases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to pursue grant funding for the Scholarly Digital Resources Center.</td>
<td>The Scholarly Digital Resources Center has been repurposed into a repository for digital preservation with more than 100,000 digital masters now stored there. Grants and gifts have supported the digitization of many collections. The University continues to pursue additional funding opportunities. The digital library has grown to over 160,000 items in more than 60 collections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find long-term or continuing support for the highly successful Information Arcade and Information Commons.</td>
<td>The Information Arcade and Information Commons have long-term and continuing support within the existing Libraries budget. This funding is leveraged through collaboration and coordination with Academic Technology Services. The Arcade underwent a significant renovation in 2006-07.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be clear about the criteria and process for selecting participants to nTITLE.</td>
<td>The program ran its course and no longer exists.</td>
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### Suggestion | Response
--- | ---
Increase the coordination of the various programs and groups introduced to develop faculty and students. | It can be a challenge to keep constituents informed about the Libraries’ rapidly changing resources and services. Since the last review, the Libraries have implemented a much more proactive outreach program for faculty and students. There has also been a much greater emphasis on library partnerships with teaching faculty, to integrate the use of library collections and searching skills into coursework. The Libraries work closely with Academic Technologies on various initiatives designed to help faculty and students become more comfortable and skilled with the use of technology in their work.

Participate actively in education applications using the new high-speed networks like Internet2. | UI has taken advantage of several opportunities to participate in high-speed networks, including, most recently, BOREAS (the Broadband Optical Research, Education, and Sciences Network).

Consider continuing CIC as one of the major partnerships to leverage remote information resources and to enrich the learning and research environment of faculty and students. | The CIC has become even more valuable for the Libraries during the last decade. In addition to over 50 shared licenses for electronic resources, the CIC recently signed an agreement with Google to provide digitized copies of books from member libraries and is creating a shared digital repository for these and other digital collections. All of these initiatives have and will continue to increase the resources readily available to UI faculty, students, and staff.

Improve remote internet access for UI students and faculty off campus and internet access for students in dorms. | See above.

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**The Self-Study Process**

The self-study steering committee compiled a first draft of the institutional self-study based on a wide range of existing sources and in consultation with University leadership. The development of the special emphasis self-study is described in the overview to Section II of this report.

The steering committee posted a first draft of the self-study (“Draft 0”), including both the institutional and special emphasis sections, on September 17, 2007. Via e-mail, all faculty, staff, and students were invited to comment on the draft, and also to attend either or both of two town meetings (held on October 3rd and October 5th) to voice their observations and suggestions. The town meetings were advertised in the *Daily Iowan*. Members of the steering committee visited key faculty, staff, and student groups— including collegiate deans, associate deans and directors, directors of student services units, student government leadership, and elected faculty and staff councils—to call attention to Draft 0 and to invite feedback.

Constructive suggestions received through these channels resulted in substantive changes to the next drafts of the report. Draft 1 was posted on October 29 and Draft 2 on November 17. These drafts also were advertised and comment encouraged. Feedback from various constituencies continued to inform the development of the final document.
Meeting the Criteria

Introduction

The special emphasis self-study that constitutes the bulk of this report highlights how The University of Iowa addresses the HLC criteria for accreditation with regard to undergraduate education. In this section of the report, our aim is to address in a focused and succinct way how the University meets those criteria in carrying out all aspects of its mission.
Committed to a threefold mission of teaching, research, and public service, The University of Iowa improves the lives of students, Iowans, and many others who benefit from our work.

**Criterion One: MISSION AND INTEGRITY**

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

**Overview**

The University of Iowa is a large, highly decentralized institution, with responsibilities to serve many constituencies. The Board of Regents, the University’s central administration, and the leaders of the major organizational units understand that it is in the classrooms, laboratories, studios, clinics, libraries, distance learning sites, and other places where faculty, staff, students, and citizens come together that we truly carry out the University’s mission every day. Many University-, college-, and department-level structures are in place, therefore, to ensure that all members of the University community can carry out their individual responsibilities in ways that support the University’s and the Board’s strategic priorities; that they recognize those priorities, and have the opportunity to have a voice in decisions about how the University will pursue them; and that they can expect those around them to treat them with respect and to function with integrity.

**Core Component 1a:** The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.
Mission Statement

The Iowa Promise, The University of Iowa’s strategic plan for 2005 to 2010, was approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in June 2005 and articulates the University’s mission, aspiration, core values, and goals.

The University's mission statement, presented in full in the box on this page, addresses the University’s threefold commitment to creating, preserving, and disseminating knowledge through teaching, research, and public service. It acknowledges the University’s concurrent obligations to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students; to the people of Iowa; and, in broad terms, to all people in the nation and in the world whose lives may benefit from the work we do here.

Mission Statement

Upon founding The University of Iowa in 1847, Iowa’s first legislature entrusted it with a threefold mission of teaching, research, and public service. In pursuing that mission today, the University seeks to advance scholarly and creative endeavor through leading-edge research and artistic production; to use this research and creativity to enhance undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, health care, and other services provided to the people of Iowa, the nation, and the world; and to educate students for success and personal fulfillment in an increasingly diverse and global environment.

—The Iowa Promise: The University of Iowa Strategic Plan, 2005–2010

Aspiration, Core Values, and Goals

The University’s aspiration is “to attract the most talented faculty, staff, and students; to provide an environment where they can discover and fulfill their potential; and thereby to realize its promise, which is to become one of the ten most distinguished public universities in the country.” The University’s “top ten” aspiration was originally articulated in our first strategic plan, Achieving Distinction (1990).

The theme of striving for excellence is evident throughout The Iowa Promise. “Excellence” is, in fact, one of our seven core values (Excellence, Learning, Community, Diversity, Integrity, Respect, and Responsibility), placed first on the list because it applies to all the rest. Our statement of core values includes this commitment:

In all that it does, the University measures itself by exacting standards, promotes continuous improvement, honors excellence and high aspiration, and holds its community as a whole to the highest degree of honesty, fairness, and personal integrity.

The Iowa Promise also articulates five top-level goals that are key to achieving our aspiration. The goals, and the strategies associated with them, emphasize excellence in carrying out all aspects of our mission. Our five top-level goals are:

To create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers.

To cultivate excellent graduate and professional programs, and to advance the research and scholarly enterprise.

To promote excellence in education by increasing the diversity of the faculty, staff, and students.

To strengthen the University’s intellectual and community vitality.
To broaden the University’s service mission to include stronger partnerships with public constituencies.

The strategies associated with these goals specify our expectations for the content and quality of education students receive at The University of Iowa. Those expectations are considered at length in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

**Open and Collaborative Planning Process**

The 23-member strategic planning committee that wrote *The Iowa Promise* comprised undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and administrators from across campus, including the presidents of the student government, Faculty Senate, and Staff Council. The committee held two widely-publicized open forums early in the process, and two more later, when a draft of the plan was available for the University community to review. The committee posted drafts of the plan as it evolved to a public web site, and invited comments to an e-mail address established for that purpose. The open forums, e-mail, and visits with constituent groups resulted in many comments and suggestions that helped to inform and improve the plan.

The plan was announced to the University community as it was presented to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa. Then-Provost Hogan talked about the plan in his first annual spring address to the University community, and distributed printed copies of the plan on that occasion. Once the Board approved the final plan, it was posted on the University’s web site, where it remains. The plan is cited in news releases about various initiatives and actions that have followed from it. The Office of the Provost distributes the plan in printed form to all new faculty during their orientation.

**Evaluation of the Plan**

The University reports each year to the Board of Regents about progress related to the strategic plan. As part of this annual review, the University tracks 44 indicators of progress tied to the plan’s five top-level goals.

Recognizing that environmental factors change unpredictably, the strategic planning committee sought to create a plan that would “[give] University leaders a context for judicious decisions about . . . effective allocation [of resources] regardless of unforeseen developments.”

The University continues to adhere to a five-year planning cycle, and will undergo a new strategic planning process for 2010 to 2015.

**Core Component 1b:** In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

**Diversity in the Mission Statement and Board Documents**

Section 6.04 of the Board of Regents Policy Manual states, “the [Regent] universities shall maintain diverse and multicultural campuses to educate students and scholars to participate in the broader world and to strengthen the State of Iowa’s connections with other states and countries.”

The University’s mission statement recognizes that our students will live and work in an “increasingly diverse and global environment,” and that the education we provide
must give them the tools they need for success in that environment. In fact, as Presidents Coleman, Skorton, and Mason all reaffirmed and as stated in *The Iowa Promise* (see below), we recognize that sustaining a diverse learning environment is crucial to providing the highest quality education for all of our students, and that incorporating diversity into all aspects of our mission is fundamental to performing that mission with excellence.

**Diversity of Constituencies**

Incorporating diversity broadly is especially important because we serve so many constituencies. Not only do we teach, conduct research, and provide public service, we also treat patients, support businesses and nonprofit institutions, protect public health, entertain, and serve as an engine for economic development in the state. Our colleges and other units have their own missions, each emphasizing a certain subset of these roles that we play as an institution. The strategic plan addresses all of these roles—most directly in the top-level goals related to vitality and engagement.

**Diversity in the Strategic Plan**

Diversity features prominently throughout *The Iowa Promise*, notably as one of our seven core values and as the focus of one of the plan’s five top-level goals: “To promote excellence in education by increasing the diversity of the faculty, staff, and students.”

Our statement of core values asserts:

> Because diversity, broadly defined, advances its mission of teaching, research, and service, the University is dedicated to an inclusive community in which people of different cultural, national, individual, and academic backgrounds encounter one another in a spirit of cooperation, openness, and shared appreciation.

Strategies related to diversity focus on promoting a welcoming climate throughout the University; building a critical mass of underrepresented faculty, staff, and students; and holding all parts of the University community accountable for both of those efforts, because diversity is central to all parts of the University’s mission. In the past few years, we have made good progress by following the strategies laid out in the plan. The aspects of that progress pertinent to undergraduate education are described in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

**Progress on Strategies Related to Diversity**

Once *The Iowa Promise* was in place, the provost appointed a Diversity Action Committee (DAC) and charged it with suggesting specific action steps the University could take to move toward the goals in the strategic plan. That committee submitted its final report in spring 2006, and action has been initiated on its recommendations. The University has reorganized the administrative structure of major diversity-focused units, created a new Center for Diversity & Enrichment (CDE), and established a new
high-level position: special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity. Each college has a collegiate diversity committee. We have piloted diversity workshops across campus; created a new scholarship program to support well-prepared students whose enrollment will contribute to a diverse learning environment (as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study); and increased by 67% over FY 2004 levels funding for the Office of the Provost’s Faculty Diversity Opportunity Program (FDOP), which supports hiring minority faculty. In spring 2007, the budget pool for FDOP was just over $1 million; the target for 2010 is $1.3 million. As of July 1, 2007, a similar program in Human Resources, the Staff Diversity Opportunity Program (SDOP), was funded to support hiring women and minorities into classifications for which they are underrepresented. Furthermore, since July 1, 2006, Human Resources has funded Cultural Linguistic Services, a program established to support retention and success among UI employees who are English language learners.

Fall 2006 and fall 2007 set new records for the largest total number of minority students ever on campus, and brought the number of minority students as a percentage of total enrollment to its highest point since 1998. More minority faculty began their appointments in fall 2006 than in any previous year, thanks in part to the increase in FDOP funding, and additional modest gains were made in fall 2007, bringing the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities among tenured and tenure track faculty to 17.1%—significantly surpassing the target of 16.0% set during the most recent strategic planning process.

Increasing diversity among faculty, staff, and students remains a particular challenge in Iowa, where the general population remains considerably less diverse than in many other states. According to 2005 state population estimates from the Census Bureau, the minority population of Iowa is 8.5%, the lowest among Big Ten states. The next lowest is Minnesota, at 13.7%, and the highest is in Illinois, at 34.2%. The additional institutions in the University’s official peer group (described below) are in states where minorities represent 31.7% (North Carolina) to 56.2% (California) of the population. Figure I-2 divides the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities among students enrolled at UI and each of its peer institutions by the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities in the total population of the relevant state (for example: Iowa’s state population is 8.5% minority according to 2005 Census Bureau estimates, and UI’s fall 2006 minority enrollment as a percentage of undergraduate enrollment was 8.7%; UI’s fall 2006 minority enrollment percentage therefore is 102.4% of the state minority population percentage). This view illustrates that UI is one of only three institutions among its official peer group where the percentage of minorities among enrolled students exceeds the percentage of minorities in the state population.
In fall 2007, 1,968 international students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) from 113 countries enrolled at UI, representing 6.5% of the University’s total enrollment. This marks a decrease from fall 2006, when 2,004 international students represented 6.7% of total enrollment. The number of international undergraduate students, however, rose from 380 (or 1.8% of the undergraduate student population) to 404 (1.9%). This may point to the success of a new allocation by the Office of the Provost that brought the total investment in international recruiting to $100,000.

In 2005, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity conducted online diversity climate surveys of undergraduate students, graduate and professional students, faculty, and staff. A report on the survey of undergraduate students, released in spring 2007, found that while most students report positive perceptions of the diversity climate at UI, students from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds, international students, and students older than traditional college age felt less included at the University and perceived less of an institutional commitment to diversity than did their majority counterparts. These surveys will lead to additional goals for improvement.

**Policies Regarding Ethical Treatment of Others**

Community, Integrity, Respect, and Responsibility are among the University’s core values, and the core values statement promises that “the University takes seriously its obligation to protect academic freedom and free expression [and to] maintain a safe, supportive, healthy, and humane environment.” Under the top-level goal “To strengthen the University’s intellectual and community vitality,” strategies include “promoting the health, well-being, and professional growth of all members of the University community,” and “attaining and maintaining gender and racial equity in opportunities and compensation.”

A variety of policies are in place to help ensure that we uphold our core values. We have
an overarching Human Rights Policy, which states:

The University of Iowa brings together in common pursuit of its educational goals persons of many nations, races, and creeds. The University is guided by the precepts that in no aspect of its programs shall there be differences in the treatment of persons because of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all. Among the classifications that deprive the person of consideration as an individual are those based on associational preference. These principles are expected to be observed in the internal policies and practices of the University; specifically in the admission, housing, and education of students; in policies governing programs of extracurricular life and activities; and in the employment of faculty and staff personnel. The University shall work cooperatively with the community in furthering these principles.

Section III-16 of the Operations Manual—the chapter on Ethics and Responsibilities for University of Iowa Staff—states that “staff will treat members of the University community with dignity and respect,” and that “staff will respect the diversity of individuals in the workplace and respect the differences among them.” Job descriptions for staff include expectation statements related to civil and respectful interactions and diversity and inclusion. The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics Code of Ethical Behavior includes as its first standard, “Treat all patients with dignity and respect.”

Section III-15 of the Operations Manual, Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility, describes faculty members’ responsibility to treat students and colleagues with fairness and respect.

The Student Handbook of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) asserts that “Students have the right of respect from all instructors and staff in the College . . . . Students have a right to a classroom environment that encourages learning. As a part of a community of learners, students and instructors should work toward classrooms and courses in which everyone feels able to explore new ideas and to acquire skills.” The Code of Student Life states that students will be subject to disciplinary action if they “intentionally interfere[e] with the lawful rights of others.”

Our Operations Manual includes a statement on diversity and a nondiscrimination statement that is printed in official University publications.

The University complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the federal civil rights law that prohibits sex discrimination in education programs and activities such as admissions, housing, financial aid, and athletics. The special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity serves as UI’s Title IX coordinator.

Core Component 1C: Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Communicating the Plan

As described above, the strategic planning committee that created the University’s current plan included representation from across campus. The process involved the University community, solicited feedback about successive drafts of the plan, and incorporated as much of that feedback as possible into the final plan. The plan was
announced to the University community in March 2005. Once it received final approval from the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in June 2005, it was distributed in print form and posted on the University’s web site.

Academic and Nonacademic Unit Plans

The University’s 11 colleges have strategic plans that are approved by the provost. Most align with the current UI plan, although some colleges are in the process of updating plans that were developed under the previous UI plan. Nonacademic units also have plans that align with the University-wide plan. The Finance and Operations strategic plan, for example, identifies four priorities: organizational vitality, financial stewardship, quality of service, and process improvement. Together, these priorities support several of the goals and strategies in The Iowa Promise. The goal supported most directly is the goal to “strengthen the University’s intellectual and community vitality,” which includes strategies related to making the best possible use of existing resources, securing new resources, and nurturing the well-being and professional growth of all members of the University community. The plan of the Office of the Vice President for Research is more typical of unit plans, in that it is organized according to the five top-level goals of The Iowa Promise. The plan of the Division of Student Services shares four of the five University-level goals.

As described under Criterion 2 below, central budget development and strategic reallocation are guided by the overarching strategic principle that limited resources must be invested in advancing the University’s highest priorities, preserving its strengths, and developing new areas of distinction. Each UI unit directs its resources toward its strategic planning goals. Program and unit reviews help administrators ensure that the same principle guides decision making across the University.

Ongoing Communication

As mentioned, the Office of the Provost distributes the plan in printed form to new faculty during their orientation. The plan is referred to in news releases and other communications that describe strategic actions the University has taken, such as the action steps that resulted from the work of the DAC, described above. As described below, the annual budget narrative to the Board of Regents ties budget priorities to goals and strategies in The Iowa Promise explicitly. The annual strategic planning progress reports are part of the public record and are posted on the Board of Regents web site.

Core Component 1d: The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa

Pursuant to Chapter 262 of the Code of Iowa, The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, consists of nine members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Iowa Senate. The Board both “governs and coordinates the operations of” the state’s three public universities (The University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa, hereafter the Regent universities), as well as two special K-12 schools, the Iowa School for the Deaf and the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School.

Board members—one of whom must be a full-time student at one of the Regent universities when appointed—serve staggered, six-year terms. No more than five of the
nine may be from the same political party, and there must also be a gender balance. The Board elects one of its members to serve as president and another to serve as president pro-tem for two-year terms.

Section 1.03 of the Regents Policy Manual includes the following statement on governance of the Regent universities:

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, by statute, governs Iowa’s three state universities . . . . The Board, pursuant to this authority, establishes the missions, adopts strategic plans, makes educational policy, appoints presidents and other institutional officials, reviews and approves budgets for submission to the Governor and General Assembly, establishes and oversees annual operating budgets and personnel policies, pursues public policy and budget priorities, reviews and approves academic programs, and adjudicates disputes. The staff of the Board, headed by the Executive Director . . . provide support for the Board, including review and analysis of all budget and policy proposals, and preparation of recommendations to the Board.

The Board’s mission statement calls for the Regent institutions to carry out high-quality teaching, research, service, and support of economic development “in accordance with their respective missions.”

The Board meets throughout the year (a minimum of four times per year, but more typically 9 to 11 times). In accordance with Iowa’s open meetings law, all meetings are open to the public, except when the Board goes into executive session to discuss such matters as personnel issues or pending litigation.

Structure of University of Iowa Administration

As indicated in the statement on governance, the Board appoints The University of Iowa’s president, whose cabinet includes the executive vice president and provost, the senior vice president and treasurer, the vice president for research, the vice president for student services and dean of students, the vice president for medical affairs, and the vice president for legal affairs and general counsel. The individuals in these positions report directly to the president, as do the special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity, the special assistant to the president for governmental relations, the athletic director, the director of university relations, and the Office of the Ombudsperson. The chief executive officer of the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics reports to the president through the vice president for medical affairs, a position created in January 2007 to integrate three UI organizations that conduct patient care: the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, the Carver College of Medicine, and University of Iowa Physicians. In fall 2007, the University also appointed a new senior associate to the president to advise on policy and coordinate special initiatives.

The University’s eleven colleges (the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Law, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health, the Tippie College of Business, the Carver College of Medicine, and the Graduate College) are principally responsible for carrying out the University’s academic mission, along with the Division of Continuing Education, International Programs, and the University College (an organizational unit that administers academic credit for a variety of programs—such as the University of Iowa Honors Program, College Success Initiatives, and the Office for Study Abroad—that do not reside in one of the other colleges). Each of these units has a dean who reports to the executive vice president and provost, the University’s chief academic officer. The University librarian, director of the Museum of Art, and chief
information officer also report to the executive vice president and provost.

**Section II-28** of the *Operations Manual* provides for reviews of the offices of the president, executive vice president and provost, and all vice presidents—and reviews of the central academic officers themselves—at least once every seven years (the most recent administrative reviews can be accessed from the Faculty Senate web site or from the University’s administration web page). The same schedule applies to reviews of colleges and departments. Collegiate deans are to be reviewed at least every five years, without regard to the timing of the review of the college. Circumstances such as turnover in administrative positions sometimes affect the scheduling of these reviews.

Review of the administrative structure is an ongoing process. As described above, over the last ten years the University’s presidents have created and eliminated positions as needed to address institutional priorities.

**Shared Governance**

The University of Iowa has a long tradition of shared governance, and the University’s core leadership continues to support that tradition. As illustrated by the list of units in *Operations Manual* section I-2.8, “Advisory Bodies,” key elements of the UI shared governance model include the Faculty Senate and Faculty Council, the Staff Council, and the Partnership of the Student Governments at Iowa (PSGI).

The Faculty Senate is composed of elected faculty representatives from each of the University’s colleges, except for the Graduate College. The Senate raises issues that concern the faculty to the central administration, recommends policy changes, and appoints individuals to serve on University committees. The Senate consults with the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, regarding appointment of central academic officials, and with the president regarding the performance reviews of those officials. The Faculty Council consists of 23 elected members of the Faculty Senate who represent the Senate when the Senate is not in session. The officers of the Faculty Senate—who occupy their positions for one year—are the president, vice president (who becomes president the following year), past president, and secretary. The inclusion of past and newly-elected presidents in the governing structure permits the faculty leadership to maintain continuity. Faculty Senate officers meet regularly with the executive vice president and provost, and less frequently but also regularly with the president and executive vice president and provost together.

The Staff Council represents the University’s non-bargaining professional and scientific and merit supervisory exempt/confidential staff members. The individuals elected to this body promote communication among staff, the central administration, the Faculty Senate, and the student government. In regular meetings with central administrators and through participation on University committees, Staff Council voices the concerns and suggestions of staff members and recommends policy changes.

Student governance transitioned during 2006-07 from a unified governing body to a more representative, bicameral legislature. The new legislative body is known as the Partnership of the Student Governments of Iowa (PSGI). PSGI consists of two member student governments: the University of Iowa Student Government (UISG) and the Executive Council of Graduate and Professional Students (ECGPS). UISG represents undergraduate students, whereas ECGPS represents graduate and professional students. Student leaders meet regularly with central administrators, and PSGI members serve on a variety of University committees.
In 2005-06, the elected presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government asked President Skorton to convene a task force to evaluate ways of strengthening collaboration among the three shared governance constituencies. That task force submitted its final report in May 2006, and one of its recommendations was the creation of a Shared Governance Council (SGC) comprising the presidents, past presidents, vice presidents, and secretaries of the Faculty Senate and Staff Council and the presidents and vice presidents of the UISG and the ECGPS. The SGC has been created and has begun to meet monthly to discuss items of interest to all three constituencies. The SGC meets regularly with central administrative officers.

The University also has a number of charter committees that advise the central administration about important issues. Charter committees generally include faculty, staff, and students, and are established or modified by collective action of the PSGI, Staff Council, Faculty Senate, and University president. The *Operations Manual* states that while charter committees act in an advisory capacity only, “it is expected that the views of the committees will have an important influence on policies and procedures in their areas of concern,” and that “members of the charter committees . . . should report to and seek the views of the assemblies [that] have nominated them.” Current charter committees, for example, address issues related to diversity, University safety and security, human rights, family issues, campus planning, and athletics. The *Funded Retirement and Insurance Committee* (FRIC) is a faculty/staff charter committee that reviews and recommends changes to faculty and staff retirement, insurance, fringe benefits, and medical and health programs. The Council on Teaching, which advises the central administration on programs and policies related to teaching, is a UI charter committee; so is the Research Council, which advises the central administration regarding policies and guidelines governing research.

Though not governed by the terms of the General Charter, the Joint Faculty Staff Budget Committee (which, like FRIC, is made up of seven members appointed by the Faculty Senate and seven appointed by the Staff Council) advises the administration on matters that affect the University’s General Education Fund. These include budgetary priority setting, salary policy, state appropriations requests, internal governance procedures that have budgetary implications, and allocating funds to support planning priorities and to address the results of unit reviews. Separate faculty and staff budget committees were combined in 2003 to provide for more efficient communication with the central administration and better coordination between the Faculty Senate and Staff Council.

The Finance and Operations office has a shared governance plan that outlines expected communication among staff, unit directors, the Finance and Operations Leadership Group, and the senior vice president for finance and operations. Senior staff and unit directors are expected to demonstrate adherence to principles of shared governance in annual performance reviews.

The individual colleges also have developed structures to support shared governance. Most have their own elected faculty bodies (although some smaller colleges meet as “faculties of the whole”), and some also have elected staff bodies. The College of Engineering, for example, has the Engineering Faculty Council and Engineering Staff Council. The Tippie College of Business has an Elected Faculty Council and an Elected Staff Council. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) has three elected faculty governance bodies: the Educational Policy Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Faculty Assembly. Staff are included in CLAS governance through participation on
a variety of regular and ad hoc committees, including the CLAS Administrative Support Group, the CLAS Classification Review Committee, the CLAS Flexible Pay Committee for P&S Staff, the CLAS Staff Recognition Committee, and several others. Also, CLAS (like other colleges) appoints students to several committees, including for example the Dean’s Student Advisory Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, the Admissions Committee, and the Teaching Awards Committee.

The Graduate Council consists of the dean and associate deans of the Graduate College (as ex officio, non-voting members), 13 elected members of the graduate faculty, and four graduate students chosen by the Graduate Student Senate. The Graduate Council advises the dean on matters related to the graduate faculty and graduate programs.

**Faculty Responsibility for the Curriculum**

Effective processes are in place to ensure that faculty members have primary responsibility for decisions about the curriculum, as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study (the procedures governing undergraduate curricula, as described in the special emphasis, pertain to graduate and professional curricula as well). Proposals for new academic programs must be approved by the appropriate collegiate bodies, by the Office the Provost, and finally (in the case of new major programs) by the Board of Regents. To ensure that new programs fit into an effective overall educational policy, proposed new graduate programs first must be approved by the Graduate Council before they are submitted to the Office of the Provost and the Board of Regents.

**University Relationship with the Board**

The University’s relationship with the Board of Regents over the past decade has generally been very productive and positive. One area of concern in recent years, now resolved, was the situation surrounding the first, failed search for a new president following the departure of President David J. Skorton in 2006. The accompanying conflict led to votes of no confidence in the Board leadership by the Faculty Senate, the Staff Council, and the UISG. Since that time, with four new members on the Board, new leadership of the Board elected, and the arrival of new President Sally Mason, relations have improved and the partnership between the University and the Board has functioned effectively. The University and the Board worked successfully together, for example, to advance the University’s top priorities to the legislature during the FY 2008 budget process.

**Core Component 1e:** The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

**Integrity as a Core Value**

Integrity is one of the University’s core values—and, of course, all seven core values, taken together, reflect the University’s expectations for ethical conduct. Our core values statement affirms that:

The University recognizes its accountability to the people of Iowa and the need to exercise responsible stewardship over the intellectual and material resources entrusted to it, including the need to direct those resources to programs and initiatives that are central to the University’s core mission. In all that it does, the University measures itself by exacting standards, promotes continuous improvement, honors excellence and high aspiration, and holds its community as a whole to the highest degree of honesty, fairness, and personal integrity.
Policies to Uphold Integrity

The University publishes many documents designed to ensure integrity in the pursuit of all aspects of its mission, from teaching to financial operations to interpersonal relationships. Colleges and other academic and nonacademic units also publish policies for that purpose. In some cases, rather than implement a central policy, the University has required units to develop their own policies.

The University of Iowa General Catalog—in both its print and online iterations—provides information on University courses and curricula as well as fees, policies, and regulations. The General Catalog serves a vital function in educating readers about the role and purpose of the University because it is one of few University documents seen by every student and prospective student, by most parents, and by many legislators, alumni, and funders.

The University Operations Manual contains University-level policies and procedures. As its introduction states:

The University of Iowa is governed by state and federal law, administrative regulations, and policies of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, which provide broad direction on University affairs. This . . . Operations Manual contains University administrative, financial, and community policies, as well as certain University-level implementing procedures. These policies and procedures have been developed to supplement and clarify Regent policy and to incorporate specific requirements of federal, state, and administrative rules and regulations.

According to UI web server statistics, in 2006-07 the average monthly number of requests for the top-level page of the web-based Operations Manual was 2,296.

University, college, and major non-academic unit manuals of procedure/handbooks available online include:

- University of Iowa Student Handbook
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Manual of Procedure
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Student Academic Handbook
- Tippie College of Business Undergraduate Program Policies and Procedures
- Tippie College of Business MBA Student Policies and Procedures Manual
- Tippie College of Business Faculty and Staff Policies and Procedures Manual
- College of Education Faculty Handbook
- College of Education Policies
- College of Engineering Manual of Procedure
- College of Law Faculty Handbook
- College of Law Student Handbook
- Carver College of Medicine Manual of Procedure
- Carver College of Medicine Faculty Affairs Policies
- Carver College of Medicine Student Handbook
- College of Nursing Student Handbooks
- College of Pharmacy Student Handbook
- College of Public Health Faculty Handbook
- Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College (plus informal rules for academic success)
- UIHC Graduate Medical Education Policies and Procedures
- The Center for Teaching’s Handbook for Teaching Assistants
The College of Dentistry and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics have manuals of procedure that are not available to the general public online at the time of this writing. Many departments also publish student handbooks and policy manuals.

Federal law requires the University to disseminate broadly certain policies to faculty, staff, and students on an annual basis. The Office of Human Resources, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, and the Office of the Provost send to staff and faculty annual notifications of key community policies—from the policy on sexual harassment to policies on conflict of interest. These and other community policies are published in the University Operations Manual. The Office of Human Resources also publishes all University-level policies related to University employment in the Staff Handbook and on the Human Resources web site.

The Office of the Provost publishes the Faculty Handbook, which includes policies and procedures affecting faculty, including those related to appointment, promotion, and tenure; professional rights and responsibilities; classroom policies; compensation; and research compliance.

The Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) publishes University-level policies related to research, including, for instance, policies related to the use of human and animal subjects in research, dealing with potential conflicts of interest, and research ethics. DSP also publishes state and federal guidelines governing sponsored projects.

The Policies and Regulations Affecting Students, including the Code of Student Life, are distributed to all students, who are expected to become familiar with them. University Housing, for example, requires that students in the residence halls abide by those policies and regulations, as well as the Standards of Student Behavior in the Residence Halls, the Residence Hall Guidebook, and the terms and conditions of the residence halls contract.

Section V of the Operations Manual deals with policies related to administrative, financial, and facilities matters. Many of these policies are administered by the Controller’s Office, a division of Finance and Operations that provides financial and accounting services.

The Office of the President maintains a web page that encourages individuals who have concerns about possible financial misconduct or violation of University financial policy to file a confidential report with EthicsPoint®, a third-party reporting firm. Reports may be submitted anonymously.

Additional policies related to academic integrity are detailed under Criterion 4 (Core Component 4d).

**Internal Auditing Functions**

Several units perform internal auditing functions for various processes in the University. The Internal Audit Department ensures that the University exercises responsible management—particularly fiscal management—and that its units comply with applicable policies. Every year, the department develops and executes a comprehensive audit plan, reporting the outcomes to the Board of Regents through the Board’s Audit and Compliance Committee. Three Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) review and approve human subject research at the University, in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services regulations. Human Resources requires credential checks for all newly hired faculty, professional and scientific staff, and some merit staff, as
well as criminal background checks on newly hired staff in positions that have been
designated “security sensitive.” Hospital Human Resources handles credentialing and
background checks for UIHC employees. The Office of Clinical Quality, Safety, and
Performance Improvement (CQSPI) in the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics
monitors adverse incidents in the hospital to ensure patient safety.

**Accreditation and External Oversight**

The University’s accountability to those we serve is ensured further by various
external agencies, including all the organizations that accredit the University and
units or programs within it. In addition to our accreditation by the Higher Learning
Commission of the North Central Association, units and programs within the
University are accredited by a wide variety of accrediting bodies, as listed in Appendix
I-C. This includes nonacademic units such as athletics, which is subject to certification
by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); and the University of Iowa
Hospitals and Clinics, accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of
Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

The University of Iowa has signed on to participate in the **Voluntary System of
Accountability** (VSA) project, a partnership between the National Association of State
Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the American Association
of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). As announced in November 2007, the
tool the VSA will use will be a common web reporting template, the College Portrait.
Participating universities will provide easily accessible information to potential
students, their families, and the public in three areas: student and family information,
student experiences and perceptions, and student learning outcomes. Information will
be kept consistent, comparable, and transparent by means of a five-page template that
participating institutions will post on their College Portrait web sites. The information
is meant to demonstrate to the public that the institutions are good stewards of their
resources.

The University is also subject to the policies laid out in the **Board of Regents Policy
Manual**, which range from business procedures to personnel policies to academic
policies and procedures. **Chapter 7 of the Policy Manual** includes the Regents Code of
Business and Fiduciary Conduct. In August 2007, after a lengthy process of revision,
the Board approved the final changes to **Chapter 6 of the Policy Manual**, which lays
out policies related to strategic planning, academic program review, approval of new
programs, academic freedom, and other academic issues.

Iowa statutes require the Office of the Auditor of State to conduct audits on all state
entities, including the Regent institutions. The most recent available reports are
available from the UI Controller’s Office.

The UI Office of the Registrar oversees compliance with the Family Educational
Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and a dedicated officer monitors compliance with
the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Department
of Athletics maintains a compliance web site to help UI boosters understand NCAA
rules governing such things as donations and recruiting, and designates a senior staff
member as compliance officer.

A full-time staff member in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity monitors
the University’s compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other
regulations. In spring 2006, an **ADA compliance review task force** submitted a final
report that found the University to be in compliance with the requirements of the ADA, but called for us to “aspire to improve accessibility beyond the minimum requirements of the ADA, in keeping with the strategy identified in The Iowa Promise to create a more welcoming and accessible environment for individuals with disabilities.”

With regard to athletics, in addition to being certified by the NCAA, UI is a member of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA), a grassroots group of Division IIA faculty senates working for intercollegiate athletics reform. COIA currently has 55 members, including 9 of the 11 Big Ten universities (Purdue and Wisconsin are not members at this time).

**Resources and Procedures for Individuals with Grievances**

The *Operations Manual* and other published policy manuals include clearly defined grievance procedures, such as the grievance procedures for professional and scientific personnel, the exempt Merit system member grievance procedure, the student employee grievance procedure, and faculty dispute procedures. Section II-29 codifies the procedures related to “cases involving alleged violations of the Uniform Rules of Personal Conduct at Universities under Jurisdiction of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa.”

The colleges have published grievance procedures for students, faculty, and staff. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences publishes its policies and resources for students making complaints in its academic handbook. The College of Education provides a step-by-step process students may follow, as well as resources for both graduate and undergraduate students who have complaints. The College of Engineering publishes the informal procedure for student complaints concerning faculty actions on its web pages. The Graduate College posts on its web site a procedure for students making informal complaints having to do with academic matters. If the informal procedure fails, students may initiate the College’s formal academic grievance procedure, also described on that site. Many of the other handbooks and manuals listed above also contain policies and procedures related to grievances.

*Section III-15.2(m)* of the *Operations Manual* requires instructors to inform students, at the beginning of each course, about departmental and collegiate complaint procedures and the availability of the Office of the Ombudsperson.

The Office of the Ombudsperson exists, in part, to help faculty, staff, and students understand the University’s published policies and procedures. The Office also offers a “confidential, neutral, and independent dispute resolution service” to “ensure that all members of the University community receive fair and equitable treatment within the University system.” The Ombudsperson does not have authority to change policies and procedures, but does bring to the attention of central administration any policies that do not uphold individual rights; thus, the Office not only reviews individual grievances, it also performs an auditing function for University policies. The Office of the Ombudsperson publishes an annual report to document the number of visitors and the nature of their concerns, and to identify for the campus community some areas where progress needs to be made.

The Judicial Commission, a committee of the Faculty Senate, investigates faculty grievances against the University arising from denials of promotion and tenure or other causes and makes recommendations concerning the resolution of those grievances. The Commission has 30 members: a presiding officer, five mediators, and 24 panelists, all appointed by the Faculty Senate.
Criterion Two: PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Overview

The University of Iowa has a strong resource base, a good strategic plan, and formal structures in place to tie the two to each other at all levels of the University. University leaders, aware of the need to plan for uncertainty regarding future revenues, have put budgeting models and processes into place that allow decision makers to make wise choices that will protect the University’s strengths and advance strategic priorities.

Through annual strategic planning progress reports, a regular cycle of program review, individual faculty reviews and promotion and tenure decisions, and in other ways, the University maintains an ongoing process of assessment. Each review provides an opportunity to determine whether actions continue to align with priorities.

Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.
Planning for Expected and Unexpected Change

As have public universities in most other states, in recent years The University of Iowa has dealt with diminishing growth in state support. According to the Grapevine project (an annual compilation of data on state tax support for higher education), state tax fund appropriations for higher education operating expenses in Iowa increased 13.0% from FY 1997 to FY 2007. Only one state (Colorado) experienced a lower rate of growth over that time. Only eight states experienced a lower rate of growth over the five-year period from FY 2002 to FY 2007.

At the time of the University’s last accreditation in 1997, state appropriations accounted for more than 60.0% of the University’s total General Education Fund budget. That percentage fell below 60.0% for the first time in FY 2002, and continued to fall to 45.5%—less than the percentage accounted for by tuition and fees (46.3%)—by FY 2007. In FY 2008, the downward slide has finally reversed; state appropriations will account for 46.7% of the General Education Fund Budget, and tuition and fees for 45.6%.

University decision makers must choose among worthwhile alternatives when investing the resources entrusted to us by our students and by the people of Iowa. It is crucial that we invest in areas that will advance our strategic priorities, preserve our strengths, and bolster emerging areas of distinction. As stated in the Planning Assumptions section of The Iowa Promise, therefore, the plan:

... does not capture all that the University wants to do; it is meant, instead, as a starting point, given our knowledge of the current environment, from which to focus the University’s efforts and make effective use of its resources. While a growing resource base will hasten progress toward a larger breadth of strategic goals, University leaders are committed to improving performance in strategic areas regardless of changes in the resource base.
The Iowa Promise and University leaders also recognize that many other environmental changes will affect the University, our students, and other constituencies, and how we perform the diverse aspects of our mission. The Planning Assumptions address expectations for other critical resources besides budget, including the clinical enterprise, administrative efficiencies, the student body, space, and technology.

Colleges and other units also monitor trends that affect their disciplines, plan for contingencies, and set expectations for the size and characteristics of their enrollments. Many academic units collect information about trends in their fields through participation in professional organizations, and some colleges and departments have advisory boards of professionals in the community who help perform that function. The Tippie College of Business, for example, has a Board of Visitors, composed of business leaders from around the country, that meets twice a year to advise the College on matters of strategic direction. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean’s Advisory Board, made up of College alumni, meets annually with the dean and other College administrators. Such boards also advise academic units on curriculum matters, a function described in greater detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Peer Benchmarking

One important way that the University monitors its environment is through peer benchmarking. As mentioned in the general overview of the University, we are a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Big Ten athletic conference, and the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC). Because the members of the Big Ten and CIC differ from one another in a variety of ways—for example, some campuses have large health sciences centers, and others do not—we also use an “official UI peer group” that includes comparable campuses from various geographical regions of the country. The official UI peer group for benchmarking purposes includes:

- University of Arizona, Tucson
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Indiana University, Bloomington
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- The Ohio State University, Main Campus
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Wisconsin, Madison

Figures I-4 and I-5 illustrate that Iowa is the smallest institution among this group in terms of faculty size, and the second smallest in terms of enrollment.
In many reports, at the request of the Board of Regents, UI provides comparison benchmarking data for a 14-member "Regent comparison group" that includes all 10 of the Big Ten public universities plus the 4 non-Big Ten universities that are part of the official UI peer group (Arizona, UCLA, North Carolina, and Texas).

**Enrollment Management**

Among the “major strategic emphases” identified in the budget development process for FY 2008, the first is to manage enrollments in ways that support the strategic planning goals related to undergraduate education, graduate and professional education, diversity, and vitality. The University will seek to increase the enrollment of nonresident, well-prepared students; adjust residence hall capacity to meet demand; and provide additional budget support to colleges with enrollment growth.

As noted above, the University has undertaken its planning and actions related to diversity in the awareness that growing diversity among the general population and the continuing trend toward globalization will affect how our students live and work. Iowa’s population is becoming more diverse, though not as quickly as in many other states. The state’s population is aging, as well; the traditional college-age population (18–24 year olds) is expected to decline by 14.5 percent from 2000 to 2020.
Our efforts to recruit and retain a diverse, well-prepared student body are described in detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study. In general, as we strive to increase diversity and to maintain enrollments at current levels (and maintain revenues), we expect we will need to look more and more to sources of prospective students from out of state and to nontraditional students.

Also described later are the activities of a group of representatives from the Office of the Provost, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), the Office of Admissions, Orientation Services, the Office of the Registrar, and the Academic Advising Center, who monitor application and admission activity beginning in March and continuing through the summer in order to identify courses that may run out of space for new students. Several years ago the Office of the Provost worked with CLAS to establish and implement a mechanism to fund the hiring of additional instructors in departments facing such a shortfall. If the number of new first-year students exceeds an established threshold, the Office of the Provost provides adequate resources to ensure full availability of course seats for new students.

**Other University-Wide Planning Efforts**

**Campus Master Plan**

In 2006 the University completed its *Campus Master Plan, The Campus, the Buildings, and the Space Between*. The plan adheres to a set of “guiding principles” meant to ensure a long-range perspective in the process of decision-making, and to encourage planners to think about the campus as a whole. The guiding principles are:

- Establish a unifying framework for the campus as a whole.
- Support the University’s educational mission.
- Demonstrate stewardship of buildings and land.
- Preserve and enhance the unique identity of the campus.
- Promote a pedestrian-oriented campus.
- Enhance the quality of the visual environment.

“Today’s challenge,” the plan states, “is to plan for continued growth while securing and enhancing existing character defining features of the campus.” The plan builds on and reaffirms the central concepts of previous plans, such as the “pedestrian-oriented campus.” However, as the plan notes,

- It does so . . . in a changing context of increasing urbanization and a growing awareness of the constraints imposed by the University’s limited land resources. The need to use land wisely, care for and renew existing facilities, and manage physical growth will be critical planning endeavors if the University is to sustain the unique identity and integrity of its physical setting through the 21st century.

It is important to note that one of the guiding principles is support of the University’s educational mission, and that in preparing the plan Facilities Management staff met with University, college, and other unit leaders to ensure their understanding of academic needs related to space. The 2006 Campus Master Plan is the first in UI history to forecast growth by taking into account the academic needs of the colleges.
In 2007 the University prepared and distributed the first annual update to the Campus Master Plan. The update highlights completed construction, site selection for future development, and the beginning phases of new building design.

**Energy Conservation and Management Strategic Plan**

In February 2007, Facilities Management completed an integrated energy plan for offsetting rising energy costs. The plan focuses on increased efficiency and reductions in energy consumption per square foot. The plan sets objectives related to reliability, conservation, and sustainability, and outlines strategies for achieving those objectives. Facilities Management believes that executing the plan will have a significant positive impact by the end of 2013, including a 10% reduction in energy use per square foot and reliance on renewable resources for up to 15% of energy.

**Critical Incident Management Planning**

The University engages in campus-wide planning for critical incidents, or situations “that can cause deaths or significant injuries to faculty, staff, students, or the public; or that can shut down business, disrupt operations, cause physical or environmental damage; or that can threaten the institution’s financial standing or public image.” The University’s critical incident management plan is posted on the UI web site.

In 2006 the University focused on examining the University’s preparedness in the event of an influenza pandemic. A response plan was drafted and is also posted on the UI web site.

**Campus IT Strategic Plan**

In July 2007, the UI Information Technology Strategic Plan Planning Group completed the University’s first-ever Campus IT Strategic Plan. The plan is the result of a thorough and highly collaborative two-year process that started with a year of review and assessment and continued with a year of consultation and goal development. The Planning Group began with The Iowa Promise as their guide to the institution’s priorities. Then, to understand and assess the current status of IT on campus, the Planning Group engaged an external advisory group to complete an environmental scan; reviewed the final report of the 2005-06 Campus IT Review; solicited input on focused questions from targeted groups on campus; and sponsored faculty, staff, and student focus groups to gather perceptions about current and future challenges related to technology. The Group distributed multiple versions of the plan for comments as it developed.

The plan’s executive summary of the environmental scan highlights “trends with the potential to have the greatest influence” on policy implementation and use of IT at The University of Iowa, including:

- The increased affordability of personal technologies, and the resulting higher expectations from students, faculty, and staff, as well as increased security issues
- Increased public and regulatory attention on technology usage, and mounting pressure on institutions to be accountable for the security and reliability of their IT infrastructure
- Emerging technologies such as e-learning, podcasting, virtualization and social networking web sites
Grant-funding agencies’ focus on increased collaboration between researchers, which will require easier electronic access to research data.

The University also conducted a large-scale review of the state of electronic communications on campus, beginning in 2005. Implementation of the recommendations from that review, and from a mid-project self-study, continues. The goal is significant improvement in e-mail service for faculty, staff, and students.

**Student Success Team**

In fall 2006 the associate provost for undergraduate education and the director of the Office of Student Life created the Student Success Team, a large group of students, staff, and faculty with particular interest in undergraduate student success. In seeking to understand what keeps students persisting to their goals at The University of Iowa and what barriers they face, the group plans to identify action steps for creating conditions on campus that will contribute to greater student success.

The large group meets twice per semester and communicates via a listserv between meetings. A 10-member executive committee meets more frequently to set direction for the group. In summer 2007, the group held its first annual retreat, with the goal of generating a project list for the next 12 to 18 months. That list evolved into an action plan, and several committees have been formed to begin work on various initiatives, some of which are referenced in the “Initiatives for Progress” section at the end of the special emphasis section of this self-study.

**Ad Hoc Task Forces**

Both the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost occasionally commission task forces to investigate cross-cutting issues and make recommendations about how to address them. The Diversity Action Committee, mentioned earlier, was one such task force, and its work resulted in a series of specific recommendations that the University is implementing. The University also is taking action on the recommendations of a task force on gender equity. This task force, charged with taking a broad look at the status of UI faculty women, submitted its final report in spring 2006.

The Intercollegiate Task Force on the Organization of Research and Education in the Life Sciences is another example of a cross-cutting task force created to help the University respond to emerging environmental changes. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other funding agencies have made clear their focus on facilitating cross-disciplinary research in the life sciences, what they call “team science,” and on the translation of research to clinical applications. In a competitive funding environment, we must find ways to position ourselves for success with regard to those priorities without compromising our institutional priorities, and without upsetting the critical balance between applied and basic sciences. The life sciences task force, completing its work in fall 2007, is examining ways the University can focus the knowledge and expertise of its many strong life sciences departments on cross-disciplinary projects. These efforts are intended to make the University more competitive for research funding and improve the overall quality of UI life sciences research and education.

These trends have also been taken into account in the budget development process, which has identified as another “major strategic emphasis” the need to manage the research enterprise in the face of declining federal NIH support. One component of this effort will be increasing the competitiveness of faculty and research facilities such as the
Iowa Institute for Biomedical Discovery and the new College of Public Health Building (see “Physical Resources,” below).

Core Component 2b: The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Sources of Revenue

The University of Iowa’s budgeted revenues for FY 2008 total $2.4 billion, $533 million of which constitutes the General Education Fund (GEF), the centrally managed fund that supports the teaching, research, and service missions of the University. The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics represent the largest single source of total budgeted revenues, at $712 million (29.2%).

GEF budgeted revenues come almost entirely from three sources: state appropriations ($258 million, or 46.7%); tuition and fees ($252 million, or 45.6%); and indirect cost recoveries or facilities and administrative (F&A) costs, which, when combined with the small amount of income from other sources, total $42 million or 7.7% in FY 2008.

In FY 2007 UI faculty, together with staff and students, set a new institutional record of $382 million in grants and contracts for research, education, and service. According to the most recent National Science Foundation (NSF) survey (2005), UI ranked 18th among public universities in federally financed expenditures for research and development. In the National Institutes of Health (NIH) 2005 report, UI ranked 13th in NIH awards among all public universities.

In 1999, the University of Iowa Foundation launched the Good. Better. Best. Iowa! campaign. More than 128,000 individuals and organizations contributed more than $1.05 billion over the course of the campaign. These funds provided for more than 500 new student scholarships and more than 150 new chairs, professorships, fellowships, and deanships; 13 new and renovated campus buildings; and more than 120 new research funds.
As of September 30, 2007 the market value of the combined University of Iowa and University of Iowa Foundation (UIF) endowment stood at $994,104,491. As the smallest public institution in the Big Ten, UI has the smallest endowment of the Big Ten universities. However, according to an FY 2006 survey by the Council for Aid to Education, the combined UI/UIF endowment ranks fourth among public institutions in terms of endowment-per-student.

Undergraduate resident tuition and fees for 2007-08 total $6,293, the lowest in the Big Ten and third from the bottom among the members of our official peer group.

Table I-5 compares tuition/fees and state appropriations revenues per student FTE at The University of Iowa and at peer institutions that also have colleges of medicine on their main campuses (because the rate of state support per student is significantly higher at schools with colleges of medicine than without). The comparison demonstrates that UI’s resources are just below the median of the peer group.

### Table I-5:
**Revenue Per Student FTE at The University of Iowa and Selected Peer Institutions, FY 2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Student FTE</th>
<th>Tuition and Fees**</th>
<th>State Appropriations</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>Per FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>24,053</td>
<td>$195,882,460</td>
<td>$440,070,173</td>
<td>$635,952,633</td>
<td>$26,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of California-Los Angeles</td>
<td>34,834</td>
<td>$297,434,000</td>
<td>$582,727,000</td>
<td>$880,161,000</td>
<td>$25,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan-Ann Arbor</td>
<td>38,043</td>
<td>$590,656,000</td>
<td>$318,903,000</td>
<td>$909,559,000</td>
<td>$23,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota-Twin Cities</td>
<td>41,034</td>
<td>$413,416,472</td>
<td>$554,679,039</td>
<td>$968,095,511</td>
<td>$23,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University of Iowa</strong></td>
<td>24,814</td>
<td>$203,039,000</td>
<td>$297,335,000</td>
<td>$500,374,000</td>
<td><strong>$20,165</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University-Main Campus</td>
<td>46,064</td>
<td>$502,437,214</td>
<td>$419,081,848</td>
<td>$921,519,062</td>
<td>$20,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Arizona</td>
<td>32,683</td>
<td>$193,498,000</td>
<td>$378,622,000</td>
<td>$572,120,000</td>
<td>$17,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>37,858</td>
<td>$273,069,126</td>
<td>$359,015,771</td>
<td>$632,084,897</td>
<td>$16,696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Data Systems (IPEDS) Finance and Enrollment Surveys

*FTE equals full-time plus 1/3 part-time student enrollment

**After discounts and allowances
The Budget Process and Strategic Priorities

The strategic plan of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, sets forth as one of the Board’s four priorities to “demonstrate public accountability and effective stewardship of resources.” A strategy associated with that priority is to “advocate for adequate support and optimize funding for Regent institutions from all sources for high-quality educational opportunities accessible to Iowans, research and scholarship, service activities, and economic development efforts.”

The University of Iowa manages its budget by pooling revenues and choosing how to direct resources toward strategic priorities. Each year, the University reviews institutional funding needs and submits a request for the following year to the Board of Regents. The University’s budget narrative to the Board ties the University’s budget priorities directly to goals and strategies in the strategic plan. The Board decides which requests, at what funding levels, will go forward to the state legislature.

Regent universities also submit proposals for tuition and fee increases each year. These proposals must include a “clear and concise explanation . . . for [the] proposed increase,” and must “describe how [the] proposed increase will assist the University in making progress on strategic goals and objectives.” The UI proposal for FY 2009, for example, indicates that incremental tuition revenue will be directed toward undergraduate student financial aid, faculty positions to maintain quality programs, and programs designed to improve first-year retention and four-year graduation rates—the latter including expansion of the University’s learning communities programs, expansion of peer-led supplemental instruction for some of UI’s most challenging courses, and development of an intervention program for at-risk students.

Allocation of General Education Funds

To follow the overarching principle in The Iowa Promise that limited resources must be directed strategically and differentially to support the most central and the most promising programs and initiatives, the University has implemented major changes to its management of GEF resources. Under the leadership of former Executive Vice President and Provost Michael J. Hogan, the University implemented a revised academic budgeting model that continues to support our highest academic priorities.

For example: the University’s “top budget priority,” according to The Iowa Promise, “is raising faculty salaries to be consistent with peers.” In FY 2006 the University reallocated $10.9 million, almost $9 million of which was directed toward improving salary competitiveness for faculty and staff. In FY 2007, about $5.5 million of the total $8.6 million reallocation went toward achieving competitive faculty salaries. With these reallocations, the University was able to provide two faculty salary increments (on July 1 and January 1), totaling more than 5% in each year. The University plans to do the same in FY 2008. Based on a preliminary look at salary data collected by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and estimated FY 2008 increments provided by the various institutions, these efforts will move the University from the bottom of the official UI peer group in a ranking of average faculty salaries in FY 2006 to eighth in FY 2008 (see Figure I-9).
In addition, over the last two years, the Office of the Provost has distributed a portion of the annual salary increment pool differentially among the colleges, based on the two key factors of competitiveness and contribution. In previous years, the salary increment pool was distributed equally to all colleges. The goal of this change is to help colleges that have fallen further behind in competitiveness of their faculty salaries, and to support units that work hard to contribute to the General Fund through tuition revenue and indirect cost returns.

The University is applying a similar model to the University’s “tuition set-aside,” a pool of funds created by setting aside a portion of all tuition revenue, which then goes back to students as financial aid. The University has increased the share of the set-aside directed to the group that generates most of it, and to the area where it has the greatest chance of further enhancing General Education Fund revenues: undergraduate students and undergraduate enrollment. Changes to the management of the Graduate College “block allocation” (a pool of funds to support graduate programs), to the distribution of student computer fee funds, and to the allotment of research space also demonstrate the University’s efforts to ensure that the allocation of resources reflects strategic priorities and rewards productivity and resourcefulness.

In FY 2006 the Office of the Provost created the Strategic Investment Fund, a central pool of resources reallocated from collegiate GEF budgets, which is entirely dedicated to advancing University-wide strategic initiatives. Colleges were required to reallocate 0.5% of their recurring GEF budgets to this new central pool—a total of $1.2 million, which was used to advance key strategies identified in The Iowa Promise, such as expanding the University of Iowa Honors Program, funding a first-year seminar program, increasing funding for FDOP, and supporting the January 1, 2006 faculty salary increase. In FY 2007, the Office of the Provost required colleges to reallocate 0.4% of their recurring GEF budgets to the Strategic Investment Fund, for a total of $1 million, which again contributed to the faculty salary increment and other strategic planning priorities including graduate student scholarships, faculty diversity, the Honors Program, and realigning the student computer fee distribution.

For the past several years, the vice president for research has reallocated to the colleges about 4.0% (approximately $1.58 M in FY 2008) of their GEF indirect cost recoveries, based on their sponsored research productivity. These funds are used for a variety of expenditures related to fostering research in the colleges, including the purchase of equipment, seed funding, and other research-related expenses. This has been a creative
way for the University to support the work of scholars in the arts and humanities and in some social sciences for whom large external grants are not available.

In FY 2004, Athletics received approximately $2.2 million in GEF support. The University leadership decided, as a major component of its GEF reallocation strategy, to substantially reduce or eliminate GEF support for Athletics. In FY 2005, GEF support for Athletics was reduced to $1.9 million. In FY 2006 it was reduced to about $900,000, and $800,000—the student aid set-aside derived from the Department of Athletics’ tuition scholarship payments—was designated as support for athletic scholarships. In FY 2007, the University reduced GEF support for Athletics by an additional $100,000, and in FY 2008 the remaining $800,000 of GEF support for Athletics will be eliminated. Athletics will continue to receive non-GEF support for central services costs such as utilities and maintenance. The reallocated GEF dollars will be used to support functions that enhance the teaching, research, and service missions of the University.

As called for by The Iowa Promise, University leaders have made thoughtful decisions about the effective allocation of limited resources in order to support the goals and strategies most central to the University’s mission.

**Human Resources**

The University’s employees are our most important resource. Our ability to serve our students and other constituents with excellence depends on recruiting and retaining a talented, diverse, and dedicated faculty and staff.

Table I-6 shows that as of November 2007 The University of Iowa employed 26,059 individuals, or 21,441 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

The University of Iowa faculty includes three Pulitzer Prize winners, four former clerks to U.S. Supreme Court justices, two National Medal of Science winners, and four Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigators. Numerous Iowa faculty have been elected to the nation’s most prestigious scholarly academies, including ten members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one member of the National Academy of Engineering, four members of the National Academy of Sciences, and sixteen members of the Institute of Medicine. According to the Office of the Provost, 96.7% of UI tenured and tenure track faculty have a terminal degree. As mentioned above, faculty are highly research-productive, as evidenced in part by their having generated (along with staff and student researchers) $382 million in sponsored funding in FY 2007.

As described above, increasing the competitiveness of our faculty salaries has been our top budget priority, and we have made significant progress toward that goal—bringing average (nonclinical) faculty salaries up from the bottom of our peer group to about the median. We have also set a goal to increase clinical medicine faculty salaries to the 50th percentile in the American

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**Table I-6:**

**Fall 2007 Employment Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Category</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Officer</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty—Tenure Track</td>
<td>1,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty—Clinical Track</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty—Other</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Doctoral</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; Scientific</td>
<td>4,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEIU/Healthcare Professionals</td>
<td>2,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit (Non-Organized)</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit (AFSCME)</td>
<td>4,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total - Salaried Faculty &amp; Staff</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,572</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents</td>
<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Assistants*</td>
<td>2,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary—Professional</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary—Merit</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary—Students</td>
<td>2,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FTE</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,441</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Headcount**

| Total Headcount for Salaried Faculty & Staff | 15,190 |
| Total Headcount All Employees               | 26,059 |

*For graduate assistants, FTE = 20 hours per week

Source: University of Iowa Employment Profile, November 2007
Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC; currently they are in the 40th percentile), and to annually monitor the competitiveness of professional and scientific (P&S) staff salaries in relation to our peers (in 2006-07, average UI nonorganized P&S staff salaries surpassed the Big Ten mean by 3.16%).

The Iowa Promise includes a goal to increase graduate teaching assistant (TA) and research assistant (RA) salaries to the top third of our peer group. In 2005-06, UI TA salaries ranked 6th out of 11—up from 7th the year before. RA salaries remained at 7th.

Also among the indicators we use to track progress toward our strategic planning goals are several related to the diversity of faculty and staff, as shown in Table I-7.

Table I-7: Progress on Selected Faculty/Staff Diversity Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall of FY</th>
<th>1997-98</th>
<th>2002-03</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>Target*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority tenured/tenure track faculty as a percentage of total tenured/tenure track faculty</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women tenured/tenure track faculty as a percentage of total tenured/tenure track faculty</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minority professional &amp; scientific (P&amp;S) staff as a percentage of total P&amp;S staff</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ethnic minorities in executive positions</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in executive positions</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Targets set during most recent strategic planning process, based on fall 2003 data

We have made significant gains with regard to increasing the diversity of the faculty, even surpassing the target (set in 2005) of 16.0% racial/ethnic minority tenured/tenure track faculty as a percentage of total tenured/tenure track faculty. We have also seen a steady increase in the percentage of women tenure track faculty, and in the percentage of women and racial/ethnic minorities holding executive positions. As mentioned above, in 2007-08 the University is implementing a new Staff Diversity Opportunity Program (SDOP) that applies best practices from the Faculty Diversity Opportunity Program (FDOP) to the hiring of women and minorities into classifications in which they are underrepresented.

In the University’s most recent annual governance report to the Board of Regents on faculty resignations, we identified the following key strategies for retaining faculty:

- Improve faculty salaries.
- Increase attention to family and career issues—for example by reviewing the recommendations of the Gender Equity Task Force (mentioned above), which found that “family reasons” was the second most commonly cited reason why faculty members resigned (the most commonly cited reason was to take an employment opportunity at another educational institution).
- Improve retention of underrepresented and minority faculty, with initiatives such as continuing to bolster FDOP.
Further improve mentoring of junior faculty. A mentoring task force, appointed by the Office of the Provost in January 2006, submitted its final report in November 2007. Recommendations in the report include training for DEOs and other mentors; creation of a Mentoring Advisory Board in the Office of the Provost; establishing a requirement that each college prepare a mentoring plan that meets its individual needs; the development of methods for monitoring the outcomes of mentoring programs; and development of a centralized web site/clearinghouse to provide information and web links to a variety of University resources for both mentors and mentees.

The University offers a variety of professional development programs for faculty and staff, as described under Criterion 4, below. Human Resources’ career development web page provides access to resources including advising, reclassification assistance, and job seeking tools. In addition, the HR services and resources for faculty, staff, and departments page offers links to employee assistance (e.g., counseling, disability services, flexible work arrangements), family services (e.g., child care and elder care), the UI Wellness program (e.g., weight management, smoking cessation, wellness seminars), and a variety of other tools and resources to help the UI workforce fulfill personal and career development goals.

In 2006 Organizational Effectiveness offered a confidential survey, Working at IOWA, asking faculty and staff to report on their work environment at the University. Working at IOWA explores the concept of engagement and views the survey as an ongoing opportunity for improvement and action.

**Physical Resources**

The University of Iowa campus sits on 1,900 acres and comprises 131 major (10,000 gross square feet or more) buildings (268 buildings total). The University has 10 residence halls, with a capacity of 5,600.

From 1998 to 2007, about 2.9 million gross square feet (GSF) of new building space were added to the campus, including the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. This reflects a growth rate averaging about 250,000 GSF per year—a rate that has remained steady since World War II, and that is similar to the average at the University’s peer institutions. Facilities growth at UI and at peer institutions is expected to slow over the next ten years.

As of the 2005 Campus Master Plan, about 535,000 GSF of new projects were in the planning phase, including the State Hygienic Laboratory ($37.7 million); the Campus Recreation and Wellness Center ($69.0 million), a new recreational facility to be located on the east side of campus; a new academic facility for the College of Public Health ($47.7 million); and a high density archival facility for the Libraries ($7.5 million).

Additional major capital projects now under way or about to begin include the Iowa Institute for Biomedical Discovery ($90 million), which will house laboratories conducting “high-risk, high-reward” research in areas such as cardiovascular disease, children’s health, and cancer, as well as the new Center for Regenerative Medicine; renovation of the Chemistry Building ($41.4 million); fire and safety improvements in Slater Hall ($3.2 million); renovation and landscaping of the Art Building ($14.7 million); and an addition to the Burge residence hall ($9 million).

A map of significant construction projects is available on the UI Facilities Management web site.
The Campus Master Plan asserts that

Perhaps the most beneficial concept to grow out of the . . . process of campus master planning is the idea of facilities stewardship—taking care of the buildings we already have. For the first time ever we have a clear picture of the current condition of every General Education building on campus.

Appendix 2 of the Campus Master Plan summarizes the current conditions of General Education Fund buildings and categorizes them according to immediacy of need for renovations.

The University’s strategic objective continues to be attaining annual financial support for facilities renewal equal to 1% of the replacement cost of all General Education Fund-supported buildings. Contributing to this goal are the General Education Fund Building renewal budget, operations and maintenance budget directed to renewal, capital appropriations from the state for facilities, state Academic Building Revenue Bonding authorizations, and other central sources of support such as designated gifts and grants.

The replacement cost of UI General Education Fund-supported buildings is now $2.8 billion. Because facilities replacement costs will continue to rise due to inflation and new buildings and major additions, the University’s financial model will include a future capital renewal set aside equal to 1.5% for each new major addition or building project approved.

Significant progress toward the goal of annual facilities renewal support equal to 1% of the replacement cost of all GEF-supported buildings was possible in FY 2007, in part due to a new energy/environment tuition surcharge. The University increased its building renewal support by $1,430,000 to a total of $8,509,000 budgeted. In FY 2008, the University added another $1,350,000 to this budget category.

The University’s annual Facilities Governance Report to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, contains additional information about UI facilities, including types of space, utilization, procedures for making decisions about allocation of space, conservation and sustainability, deferred maintenance, and fire safety.

Core Component 2c: The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

Evaluation of Faculty

Assessment—both self-assessment and external review—takes place across the University and at all levels. The heart of assessment at The University of Iowa is the system of tenure and promotion and faculty review, alongside regular reviews of academic programs. Ultimately, the quality of educational programs depends on the quality and commitment of the faculty delivering them, and these faculty undergo regular review, including post-tenure assessment.

As required by section III-10.1(a)(4) of the Operations Manual, every probationary (tenure track but not yet tenured) UI faculty member receives a performance review each year. Probationary faculty members also undergo full-scale departmental or collegiate review in the third or fourth year of service, depending on the norm within the unit. The Operations Manual states:
Reappointment reviews should take into account the faculty member’s proven teaching effectiveness and research productivity and potential. [and] also should include an evaluation of departmental, collegiate, and University educational goals and include a determination of the likely role of the faculty member in achieving such goals. Only if an institutional need is found likely to exist for a person with the faculty member’s substantive background, and only if the faculty member’s teaching effectiveness and research productivity and potential are deemed of such a quality that an affirmative tenure decision is likely to be made, should something other than a terminal appointment be tendered.

The Faculty Handbook, a web resource maintained by the Office of the Provost, defines the process for completing the annual and third-/fourth-year reviews.

The Faculty Handbook also points to the procedures for tenure and promotion decision making for tenure track faculty and to the procedures for promotion for clinical track faculty. Both policies have been revised over the past few years in order to standardize processes across campus.

The promotion and tenure process begins with and relies on peer review in each faculty member’s home department, followed by evaluation by peers outside the University and detailed evaluation at the collegiate and University levels. Ultimately, the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, approves all faculty promotion and tenure decisions. Section III-10.2 of the Operations Manual describes the basic criteria for promotion—which include criteria related to:

- Teaching (e.g., “recommendations for promotion should include evidence drawn from such sources as the collective judgment of students, of student counselors and of colleagues who have visited the individual classes or who have been closely associated with the person’s teaching . . . or who have taught the same students in subsequent courses”)

- Research (e.g., “quality of production is considered more important than mere quantity . . . The candidate should pursue a definite, continuing program of studies, investigations or creative works”)

- Other professional contributions (e.g., “such contributions should be evaluated in terms of the effectiveness with which the service is performed, its relation to the general welfare of the University and its effect on the development of the individual”)

Section III-10.4 specifies the basic qualifications required for promotion to the academic ranks of assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

Section III-10.9 contains clinical track policies, including the basic qualifications required for promotion to the clinical faculty ranks of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

In accordance with section III-10.7, all academic units have policies for peer review of tenured professors, to be carried out at least every five years. These reviews are to “address the quality of the faculty member’s performance in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service, and should result in recommendations that help to enhance that performance.”

According to the Post-tenure Effort Allocation Policy (section III-10.6), or PTEAP, each academic unit defines an expected distribution of effort for tenured faculty within that
unit ("unit norms," defined by each unit and approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in May 1998). The policy allows differential allocation of effort for an individual faculty member on a yearly, negotiated basis, to capitalize on particular faculty strengths, provided the allocation is consistent with the unit’s overall mission and strategic plan. Every spring, departments and colleges report to the Office of the Provost (via a web application) the expected effort allocation portfolio for each of their tenured faculty members.

**Evaluation of Staff**

Under section III-3 of the *Operations Manual*, professional and scientific (P&S) staff members are appointed to one of five status categories: career, probationary, at-will, term, or temporary. Most new P&S staff are appointed to probationary status for a period of 24 months, during which time an employee may be terminated for any legitimate reason at any time. The staff member must be informed of the reason for termination, and has recourse through P&S grievance procedures (section III-28.4) if he or she feels the termination decision was made on improper grounds. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, a P&S staff member may earn career status. Should the University take action to dismiss a P&S staff member who has career status, the burden of proof is on the University to prove lack of satisfactory performance.

Performance reviews of University staff members are governed by the policies outlined in section III-3.2 of the *Operations Manual*, which were substantially revised and clarified in 2007. The policy requires every administrative unit to demonstrate utilization of an appropriate performance management system. The associate vice president for human resources runs a compliance report annually for each college or division. Performance management consultation is available for all organizational leaders through Organizational Effectiveness.

The percentage of UI employees receiving annual performance reviews is one of the indicators of progress associated with the University’s strategic plan. That percentage has increased from 85% in FY 2004 to 95% in FY 2007.

**Academic Program Review**

All academic programs are regularly reviewed on a five- or seven-year cycle, in accordance with section II-28 of the *Operations Manual*. Departmental and program reviews always include a self-study, a detailed analysis by reviewers from outside the unit (and members from outside the University), a written critique with the opportunity for comment from the unit, and a final response by the dean of the college or director of the larger administrative unit. The final report and supporting documents are forwarded to the executive vice president and provost for consideration within the context of institutional goals and long-term strategic planning.

In 2005-06, the Office of the Provost worked with the Faculty Senate Committee on Policies and Compensation to revise the University’s academic program review policies—sections II-28.2 and II-28.3 of the *Operations Manual*—to follow up on the recommendations that came out of a 2004 Board Office audit of academic program review and student outcomes assessment procedures at the Regent institutions, streamline the language of the policy, and create parallel policies for reviews of colleges and departments. The changes were approved by the Faculty Senate in February 2007.

Areas to be considered in a departmental or program review are determined by the
The department’s mission and goals, and their contribution to the mission and
goals of the College and the University
Projected enrollments over a seven-year period
Admissions policies and procedures
Student perceptions of the department or program, the faculty, and the
administration
Learning objectives for the program and student achievement of those objectives
Interaction of faculty and students and interaction of the program with other parts
of the University
The nature of scholarly, creative, and service activities within the department
A profile of faculty
An assessment of facilities and support services

Criteria for program evaluation are determined by the executive vice president and
provost, but should include assessments based on the program’s quality and centrality,
as well as student demand, potential for excellence, external impact, and cost. These are
the primary and secondary criteria defined in the document Criteria for Institutional
Enhancements and Reductions, generated in 1991 by the University of Iowa Strategic
Planning Steering Group and last revised in 1997. “Particular attention should be
focused,” the policy states, “on ways in which improvements in programs and functions
can be achieved within currently available departmental resources, or if indicated by
enrollment trends and other factors, with appropriately reduced resources.”

Collegiate reviews are expected to consider these issues as well, and also to address the
college’s organizational and financial structure, the role of faculty and students in the
college’s operations, the college’s relationship to the University and to its alumni, and
the effectiveness of the college’s strategic planning and plan implementation.

Evaluation of Individual Courses and Instructors
Student evaluation of individual courses, supported by Evaluation and Examination
Services, occurs in most undergraduate classes. Processes for these evaluations are
described in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Non-Academic Program Review
Nonacademic programs also are regularly reviewed to assess their quality and centrality
to the University’s mission.

At its December 2003 meeting, the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, adopted an
“Administrative Services Transformation” resolution that, in part, directed the
University presidents to propose methods to achieve administrative efficiencies and
other cost-containment measures through enterprisewide collaboration. The University
of Iowa set a goal (a strategic planning progress indicator and target) to conduct six of
these administrative reviews per year during the first three years of the planning period.
In 2004-05, the University conducted 12 reviews; in 2005-06, 13; and in 2006-07, 10.

**Organizational Effectiveness (OE)** is a unit of the Office of Human Resources within Finance and Operations, with the mission to assist in “strengthen(ing) individual and organizational learning and performance,” in support of the *Iowa Promise* goal to “strengthen the University’s intellectual and community vitality.” Home to the HR Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit, OE provides assistance with nonacademic unit reviews. CQI has compiled helpful documents on its website, including a description of the unit review process and information for units about how to prepare for a review.

In FY 2005 UI formalized a function of business office improvement emphasizing LEAN methodology (the business improvement methodology that calls for the reduction or elimination of waste and work that does not add value). Organizational Effectiveness leads the program, which involves collaborations with the LEAN program in the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC) and with private sector partners such as Rockwell Collins; HNI, Inc.; St. Luke’s Hospital; Principal Financial Group; and Deere Credit Corp (together, the Business Process Improvements Partners group). The program has led to many opportunities for reallocation among business services and support functions in the University and UIHC. During calendar year 2006, business process improvement initiatives were applied to a variety of University functions, including parking, registration, the Cashiers Office, biohazards disposal, sponsored programs contracting (primarily research contracts), printing, and bundling of on-campus financial services. For the spring 2007 semester, projects included University Hygienic Laboratory contracting, construction bidding and award processes, fringe benefit systems/costs, and student services functions within the Office of the Provost.

**Reviews of Administrative Offices**

As noted earlier, section II-28 of the *Operations Manual* provides for reviews of the offices of the president, executive vice president and provost, and all vice presidents at least once every seven years (the most recent administrative reviews can be accessed from the Faculty Senate website). Central academic officers, including the president, vice presidents, and deans, are to be reviewed at least every five years, in addition to annual performance appraisals.

**Strategic Planning Indicators of Progress**

The University reports each year to the Board of Regents about progress related to the strategic plan. As part of this annual review, the University tracks 44 indicators of progress tied to the plan’s five top-level goals. Among these are indicators of student success, such as graduation and retention rates; faculty success in winning grants and contracts; indicators of progress in increasing diversity among faculty, staff, and students; competitiveness of faculty salaries; gift productivity; and various measures related to the University’s engagement with the larger community.

**Governance Reports**

Each year, the University submits to the Board a series of governance reports on topics such as faculty activities and workload, economic development and technology transfer, graduation and retention rates, distance education, facilities governance, and many others. These reports allow the Board to verify that the University is using its resources effectively and making appropriate progress toward established goals.
**Institutional Data**

In keeping with our decentralized nature and tendency toward lean central administration, to date The University of Iowa has not established an Office of Institutional Research. This presents a variety of challenges that come to the forefront during an intensive data-collection process such as the preparation of an institutional self-study. There are individuals in various central offices, however, who have responsibilities related to data collection and analysis. The Office of the Provost administers the University’s participation in peer data exchanges, and communicates regularly with deans and collegiate budget officers about its analyses of data from central sources.

More and more institutional data have become available for central, departmental, and collegiate use over the past several years with the advent of the new HR system, the growth of the University of Iowa Research Information System (UIRIS), major enhancements to the Registrar’s data warehouse, and improvements in other systems as described above under significant developments since the last NCA accreditation evaluation. The new student information system now under development—described in the special emphasis section of this self-study—will be another significant improvement in data delivery.

**Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.**

As described above, all of the colleges and major non-academic organizational units have strategic plans, most closely aligned with the University-wide plan.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences strategic plan for 2006 to 2011, for example, establishes the College’s five key goals, which echo the University’s goals:

- Provide students a rich and challenging experience in General Education and in the undergraduate major.
- Promote excellence in education by increasing the diversity of the faculty, staff, and students.
- Advance the research and scholarly enterprise and cultivate excellent graduate and professional programs.
- Strengthen the College’s intellectual and community vitality.
- Reaffirm the College’s service mission and partnerships with the public.

The College’s mission statement also echoes the University’s mission statement—and emphasizes student learning in an increasingly complex environment:

The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences provides academic programs that prepare our students to be knowledgeable citizens of the 21st century and empower them to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The College also advances scholarly and creative endeavor through leading-edge research and artistic production. Faculty and staff use this research and creativity to enhance undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, and to provide a wide range of services to the people of Iowa, the nation, and the world. The College conducts its activities in, and serves as a model for, a culturally diverse, humane, technologically advanced, and globally conscious environment.
As described, academic program review policies expect those reviews to consider how the program contributes to the mission and strategic goals of the department and college in which it resides, as well as the mission and goals of the University as a whole.

Organizational Effectiveness, which assists with non-academic unit reviews and administers business process improvement initiatives, explicitly states (in its most recent annual report, for 2006-07) that its aim is to meet the challenge of the Iowa Promise goal “to strengthen the University’s intellectual and community vitality.”

The University’s annual budget narrative aligns budget initiatives with specific goals and strategies in The Iowa Promise, and the University’s new academic resource management model (described above) has transparently supported the University’s top budget priority (faculty salary competitiveness, as defined in The Iowa Promise) and other strategic priorities such as faculty diversity and undergraduate education initiatives.
Criterion Three: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Overview

For the most part, we have deferred discussion of the ways in which The University of Iowa meets the third criterion for accreditation to the special emphasis section of this self-study, which is a focused self-assessment of undergraduate education at The University of Iowa.

The limited consideration given here again highlights Iowa’s decentralized nature, as it is the faculty in the colleges and departments who identify expected learning outcomes for their students, and it is primarily at the level of academic program review that we have focused the assessment of learning outcomes.

This discussion also demonstrates that a commitment to effective teaching is embedded in University policies and procedures; that the fundamental teaching and learning resources faculty and students need, such as libraries and technology infrastructure, are well established, of high quality, and well used; and that the University continues to seek innovative ways to enhance teaching and learning and respond to the needs of diverse learners and a changing environment.
Core Component 3a: The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

The University of Iowa has maintained a longstanding requirement for outcomes assessment as a part of the process of academic program review. Incorporating outcomes assessment procedures within the program review process should ensure that assessment is undertaken by individuals with full knowledge of a program's unique mission and goals, and should also make the best use of human and financial resources. The University of Iowa has applied and been accepted to participate in the Higher Learning Commission's Academy for Assessment of Student Learning. We look forward to strengthening our student learning outcomes assessment efforts as a result of that participation.

As noted above, in 2005-06 the Office of the Provost worked with the Faculty Senate to revise the University's academic program review policies. This effort was based in part on an analysis of recent academic program reviews, which found a need to reinvigorate the program review process and encourage more consistent results. The policy (in section 11-28 of the Operations Manual) now reads, in part:

Instructional programs of the [college or department] should be assessed in regard to:

(i) the learning objectives of the program;

(ii) curriculum content in relation to the learning objectives of the program;

(iii) student achievement of learning objectives of the program;

(iv) program changes since last review and success of changes in relation to program learning objectives;

(v) recommendations for program changes based on recent assessments and other pertinent data;

(vi) the relation of the program to the goals of the college;

(vii) the continuing need for the program; [and]

(viii) the overall quality of the program . . . .

In June of 2006, in response to discussions with staff of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, national discussions on accountability, and internal discussions about improving undergraduate education, the Office of the Provost initiated the development or re-development of outcomes assessment plans in each of the University's undergraduate majors, to be completed by May of 2007. That effort is described in detail in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Assessment of the University’s General Education Program also is considered in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

In October 2006 the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) published guidelines for strategic assessment of departmental graduate programs. Along with a mission statement for the department’s graduate degree program, a description of admission processes, and data about program size and student support, the guidelines require a narrative about program outcomes that discusses whether graduate students “compete effectively for honors and disciplinary recognition during their studies,” and to what extent graduates
of the program receive appropriate placements. This assessment must be included as an appendix to the departmental self-study for all CLAS departmental reviews.

To monitor the achievements of graduate students, individual program reviews document success in first-year graduate coursework, performance on qualifying and comprehensive examinations, program completion rates, and faculty perceptions of student quality. In addition, specific graduate and professional programs monitor the quality of graduate students’ academic and professional achievements, including dissertation and thesis quality, scholarly publications and grants received, post-doctoral or other post-degree fellowships and residencies, and first employment. Many graduate and professional programs must also meet outcomes assessment criteria established by accrediting agencies.

Graduates of some professional colleges, such as the Carver College of Medicine and the Colleges of Law, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and Nursing, must pass board or licensure exams to practice their profession. The pass rates of their graduates on these exams are the most immediate demonstration of student achievement. One of the indicators of progress associated with the University’s current strategic plan monitors the pass rates for these five colleges in comparison to state or national rates. In spring 2007, the latest data available (2006) indicated that the pass rates on professional licensing exams for students of the Colleges of Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Nursing surpassed national means. UI College of Law students passed the bar exam at rates above the mean for the state of Iowa. Carver College of Medicine graduates achieved pass rates above the national mean for two out of three parts of the medicine professional licensing exam. See Table I-8 for the most recent available four years of data on UI and national pass rates on professional licensing examinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate/Professional Program</th>
<th>Exam Pass Rate Information Available</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry—National Board Dental Examination</td>
<td>Part One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UI Pass Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
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### Graduate/Professional Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Pass Rate Information Available</th>
<th>Part One</th>
<th>Part Two—Clinical Knowledge</th>
<th>Part Two—Clinical Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class of:</td>
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<td>National Pass Rate</td>
<td>UI Pass Rate</td>
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<tr>
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<td>93%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>95%</td>
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#### Law—Iowa Bar Exam

Pass rates for all test takers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>UI Pass Rate</th>
<th>State Pass Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>78%</td>
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</table>

#### Nursing—National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>UI Pass Rate</th>
<th>National Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>87.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Pharmacy—North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>UI Pass Rate</th>
<th>National Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the current University-wide conversation about undergraduate outcomes assessment, the University does monitor a number of high-level indicators to give an overall picture of student success. Many of these are among the indicators of progress associated with the University’s strategic plan. For example:

- **One-year retention rate of new, direct-from-high-school students**—Increase from 83.2% (2003 cohort) to 86.0% by 2010. In fall 2006, the one-year retention rate was 84.1%.

- **Six-year graduation rate of new, direct-from-high-school students**—Increase from 66.2% (1998 cohort) to 70.0% by 2010. In fall 2006, the six-year graduation rate was 65.5%.

- **Number of graduate students winning national fellowships or awards**—30 new awards in each year from 2005 through 2010. In 2006-07, 41 graduate students won national fellowships or awards.

- **Time to Ph.D. degree**—decrease the average from 6.7 years (for the students who graduated 1999-2004) to 6.4 years. For students who graduated between 2001 and 2006, the average time to Ph.D. degree remained 6.7 years.

**Core Component 3b: The organization values and supports effective teaching.**

The special emphasis section of this self-study describes and evaluates support for effective teaching at The University of Iowa, including training of teaching assistants, teaching awards, the activities of the Center for Teaching, reviews of faculty, peer review of teaching as a component of the promotion and tenure review process, student course evaluations, and professional development opportunities for instructors.

The special emphasis section also describes the process of curriculum review, which is designed to ensure that tenure track faculty develop and control curricular content at the departmental and collegiate levels.

Additional evidence of the University’s commitment to effective teaching is noted throughout the special emphasis section of this self-study. Instructional technologies, for example, are helping faculty incorporate innovative teaching methods into their courses, and respond to diverse on-campus and distance learning needs. Two Service Learning Institutes have helped faculty incorporate service learning into their curricula. Mature resources such as the University Libraries and Information Technology Services provide instructors with fundamental support for their teaching.

**Section III-10.1a(4) of the Operations Manual** requires that annual reviews of probationary faculty members “take into account the faculty member’s proven teaching effectiveness,” and further states that “the first step in a tenure decision should be an evaluation of teaching effectiveness.” Section III-10.4 outlines qualifications for promotion to specific faculty ranks, the first qualification being, in each case, evidence of promise or proven ability as a teacher. The Office of the Provost emphasizes the importance of the teaching role at new faculty orientation programs, and departments do the same for new graduate teaching assistants.

The University of Iowa has an excellent and highly qualified faculty. According to fall 2007 data from the Office of the Provost, 96.7% of tenured and tenure track faculty have terminal degrees. One hundred sixty-nine faculty members currently hold endowed chairs, professorships, or deanships. Our non-tenure track faculty cohort consists of
highly qualified professionals. Many of our graduate teaching assistants go on to become faculty members.

Teaching Awards

The University offers several campus-wide awards that recognize faculty and staff for their achievements in teaching. Faculty, staff, and/or students nominate instructors for these awards, which—as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study—include Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards, Collegiate Teaching Awards, the President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence, and the President’s Award for Technology Innovation. The latter awards are the University’s highest honors for teaching.

President & Provost Award for Teaching Excellence

Each spring the Council on Teaching selects three tenure track or clinical track faculty members to receive the President & Provost Award for Teaching Excellence, in recognition of sustained outstanding performance in teaching. Beginning in 2007-08, the Council will make an award to a non-tenure track faculty member as well. Recent recipients of the award include:

Craig Kletzing, professor of physics and astronomy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, where he has taught since 1996. Professor Kletzing’s colleagues recognize him as a progressive and innovative instructor who works actively to keep abreast of cutting-edge teaching methods and theories, and uses them successfully in his own teaching of introductory physics. Students appreciate his skill at demonstrating difficult physical concepts and his commitment as a mentor. Effective at incorporating undergraduate and graduate students into his research program (which involves building instruments that make scientific measurements on both rockets and satellites), Professor Kletzing teaches students not just about physics, but also about how to succeed as practicing scientists.

George (Geordie) Lawry, professor of internal medicine in the Carver College of Medicine, where he has taught since 1993. Professor Lawry has been elected “Teacher of the Year” by each of the medical school classes multiple times. In addition to being a popular and effective lecturer and clinical mentor at The University of Iowa, Professor Lawry is committed to improving medical practice nationwide. He is developing a three-part, interactive instructional program to help learners—from first-year medical students to practicing physicians—develop better musculoskeletal examination skills, and part of that program has already been incorporated into the leading rheumatology textbook. Professor Lawry also serves as co-chair of a national organization charged with ensuring that a standardized curriculum in musculoskeletal medicine is being delivered in 100% of allopathic medical colleges by 2011.

Leslie Marshall, professor in the College of Nursing, where she has taught since 1978. Professor Marshall received the College of Nursing undergraduate students’ “most influential teacher” award in 2002, and the International Programs Outstanding International Educator award in 2003. After establishing her academic career, Professor Marshall returned to school to pursue a bachelor of science in nursing so that she would better understand how to organize the content of her physiology and pathology courses to meet the demands of nursing practice. Her commitment to empowering learners extends beyond the UI campus; she has
taught college students in Papua New Guinea, for example, as well as hospital staff in Micronesia. Students and faculty alike recognize her courses as among the most challenging but well taught courses in the College curriculum.

President’s Award for Technology Innovation

The Academic Technologies Advisory Council each year selects the recipient of the President’s Instructional Technology Innovation Award, which recognizes creative use of technology in teaching. Recent recipients of the award include:

Bob Boynton, professor of political science in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Professor Boynton received the award for technology innovation along with the students in two of his courses, Global Political Communication and Governing Feudal England, for the innovative use of a new technology called Web 2.0. Professor Boynton integrated two features of that new technology into a new teaching model for his courses. One feature allowed students to organize information collaboratively; another allowed students to create web sites easily, and also gave Professor Boynton a new way to interact with them as they created those pages. The result is a new model for learning that has the potential to spread across a wide variety of disciplines, and that represents an important advance toward adaptive learning.

Professors Marc Armstrong and David Bennett of the Department of Geography in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Their project involved integrating existing technologies into a new teaching model. While students are in the field, a global positioning system determines their location, a server calls up information about that location—which might include data, images, video, online discussions, or other materials—and the students access that information on a handheld computer. This innovative learning model has potential not only for the study of geography, but for any discipline that involves learning “on location,” be it at an excavation site, in a museum, or on a nature trail.

Core Component 3c: The organization creates effective learning environments.

The special emphasis section of this self-study includes a focused evaluation of learning environments at The University of Iowa.

In addition, the special emphasis—particularly in the section on “Environments and Resources for Learning”—addresses many of the ways the University supports student learning outside of the traditional classroom experience.

Core Component 3d: The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

The special emphasis section of this self-study includes a discussion and evaluation of the University Libraries; Information Technology Services; centers to build key skills in writing, speaking and math; the University of Iowa Honors Program; programs in support of diversity; academic advising; the Center for Teaching; and a variety of other key programs and resources that support teaching and learning.
The University of Iowa is committed to lifelong learning, discovery, and innovation, as demonstrated by the achievements of our faculty, staff, and students.

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

Criterion Four: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Overview

The University of Iowa's commitment to promoting a life of learning for all members of the community is expressed in our mission documents, our policies, our programs to support inquiry and to reward achievement, and our curricula. The real evidence of that commitment, however, is the extraordinary record of accomplishment on the part of faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component 4a: The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

The theme of “valuing a life of learning” pervades The Iowa Promise. One of our core values is “learning.” Our goal for undergraduate education is, in part, to help students become “lifelong learners.” Our diversity goal focuses on the role of diversity in promoting “excellence in education.” Our vitality goal is, in part, to “promote a thriving intellectual environment.” Our engagement goal hopes to promote “the mutual
exchange of ideas and synergistic use of complementary expertise.” And in setting a
top-level goal to “advance the research and scholarly enterprise,” we celebrated our
dedication to the “discovery, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge”:

Faculty, staff, and student research produces new knowledge, innovations, and
creative works that improve our lives and our society. The University’s research
and postbaccalaureate programs foster a rich, vibrant learning environment for all
students, including undergraduates.

Academic Freedom

A “rich, vibrant learning environment” depends on the exercise of free inquiry and on
respect for academic freedom throughout the University community.

Section III-15.1 of the Operations Manual, which begins the University policy on
professional ethics and academic responsibility, states:

The indispensable condition for the successful discharge of [the University’s basic]
functions is an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. Unless he or she is free to pursue
the quest for knowledge and understanding, wherever it may lead, and to report and
discuss the findings, whatever they may be, the University faculty member cannot
properly perform his or her work. As a participant in an enterprise that depends
upon freedom for its health and integrity, the faculty member has a special interest
in promoting conditions of free inquiry and furthering public understanding of
academic freedom.

In 2007, after a lengthy process of revision, the Board of Regents approved the final
changes to Chapter 6 of the Policy Manual, which specifies policies related to strategic
planning, academic program review, approval of new programs, academic freedom, and
other academic issues. Section 6.10 now states:

University teachers shall be entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the
teachers’ subject, but should not introduce into the teaching controversial matters
that have no relation to the subject.

University faculty are also citizens. When they speak or write as citizens, they should
be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but they should remember that the
public may judge their institution by their public utterance. Thus, they should make
every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

Regent universities shall not be or become an instrument of partisan political action.
The expression of political opinions and viewpoints shall be those of individuals,
not of institutions, because the official adoption of any political position, whether
favored by majority or minority, tends to substitute one-sided commitment for the
continuing search for truth.

Academic freedom features prominently in other University policies, as well, such as the
anti-harassment policy (Section II-14), which promises that:

The University also is committed strongly to academic freedom and free speech. An
educational institution has a duty to provide a forum in which free speech and
differences of opinion are actively encouraged and facilitated, and where opinions
and deeply held beliefs are challenged and debated. Critical to this mission is
providing a nondiscriminatory environment that is conducive to learning. Respect for
these rights requires that members of the University community tolerate expressions
of opinion that differ from their own or that they may find abhorrent.

The policy on inviting guest speakers to participate in academic exercises (section V-28.2) reflects these commitments. Policies affecting students do as well: the introduction to the Code of Student Life states, “Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. . . . Students are expected to exercise their freedom to learn with responsibility and to respect the general conditions conducive to such freedom.”

The University’s tenure policies (section III-10) require that a tenured faculty member’s appointment “may be terminated only for good cause and in accordance with the principles of academic freedom stated in the Statement on Tenure and Academic Vitality at The University of Iowa” (section III-10.1). Section III-29.5 specifies that a decision to deny tenure, promotion, or reappointment may be challenged on the grounds that it was made for a reason that violates a faculty member’s academic freedom.

Sponsored and Nonsponsored Research and Creative Activity

UI faculty, staff, and students have submitted more than 3,000 grant and contract applications in each of the past five years. In FY 2007 they received 1,995 awards, for a record total of $382.2 million. As noted previously, according to the most recent National Science Foundation survey (2005), UI ranked 18th among public universities in terms of federally financed expenditures for research and development. In the National Institutes of Health (NIH) 2005 report, UI ranked 13th in NIH awards among all public universities.

Whether or not they attract external funding, faculty scholarship and creative activity are the foundation of the University’s mission. Departments and disciplines across the University serve as engines of discovery, contribute to the quality of life in Iowa and beyond, improve the quality of education we offer our students, and enhance the University’s stature and reputation, thereby increasing our ability to attract top-notch scholars and students.

The University maintains partnerships with cultural venues throughout the state to recognize the importance of arts, culture, and recreation to building community vitality. University of Iowa faculty share insights into the life of discovery with diverse audiences and constituencies throughout the year, examining how creativity shapes lives and transforms communities. Many of these are described under Criterion 5, below.

Similar examples of the impact of faculty scholarship and creative activity could be taken from departments and disciplines across campus, and might include the College of Education professor researching how to improve literacy in our schools, the sociology professor studying the impact of workplace policies on working parents, and the law professor researching international human rights issues.

Internal Research Support

The Office of the Vice President for Research maintains a comprehensive list of internal funding sources for research and scholarship available to faculty and staff. Resources are available from the Colleges of Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health, as well as the central administration, which offers research support through International Programs, the Office of the Provost, the Graduate College, and the Office of the Vice President for
Research. In the aggregate, these awards total over $2 million. One prominent example among these awards is the Arts and Humanities Initiative, created in 1997-98, which supports humanities research and work in the creative and performing arts. The program is regarded as a model for arts and humanities support at public universities elsewhere in the country.

Researchers, scholars, and creative artists have at their disposal, through the Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) in the Office of the Vice President for Research, electronic access to descriptions of external funding sources, application forms, and on-line proposal submission. Information and forms for nearly all major federal funding agencies (and many private agencies) are now obtained and distributed to UI researchers via the DSP web page. The newly-established Office of Research Development (ORD) helps develop complex projects, offers assistance to those new to the grants process who seek advice about proposal and budget preparation, develops connections with funding agencies and foundations, and sponsors grant-writing seminars.

The University recognizes the need to assist junior faculty in obtaining the skills necessary to achieve success in grant applications. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has an active program to assist faculty in preparing proposals. To supplement departmental and collegiate mentoring, the DSP offers individualized assistance and provides regular workshops through the University’s staff development program.

Mentoring by senior faculty is a key means of improving junior faculty skills in grant writing and in many other areas (see the final report of the UI Task Force on Mentoring for a review of the literature about the effectiveness of mentoring relationships). Some UI colleges (Education, Dentistry, and Law) have developed formal mentoring programs for junior faculty, as described in the Mentoring Task Force report. As mentioned, a mentoring web site is under development in the Office of the Provost.

The DSP employs a graduate assistant who works with other graduate and professional students to help them identify funding opportunities. The Graduate College also maintains a database of research awards available to graduate students. Many individual colleges and departments also offer scholarships to graduate students, many of them to support research in a particular discipline. The Stanley Graduate Awards for International Research provide $2,000 in travel money to help graduate students pursue research abroad in any field.

A variety of grants are available to support undergraduate research as well, as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

The University Libraries, also considered in the special emphasis section of this self-study, are a valuable resource available to researchers at all levels. Also valuable, though to more specialized users, are the University’s many (often interdisciplinary) centers, programs, and institutes and their focused expertise in issues related to teaching, research, and service.

Scholars from any discipline may apply for an appointment at the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, located on the Oakdale Campus, where up to 30 scholars participate in “an intellectually exciting and productive research community.” The Center provides a supportive environment in which scholars can work alone or in groups, and often with public partners. The Center also administers several competitive grants and fellowships for UI faculty to pursue their own research and to host conferences and seminars that bring national and international scholars to campus.
Professional Development Opportunities for Faculty and Staff

The heart of the University’s faculty development program is the Career Development Award (CDA), a competitive program that offers (in most cases) a single semester of paid leave during which the faculty member pursues a defined research project. A faculty member with a nine-month appointment may apply for a CDA after completing the equivalent of ten semesters of full-time academic service; a faculty member with a twelve-month appointment must have completed four years of service. An individual who has taken a CDA leave must complete the same amount of additional service to become eligible for a subsequent award. The program is designed to encourage scientific inquiry, research, artistic creation, clinical or technical expertise, and/or innovation in teaching. Following the semester of the award, faculty members report on the results achieved, which should include one or more products for dissemination through publication, exhibit, professional presentation, performance, or instruction. Faculty may receive awards based on their accomplishments and potential in teaching, research, creative, or clinical activity.

The highly competitive and prestigious Faculty Scholar Award gives scholars of great promise the opportunity to do extended, concentrated work on a defined project. Award recipients are released from half of their usual teaching, advising, administrative, and service obligations for three consecutive years.

The Global Scholar Award is similarly prestigious. It gives tenured faculty members with established records of research and teaching the opportunity “to consider their research and teaching in relation to significant globalizing trends.” Global Scholars are released from half of their usual teaching, advising, administrative, and service obligations for two consecutive years.

A series of fellowships rounds out the University’s faculty development program. Old Gold Summer Fellowships fund summer work on research, creative activity, or instructional development; the program is open to probationary tenure track assistant and associate professors with nine-month appointments who have completed no more than three years on the tenure track faculty at The University of Iowa. Any regular tenure track or clinical track faculty member may apply for a May Brodbeck Humanities Fellowship or a James Van Allen Natural Science Fellowship, which are offered in alternate years. Both come with a $15,000 stipend that may be used in any of a variety of specified ways.

In fall 2007, the Office of the Provost created a new staff position—coordinator of faculty development programs. The new coordinator will work with the associate provost for faculty to develop new programs to assist faculty in achieving their career goals, including leadership training. In conjunction with this effort, the Office of the Provost plans to develop a newsletter for new faculty, a mentoring web site, facilitated peer mentoring groups, and workshops aimed at career skills such as grant writing and time management. Other offerings are being considered for mid-career and senior faculty.

Professional development opportunities for instructors—including the activities of the Council on Teaching and the Center for Teaching—are described in the special emphasis section of this self-study. The Council on Teaching administers a number of the teaching awards mentioned below, as well as the annual Instructional Improvement Awards that provide up to $5,000 (to each of eight or nine recipients) to support especially promising instructional initiatives. The Center for Teaching encourages and supports excellence in teaching and learning via consultations, workshops,
special events, written and audiovisual resources, and scholarship. In addition, the Academic Technology Advisory Council each year awards a total of $100,000 to support innovative instructional computing projects that have the potential to improve teaching and learning.

The Department of Human Resources, through its Organizational Effectiveness unit, administers the University’s UI Learning and Development Program, which provides professional development and training for University faculty and staff (and also for regional corporations). Opportunities for University employees range from classroom instruction to online learning with SkillSoft. Organizational Effectiveness also includes the UI Learning and Development Resource Center, offering more than 1,200 books, videos, and other learning tools.

One of our strategic planning progress indicators tracks faculty and staff enrollment in developmental and leadership programs. In 2006-07, 11,447 faculty and staff enrolled in these programs, exceeding the target of 10,250.

**Units and Programs that Support Lifelong Learning**

Nontraditional units such as the Labor Center, Summer Writing Festival, and online courses provided by the Division of Continuing Education serve the campus, graduates, and Iowa citizens regardless of location and serve to enhance lifelong learning.

The Senior College is a joint project of the UI Emeritus Faculty Association and the UI Retirees Association, with support from the UI Alumni Association. The Senior College offers short-term, low-cost classes open to any retired person. The classes, taught by emeritus and current UI faculty or by experts in the community, cover a range of subjects each year. Fall 2007 offerings range from “Exploring Your Family Stories” to “Mental Illness and Behavioral Pathology in Opera.”

**Recognition of Achievement**

The University and its colleges, departments, and non-academic units recognize and honor the achievements of faculty, staff, and students in ways too numerous to list comprehensively. Following are some representative examples.

At the annual Faculty and Staff Awards Banquet, held each fall at the Levitt Center Assembly Halls, the University Community honors the winners of some of the most prestigious staff and faculty awards, including:

**The University Outstanding Staff Award.** The University of Iowa Staff Council presents the University Outstanding Staff Award each year to six recipients who have made significant contributions to the University community. Nominations are made by faculty, students, and staff.

**The Graduate College Outstanding Mentor Award.** The Graduate College Outstanding Mentor Award recognizes and rewards exemplary faculty mentoring efforts. Award recipients are selected from graduate faculty in four large disciplinary areas: humanities and fine arts, biological and life sciences, mathematical and physical sciences and engineering, and social sciences.

**The President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence.** This award was created in 2004 to recognize tenure track or clinical track faculty who have sustained a high level of teaching excellence. Beginning in 2007, non-tenure track lecturers will also
be eligible for an award.

**The President’s Award for Technology Innovation.** This award recognizes the year’s most creative use of technology in teaching. The creativity of the project, its breadth of applicability, and its potential impact on both teachers and learners weigh heavily in the competition.

**The Regents Award for Faculty Excellence.** Given by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, this award honors faculty members who have made significant contributions to excellence in public education across the domains of teaching, research, and service.

**The Lola Lopes Award for Undergraduate Student Advocacy.** The Lola Lopes Award for Undergraduate Student Advocacy, named in honor of a former associate provost for undergraduate education and professor emerita of the Tippie College of Business, was established by the Office of the Provost in 2007 to honor University of Iowa administrators and staff who support undergraduate education and serve as strong, effective advocates for undergraduate students and the undergraduate experience.

The winners of several awards for extraordinary service to the University and the community are also honored at the Banquet. Those awards are described under Criterion 5, below.

The top teaching award presented by each college is the **Collegiate Teaching Award.** In 2007, 20 faculty from the Tippie College of Business, the Carver College of Medicine, and the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Law, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health won the award for demonstrating qualities such as dedication to teaching and mentoring, enthusiasm and ability to inspire students, successful incorporation of service learning into their curricula, and creative and effective presentations of classroom concepts.

**The Improving Our Workplace Awards (IOWA) for staff members** recognize individual and team efforts that exceed expectations, demonstrate innovation, and/or result in cost savings for the organization.

**Hancher-Finkbine Medallions** are awarded each year to two undergraduate students, two graduate or professional students, a faculty member, and a graduate of the University, in recognition of “leadership, learning, and loyalty.” The Medallions are presented at an annual dinner that first took place in 1917. These prestigious awards are named for the founder of the Finkbine Dinner, William O. Finkbine, a Des Moines businessman and 1880 UI law graduate, and for Virgil M. Hancher, president of the University from 1940 to 1964.

Many departments, programs, and colleges present awards to students. The College of Education, for example, lists more than 30 scholarships and awards available to students on its web pages, and the Carver College of Medicine has more than 40. The College of Engineering “Honor Wall” lists student award recipients as well as faculty and alumni.

During the 2007-08 academic year, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) will provide almost $270,000 in financial support through a combination of 124 different academic scholarships, prizes, and awards. Compared to the 1997-98 academic year, CLAS has increased the number of scholarships, awards, and prizes by 273% and the total amount of financial support awarded by 415%. For the 2008-09
academic year, these numbers will continue to increase; CLAS plans to award close to $325,000 through 127 academic scholarships, awards, and prizes. Many CLAS departments also offer scholarships and awards.

Students who participate in the University of Iowa Honors Program benefit from several endowments that fund annual scholarships used to celebrate outstanding performance in the program. At the end of the first year and again at the end of the second year, the program selects eight students to receive $1,000 Rhodes Dunlap Scholarships and one student in CLAS to receive a Dewey Stuit Scholarship ($1,500 for the student ending his or her first year, $2,000 for the student ending his or her second year). At the end of the third year, the program awards one $2,500 James D. Robertson Scholarship to a CLAS student in the social sciences, and each year a junior or senior student in history earns the $1,000 Kay Keeshan Hamod Scholarship. The Honors Program administers all of these award programs and appoints faculty committees that select the recipients. The Honors Program also recognizes the top graduating seniors from each of the undergraduate colleges as Collegiate Scholars, among the highest honors available to UI undergraduates.

The Graduate College awards the

D.C. Spriestersbach Dissertation Prize to recognize excellence in doctoral research: the winner becomes The University of Iowa's nominee in the national competition for the Council of Graduate Schools/University Microfilms International Distinguished Dissertation Award

L.B. Sims Outstanding Master's Thesis Award to recognize distinguished scholarship at the master's level: the winner's thesis becomes The University of Iowa's nomination for the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools Distinguished Thesis Award

Jakobsen Conference Awards to acknowledge the top submissions to the James F. Jakobsen Graduate Conference, an annual event organized by the Graduate Student Senate to highlight the work of graduate students across campus

Duane C. Spriestersbach was dean of the Graduate College from 1965 to 1989, and Leslie B. Sims was dean of the Graduate College from 1991 to 2001. James F. Jakobsen served as associate dean of the Graduate College from 1968 until his retirement in 1998.

The University also demonstrates that it values a life of learning by honoring the achievements of alumni. The College of Public Health, for example, gives Outstanding Alumni Awards each year, as well as the Hansen Leadership Award, which honors a person who has demonstrated exemplary leadership in the health field. The Carver College of Medicine’s Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest honor the College bestows on its graduates. The College of Dentistry gives the Dental Alumnus of the Year Award, the Alumni Service Award, and the Dental Educator of the Year Award. The University of Iowa Alumni Association has awarded the UI Distinguished Alumni Award every year since 1963.

University News Services works with colleges, departments, and central administration to generate news releases about the remarkable accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.
Core Component 4b: The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Undergraduate Education

The first of the five top-level goals in The Iowa Promise is “to create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers.” Further description of this goal reads, in part:

The University considers excellent undergraduate education the core of its mission. In meeting this responsibility, we will provide high-quality curricular and cocurricular programs that encourage intellectual and physical vitality and help students acquire the habits of mind that sustain lifetime learning.

One of the strategies associated with this goal is to “ensure that all students graduate with strong core skills, a broad liberal arts education, and concentrated study in one or more majors.”

The special emphasis section of this self-study describes and evaluates the University’s General Education Program (GEP), the goals of which, as stated by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, compose two categories:

The GEP intends to facilitate the acquisition of essential proficiencies and skills in and familiarity with:

- The use of language (both English and a second language)
- The manipulation and analysis of symbols (both mathematical and verbal)
- Critical reasoning
- Modes of thinking and basic information across the liberal arts and sciences disciplines
- Discipline-appropriate research and inquiry

The GEP also aims to develop in every student enduring qualities that mark a liberally educated person, including:

- A lifetime pursuit of personal intellectual growth and social responsibility
- A tolerance and open-mindedness, facilitating the ability to question and evaluate one’s own attitudes and beliefs
- A sufficient general knowledge and proficiencies to adapt to new vocations and opportunities
- An ability to understand and to cope with the complexity and diversity of contemporary life

For purposes of its investigations, a subcommittee of the self-study committee shaped these goals into eight major desired learning outcomes of the GEP, described in the special emphasis section of this self-study:
Critical thinking includes skills in evaluating bodies of information and analyzing and judging values expressed by oneself and others.

Communication skills include the ability to organize thoughts clearly and to communicate them effectively in words, writing, and visual displays.

Understanding of world complexity includes understanding distinctive characteristics of different countries and the varied ways countries interact with each other.

Appreciation of diversity includes understanding one’s own uniqueness and also the uniqueness of persons different from oneself.

Understanding of scientific inquiry includes the ability to collect and use dependable sources of data and follow standards of scientific method while evaluating results.

Social responsibility includes understanding the importance of bringing one’s educational skills to contribute to the local community and society as a whole.

Appreciation of the arts includes understanding how visual, written, and performing arts help us think and enhance our emotional lives.

Life of the mind includes developing interests and habits for life-long learning and enjoyment of creations of others and ourselves.

The special emphasis self-study also describes and evaluates undergraduate education within the major, as well as a variety of co-curricular activities, many of which give students opportunities to engage in research, creative activity, and public service.

Graduate and Professional Education

The second of the five top-level goals in The Iowa Promise is “to cultivate excellent graduate and professional programs, and to advance the research and scholarly enterprise.” Further description of this goal states:

As a research university, The University of Iowa is dedicated to the discovery, dissemination, and preservation of knowledge . . . . Our graduate and professional programs prepare the next generation of scientists, scholars, artists, and faculty members to carry this crucial effort forward into the increasingly knowledge-intensive world of the future. In the next five years, we will seek to enhance existing and develop new programs of distinction that are central in these ways to our teaching, research, and service mission.

Mechanisms to ensure the quality and academic rigor of graduate programs include the academic review and faculty evaluation processes described above.

The Graduate Council also has a crucial responsibility to “evaluate new graduate programs and revisions in existing programs, including nondepartmental and interdisciplinary programs, and to make recommendations to the graduate faculty on new programs and on such aspects of curricula as will maintain uniform and effective educational policy.”

Assessment of how well graduate students have achieved expected learning outcomes may involve measuring their performance on qualifying and comprehensive examinations, an assessment of dissertation and thesis quality, scholarly publications or grants received, post-doctoral fellowships or residencies, or performance on
professional certification licensure exams.

Several of the indicators with which we track progress toward the goals of our strategic plan relate to graduate education, as described above.

**Core Component 4C:** The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

**Globalization, Diversity, and Technology in The Iowa Promise**

*The Iowa Promise* repeatedly demonstrates the University’s attention to our changing society—to how increasing diversity, globalization, and rapidly evolving technology affect students (and all members of the University community), and must therefore affect how we carry out our mission.

As already noted, The University of Iowa’s mission statement calls us to “educate students for success and personal fulfillment in an increasingly diverse and global environment.” An elaboration of the top-level goal devoted to diversity recognizes that our learning environments must “equip [students] to live as members of an international community, in which success and personal happiness increasingly depend on the ability to appreciate and negotiate difference on a global scale.” Strategies associated with the top-level goal devoted to undergraduate education include:

- [Making sure that general education requirements] foster . . . an understanding of science, technology, and mathematics . . . and the skills needed to participate in an increasingly global environment.
- Continuing efforts to internationalize the educational experience.
- Providing curricular and cocurricular opportunities that will enable [students] to understand and succeed in a multicultural and global community.
- Promoting [students’] facility . . . for the use of information technology.

**General Education and Major Program Curricula**

As noted above, the key learning outcomes of Iowa’s General Education Program (GEP) include (as phrased by one self-study subcommittee) “understanding of world complexity” and “appreciation of diversity,” as well as critical thinking and communication skills—all of which bear on an individual’s ability to “live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.” Among the program’s goals as defined by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) are development of “tolerance and open-mindedness,” and “an ability to understand and to cope with the complexity and diversity of contemporary life.”

The special emphasis section of this self-study describes the University’s process for review and modification of the GEP, and presents an assessment of the program that takes into account the perceptions of students, faculty, and employers in the community.

The special emphasis self-study also describes the process of curriculum review for undergraduate major programs. The review process is meant to ensure that departments revise their undergraduate curricula, when appropriate, to respond to changes in student needs and in the relevant field of study. As noted there, some departments
and colleges use advisory boards composed of professionals in the field to assist in providing feedback about curriculum design and implementation. In addition, every department in CLAS has a liaison to the Pomerantz Career Center, which maintains close relationships with employers around and outside of Iowa. This helps to keep the departments and the Academic Advising Center informed about current and emerging employment needs.

**Focused Programs to Help Prepare Students for a Changing World**

Many programs at the University help students and faculty acquire knowledge and skills related to multicultural understanding or technology.

**Globalization and Diversity**

International Programs, in collaboration with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), offers a B.A. degree program in international studies, which was approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in November 2002 to replace a group of narrowly focused programs. Students may choose to pursue the interdisciplinary international studies program with either a geographic or thematic emphasis. The proposal for the program noted that:

In an era of increasing globalization, it is essential to utilize the strengths and methods of many disciplines to understand the growing connectedness and diversity of interactions and regional and global levels. The modified International Studies major will prepare students for a changing and complex world by increasing their knowledge of international issues and developing their skills in critical thinking, logical reasoning, and communication from multiple intellectual perspectives.

The program is intended to prepare students to pursue graduate study or careers in fields such as business, government, international development, philanthropy, and the arts. In fall 2007 471 students were enrolled as international studies majors (either first or second major).

International Programs administers The University of Iowa’s study abroad program, which gives students opportunities to experience different cultural perspectives, gain confidence and self-reliance, improve communication skills, and accrue experience that future employers are likely to value. The number of students participating in study abroad programs is among the indicators we use to track progress toward our strategic planning goals. In 2006-07, 801 undergraduate and 356 graduate students participated in study abroad programs, up from 564 undergraduate students and 130 graduate students in 2000-01. The special emphasis section of this report provides more detailed information about UI study abroad programs.

International Programs also supports 16 programs and centers that host lectures and activities, many of which support undergraduate classes and research interests.

The University of Iowa is participating in the American Council on Education (ACE)’s Internationalization Laboratory for 2006-07. The program engages a small group of institutions in finding ways to internationalize their teaching, learning, research, and service functions. As part of the laboratory, UI has committed to:

Forming an internationalization leadership team
Developing a set of global learning outcomes, either recommended or required, and an assessment plan

Reviewing current institutional internationalization activities with the objective of sharpening institutional goals and determining whether students have sufficient opportunity to meet those learning outcomes

Analyzing the findings of the review

Developing a strategic action plan analyzing the state of internationalization on campus and recommending international goals and strategies to achieve them

In 2006-07 the College of Engineering introduced a global awareness component to the engineering curriculum. Eight invited lectures by speakers from diverse fields were offered over the course of the year. The College’s curriculum committee evaluated the effectiveness of the initiative at the end of the year, and concluded that the program should continue in 2007-08. The College of Engineering has also established a partnership with the Université de Provence in Marseille, France, to develop an international project experience for undergraduate engineering students. The industry-sponsored initiative, called Virtual International Project Teams, involves interdisciplinary teams of students from the two universities collaborating on a common project. The UI students will travel to France for a one-week exchange, to interact with their Université de Provence counterparts and tour European industry.

CLAS has revised its African American studies program, and is in the process of building a Latino studies program. Other CLAS academic programs that focus on diversity and multiculturalism include American Indian and native studies (minor and certificate programs), American Sign Language and deaf studies (a certificate program), sexuality studies (a certificate program), and women’s studies (major and minor programs).

Individual courses in programs across campus also deal with multiculturalism and diversity.

Information Technology

Many degree programs and individual courses help students build skills in the use of information technologies—including “Online@Iowa,” a course for new undergraduates described in the special emphasis section of this self-study. In addition, some focused programs help faculty incorporate the use of technology into their courses.

Instructional Services, a division of Information Technology Services (ITS), supports the use of information technology in teaching and learning. The unit provides training, software development, assistance with course web sites and the University’s new course management system (described in the special emphasis section of this self-study), and other services.

Instructors and instructional support staff may choose to register for New Experiences with Teaching Technology (NExTT) workshops, which cover topics such as the use of the course management system, creating and maintaining web sites with an HTML editor, working with digital images, or best presentation practices.

Among the workshops offered by the Center for Teaching each semester, several focus on use of information technology in teaching, such as “How to Click with your

**Core Component 4d:** The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

**Policies and Procedures Governing Academic Integrity among Students**

The Code of Student Life defines “academic misconduct,” and section II.C. of the Policies and Procedures Affecting Students describes how individual concerns about potential academic misconduct will be reviewed, by whom, and what disciplinary action may be taken if the complaint is upheld. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Student Handbook further clarifies the definition and consequences of academic fraud for students in the College, which requires that course syllabi include a reference to the definition and policy. The Tippie College of Business Honor Code defines academic offenses that are punishable under the College’s judicial procedures. Section IV.F. of the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations outlines the College’s policy regarding cases of plagiarism by graduate students. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences also provides template language regarding academic misconduct (among other issues) for faculty to use in syllabi construction.

The Center for Teaching web site provides an excellent compilation of resources (both UI and others) about plagiarism, including links to University and collegiate policies. The Handbook for Teaching Assistants outlines policies and procedures for TAs who encounter academic misconduct.

To achieve certification by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Committee on Athletics Certification (as The University of Iowa did most recently in spring 2007, following a review that started with a 2004-05 self-study), the University must demonstrate academic integrity within its athletics programs. The self-study report on academic integrity describes academic standards and academic support systems for student athletes, and how the standards and systems in place at UI meet the NCAA criteria.

**Policies and Procedures Governing Research**

As described above under Core Component 4e, the Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) publishes on its web page a comprehensive set of links to University, state, and federal policies related to research. Most of the University policies listed there are contained in section II-27 of the Operations Manual, including the policy on ethics in research and the policy on anti-retaliation for reporting of misconduct in research.

The Office of the Vice President for Research also maintains a “research compliance” page, with links to policies with which researchers must comply, including policies regarding human and animal subjects, conflict of interest, export controls, financial responsibilities, and research misconduct.

Several offices and entities advise researchers about, and monitor compliance with, these policies. The Health Protection Office, for example, audits workplace environments for biological, chemical, radiological, and general safety, according to local, state, and federal regulations. The UI Grant Accounting Office enforces various financial policies, including a cost sharing policy designed to ensure compliance with
the federal requirements set forth in OMB Circulars A-21 and A-110. As required by the UI conflict of interest in research policy (section II-18.6 of the Operations Manual), potential conflicts of interest in research are managed by a Conflict of Interest Officer (COIO) and a Conflict of Interest in Research Committee (CIRC), both appointed by the vice president for research. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee advises the vice president for research and makes a biannual report on the status of animal programs and facilities. The Human Subjects Office provides administrative support for the University of Iowa institutional review boards (IRBs), of which there are now three: a biomedical IRB, a behavioral/social science IRB, and a new one established in 2007-08 to provide review for the Iowa City Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The IRBs review and approve human subject research at The University of Iowa in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services regulations.

**Intellectual Property**

Section V-30 of the Operations Manual contains the University’s Intellectual Property Policy, which has two parts: a Patent Policy and a Copyright Policy. These policies apply to all patentable inventions and copyright-protected works created by faculty, staff, or students.

The objective of the Patent Policy is

. . . to enable the public to use and benefit from inventions originating at the University. In pursuing this objective, the University will seek to manage inventions in a way that advances the academic missions of the institution, including research and scholarship. The Patent Policy further provides a framework for the orderly transfer of academic inventions to the private sector in exchange for equitable compensation to the institution as well as to individual inventors. In keeping with the University’s academic objectives, the policy directs that portions of the institutional earnings from any patent will support research broadly across campus, research related to the patent, and administrative efforts to secure and manage additional patents.

The objective of the Copyright Policy is

. . . to advance the mission of the University by:

(a) Encouraging and supporting the exercise of academic freedom, innovation, and creativity;

(b) Structuring the rights of ownership and the rights to use copyright materials created by members of the University community in a way that:

(i) Enables the timely dissemination of materials resulting from the scholarship, teaching, research, and creative activities of faculty, staff, and students;

(ii) Permits the University to retain a copyright in and/or use materials created by members of the University community under certain circumstances;

(iii) Permits the University to meet contractual obligations to outside entities; and

(iv) Accommodates and is consistent with related University policies.
(c) Assuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations in the management of copyright materials.

The policies are administered by an Intellectual Property Committee appointed by, and advisory to, the vice president for research.

The University of Iowa Research Foundation (UIRF), a nonprofit corporation dedicated to promoting the commercialization of UI-developed technologies and inventions to contribute to economic development and other public benefit, helps UI inventors obtain patents and copyrights and provides other advice and services related to intellectual property protection and commercialization. Under the University’s Intellectual Property policy, the UIRF owns most of the intellectual property developed from University resources. The UIRF receives payments due according to license agreements and distributes income to the inventor (and, when applicable and according to the policy, to other University entities).

**Academic and Research Ethics as Course Content**

Students learn about acquiring and applying knowledge responsibly primarily by putting principles into practice in their coursework. Many courses, in fact, focus on ethics in relation to an academic subject or profession. Examples in fall 2007 include the Department of Epidemiology course “Clinical Research Ethics,” the Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations course “Issues and Ethics in Professional Psychology,” and the “Responsible Conduct in Research” course offered by both the Graduate College and the Carver College of Medicine.

Individual instructors teach students about the nature of cheating and the importance of academic honesty in a variety of ways within their courses. Two programs for first-year students that are described in the special emphasis section of this self-study—“Online@Iowa” and “The College Transition”—incorporate modules having to do with academic integrity. Instructors who teach writing actively educate students about plagiarism.
Criterion Five: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Overview

University of Iowa faculty, staff, and students engage with the community in many diverse, formal and informal, large- and small-scale ways. For many of these activities, data about participation and effectiveness are collected by the units, programs, or services that sponsor them, but are not collected centrally. Where we do collect data and track trends centrally—for example, with regard to our major engagement efforts in the areas of health care, economic development, and the newer civic engagement initiative—it is clear that University of Iowa services and resources are in high demand.

The volume and diversity of activities that take place across campus suggest that we are responding to constituent needs, although more systematic assessment of some activities would surely reveal opportunities for enhancement.

Core Component 5a: The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.
Strategic Planning for Engagement

In his 2004 annual keynote address to the University community, then-President David J. Skorton declared 2005-06 the “Year of Public Engagement” at The University of Iowa. During that year, he said, the University community should intensify efforts to engage with the public and with public issues at the local, state, national, and international levels. He emphasized that the year was meant to launch an “ambitious agenda of engagement” that should continue long after the Year of Public Engagement had passed. He also noted that the year would honor the University’s longstanding tradition of public service and the many ways in which faculty, staff, and students had contributed to the public good long before the Year of Public Engagement began.

The University formalized its ongoing commitment to an “ambitious agenda of engagement” in *The Iowa Promise*, most notably in the top-level goal “to broaden the University’s service mission to include stronger partnerships with public constituencies”:

> “Engagement” involves much more than conventional, unidirectional outreach; it requires public partnership and a commitment to interchange and reciprocity. The University, particularly in its role as a state university, thrives on this commitment and seeks to expand access, interaction, dialogue, communication, societal benefit, and mutual care and concern. The mutual exchange of ideas and synergistic use of complementary expertise will promote success across the state of Iowa.

To enhance the kind of two-way communication called for by this commitment, strategies in the plan focus on building relationships with key constituents (alumni and friends, state officials, potential and enrolled students, parents, Iowa citizens) and with community organizations, businesses, and other components of the state’s education system.

Identifying Constituencies and Analyzing Capacity

The process of gathering information about constituent needs and analyzing capacity to meet those needs is carried out by the individuals or units who engage with those constituents directly. Many academic units collect information about developments in the field and emerging needs through faculty participation in professional organizations or through the input of advisory boards. Individuals and units learn about emerging needs in the communities they serve through their direct interactions within those communities. For example, the Tippie College of Business and many of its departments and centers rely on the input of advisory boards made up of professionals from the community or—in the case of the College’s Board of Visitors—from around the country. The Civic Engagement Program participates actively in the Volunteer Administrators’ Network—a group of professionals who work with volunteers in Johnson County and surrounding areas—and includes community organizations and public members on its board. University leaders meet with or serve as members of state and local organizations such as Diversity Focus, a coalition of Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor businesses and organizations dedicated to promoting area diversity. The Pomerantz Career Center works with area employers to understand their needs; over the past three years, Career Center staff have traveled to more than 700 organizations. University leaders participate in statewide educational coordinating groups such as the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education (ICCPPSE) and the Regent Committee on Educational Relations (RCER) in order to make sure that our educational activities complement those of other institutions within the state.
The examples of UI engagement and service activities listed under Core Component 5b have grown out of, or continue because of, need or interest in the community. For example:

UI physicians conduct outreach clinics in communities where the services they provide are in demand.

**Continuing Medical Education** (CME) staff regularly survey Iowa physicians to assess areas of unmet need, determine preferences for delivery formats, evaluate overall physician satisfaction with CME programs, and analyze the impact of CME programs on physician practice.

Staff from the Office of the Vice President for Research have met with groups across the state to talk about the University’s activities and resources and to learn from business and community leaders what additional steps UI can take to enhance the statewide business climate.

The **Iowa Centers for Enterprise** actively encourage businesses and entrepreneurs to contact the University with individual questions and needs.

Schools and communities around the state request visits from **Arts Share**.

The Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center surveys Iowa nonprofits to gather information about their needs.

Many of the University’s public health programs focus on issues of importance to Iowa’s agricultural community.

College of Education outreach programs to area K-12 schools have responded to emerging needs such as the growing population of Spanish speakers.

The new “2 Plus 2” partnership with Iowa’s community colleges grew out of regular communication between community college and UI leadership.

As described elsewhere in this self-study, new academic programs have developed over recent years in response to student needs.

Schools and community groups regularly invite faculty to speak on topics of particular interest to them. For example, in 2006-07 College of Engineering faculty made more than 30 visits to area schools for engineering-related demonstrations and presentations.

**Tracking Engagement Activities**

As described under Core Component 1b, we serve many diverse constituencies and play a wide variety of roles in our relationships with them. These roles encompass many and varied everyday activities, ranging from an individual faculty member offering an ad hoc informational workshop in response to a community concern, to staff in an established unit or program serving hundreds of people every week. Maintaining accurate institutional data about these activities is challenging. Nevertheless, the University continues to seek useful and manageable ways to capture and reports engagement with constituencies and the impact of that engagement.

The **Resources for Iowans web page** lists many of the available programs and services at UI. Some colleges and other units describe or promote their outreach efforts on their web sites, as well. The College of Public Health **lists its outreach and service activities**
by county, and also lists the more than 25 interdisciplinary centers based in the college that conduct various research, outreach, and policy activities related to public health. The College of Engineering maintains an economic partners page that describes “value-added opportunities for building a relationship with the College of Engineering” (in 2007, the College serves 280 corporate partners). The College of Education maintains a web page about its outreach activities as well as a database of faculty and staff outreach with data drawn from individual professional biographies. The College of Pharmacy’s web site highlights its three service divisions—the Division of Drug Information Service, the Center for Advanced Drug Development, and the Division of Pharmaceutical Service—which provide resources that are used across the country and worldwide. The College of Dentistry maintains a web page listing its services for professionals and industry. The College of Law maintains a page about its research centers. International Programs has a web page devoted to outreach and community engagement.

**Core Component 5b:** The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

A representative list of UI engagement activities demonstrates both the University’s extensive capacity for engagement and service and our ongoing and growing commitment to this aspect of our mission. Because health care and economic development are two of the largest and most visible aspects of the University’s service to the community, this section begins with a brief description of each of them. It continues with selected examples of other kinds of outreach and engagement activities carried out by colleges and other units across the UI campus.

**Health Care**

For many Iowans, the most visible and important way in which The University of Iowa touches their lives is through health care.

A key *Iowa Promise* strategy related to engagement is:

- Enhance health care services and programs offered by the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, the health sciences and other colleges, and the University Hygienic Laboratory by:

  - Educating highly competent and committed health professionals and research scientists for Iowa and beyond;
  - Advancing health care and the public’s health through excellence in biomedical and population-based research;
  - Delivering high-quality and cost-effective primary and specialty health care to Iowa and the region;
  - Promoting meaningful community service through collaboration with the practice and larger communities;
  - Sustaining the University’s commitment to provide health care to the underserved.

During fiscal year 2007 the enterprise admitted 29,216 acutely ill patients, delivered 1,808 newborns, and recorded more than 864,000 total clinic visits at UI Hospitals and
Clinics and at outreach clinics in communities throughout the state.

The College of Dentistry, in addition to its range of on-campus dental clinics that serve about 9,000 patients each year, offers outreach programs that focus on pediatric and geriatric dentistry and other special needs patients; the Geriatric Mobile Dental Unit, for example, brings quality dental care to place-bound elderly adults. As of fall 2007, the College of Dentistry conducts outreach programs in 98 of Iowa’s 99 counties. As an integral part of the Nursing curriculum, College of Nursing faculty provide clinical services at the UI Hospital and Clinics and also through businesses and consultation services developed as part of the faculty practice plan. Faculty in the College of Pharmacy’s Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy program oversee and provide clinical services at residency sites across eastern Iowa. Faculty in the College of Public Health staff the Occupational Medicine Clinic, which provides diagnostic testing services and care for patients with work-related health problems. The UI Mobile Clinic is an interdisciplinary project started by students from the health sciences across the University, including students in medicine, nursing, physical therapy, dentistry, pharmacy, public health and the physician assistant program. The Mobile Clinic provides free health screening, prevention, and basic health services to underserved individuals in and around Iowa City.

As noted earlier, a new five-year, $33.8 million Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) from the National Institutes of Health will allow The University of Iowa to expand and enhance “bench-to-bedside” research—which means UI faculty research will translate more quickly into clinical care for Iowans and others.

UI Health Care maintains a web site that lists many health care services by community.

**Economic Development and Technology Transfer**

Another way in which The University of Iowa touches the lives of Iowans on a large scale is through economic development and technology transfer. This is reflected in another of the Iowa Promise strategies related to engagement:

- Facilitate faculty, staff, and student entrepreneurship, the commercialization of inventions, and engagement with external partners in supporting economic development by:
  - Establishing an environment conducive to the development and promotion of faculty, staff, and student ideas;
  - Increasing partnerships with state, community, and regional economic development organizations that participate in business recruitment, retention, and growth activities;
  - Collaborating with external partners to create a more sustainable region and to leverage Iowa’s natural resources;
  - Facilitating the transfer of University technology and intellectual property to the business sector, particularly to business entities within Iowa.

As stated in the most recent annual governance report to the Board of Regents on economic development and technology transfer (October 2007):

The Regent universities promote the economy of Iowa primarily by providing higher education to the people of the state. They also strengthen the Iowa economy by
conducting academic research—most notably when it results in intellectual property and applications in the marketplace—and by providing expertise and assistance directly to Iowa’s people, industry and communities. The Regent universities thus support the economy of Iowa primarily through their core missions, and their economic contributions to the state are fundamentally linked to their overall academic excellence . . . .

Many organizational units at the Regent universities are engaged with Iowa’s people, industry and communities for the promotion of the state’s economic development. Key economic development efforts include: research, intellectual property development and technology transfer, business incubation and acceleration, direct technical assistance to local and regional economic development groups, technical assistance and counseling to businesses, market research for Iowa companies and attracting and retaining businesses in the state. These activities are also highly coordinated with the economic development efforts of the Governor, the Iowa General Assembly, and state agencies including the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

Highlights of University of Iowa economic development activity in FY 2007 included 87 new intellectual property disclosures, 130 patent applications and 119 new patents, and $17.4 million in royalty and license fee income.

Fifteen tenants occupy the University’s Technology Innovation Center (TIC)—a business incubator that offers cost-effective space and services to start-up companies’ new ventures using advanced technology. Thirty-one companies have “graduated,” or met their business goals. The University’s Oakdale Research Park (ORP), which provides corporations with sustained access to University resources, houses six corporate tenants and four UI “anchor laboratories”: the Center for Biocatalysis and Bioprocessing, the Center for Advanced Drug Development, Oakdale Medical Research, and the National Advanced Driving Simulator.

Representative Examples of Other Engagement Activity at The University of Iowa

A few representative examples of ongoing engagement activities at UI include:

Arts and Humanities

The University of Iowa has a longstanding tradition of leadership in the humanities and creative arts. The University brings many high-quality art, music, theatre, and literature programs to the community, through performances (e.g., programs offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Division of Performing Arts), readings (e.g., “Live from Prairie Lights”), museums (e.g., Museum of Art, Museum of Natural History), and other venues.

Arts Share brings the resources of the Division of Performing Arts (music, dance, theatre), the School of Art and Art History, and the Writers’ Workshop to schools and communities around the state. The program’s mission is to “strengthen the arts in underserved areas, reaching out to provide access to life-enriching arts experiences throughout Iowa.” UI established Arts Share in the summer of 1995 to continue the arts education outreach efforts that had been in existence for nearly twenty years under the auspices of the former Arts Education and Outreach Program. Arts Share coordinates approximately 300 events each year, and artists from the program have visited 72 of Iowa’s 99 counties. Events such as interactive performances, workshops, and residencies take place in schools, libraries,
museums, nursing homes, and performance venues.

In the summer of 2007, Hancher Auditorium sponsored the Joffrey Ballet “River to River” tour—a “gift back to the people of Iowa” in honor of Hancher’s 35th anniversary—that featured ballet performances in outdoor spaces in several locations throughout the state. Movement workshops for all ages were conducted at each of the sites on the days of the performances. The program featured several works, including two that represent the fruitful three-decade relationship between Hancher and Joffrey: Laura Dean’s “Sometimes It Snows in April” from the Joffrey/Prince collaboration “Billboards,” which was co-produced by Hancher, where the world premiere performances were staged in 1993; and selections from Robert Joffrey’s acclaimed production of Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker,” which premiered at Hancher in 1987. An estimated 32,000 Iowans saw the Joffrey performances, and an additional 900 participated in the movement workshops.

Faculty sometimes collaborate with other organizations to bring their scholarship to the wider public. For example, Douglas Baynton, professor of history and speech pathology and audiology and an authority in the history of disability in the United States, has served as a consultant to public television (PBS) for a documentary titled “History Through Deaf Eyes” and to National Public Radio for a broadcast titled “Beyond Affliction: The Disability History Project.” Anthropology professor Russell Ciochon’s research on Gigantopithecus, an ancient giant ape, was highlighted in a recent History Channel documentary.

UI is a member of Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life, a national consortium of higher education institutions dedicated to public scholarship in the arts and humanities. The consortium defines public scholarship as work that is carried out in partnership by the University and the community; that results in a public good; that contributes to public debate; and/or that gives any or all of the above a more prominent place in higher education.

An interdisciplinary example of outreach to the community is the collaboration among Hancher Auditorium, the UI Center for Macular Degeneration, the Department of Theatre Arts, the Writing Program of the Carver College of Medicine, and writer/actor/director Rinde Eckert to create a work that explores the experiences of people who are losing or have lost their vision and those who care for them. Eckert, an Iowa City native and UI graduate, will interview patients and their families as well as physicians, fellows and residents, researchers, staff, and medical students, and will use this material to create a play exploring the slow process of macular degeneration. The work will be performed by Eckert and students in the Theatre Arts Department in November 2008, with two of the nine scheduled performances open only to patients, their families, and the health care providers and their invited guests. A variety of activities have been planned to provide opportunities for the interviewees and theatre students to interact. This project is one of eight funded by the Doris Duke Foundation through the Association of Performing Arts Presenters’ Creative Campus initiative.

Research and Education Centers and Resources

The interdisciplinary Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center (INRC) conducts research and collaborates with government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other educational institutions to educate and strengthen nonprofits in Iowa. A September 2000 report presented the results of a survey the
INRC conducted to gather information about the needs of Iowa nonprofits, and also to educate survey participants about what the Center does. The INRC offers a two-semester course—"Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness"—for Iowa students, and also an annual continuing legal education option.

The John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC)—a collaboration among the Tippie College of Business, the College of Engineering, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and University of Iowa Health Care—offers a certificate program in entrepreneurship for Iowa undergraduate students; advanced graduate courses on campus and at several locations in Iowa; specialized training for high school teachers; summer camps for Iowa youth; and, in partnership with Iowa community colleges, entrepreneurial training for Iowa citizens interested in owning their own businesses. JPEC “seeks to support the next generation of successful Iowa entrepreneurs.” JPEC now houses The University of Iowa Small Business Development Center, (SBDC) which has served the surrounding counties since 1981.

The UI Center on Aging, composed of faculty and staff from various fields, researches issues related to aging and plays an active role in developing public policy directions by providing state agencies with research findings. Among U.S. states, Iowa has the fourth largest proportion of citizens over 65 years old and the second largest proportion of citizens over 85.

The Iowa Electronic Markets (IEM), operated by faculty in the Tippie College of Business, serve multiple teaching and research needs. The markets are small-scale, real-money futures markets in which contract payoffs depend on economic and political events such as elections. Since the program’s inception in 1988, IEM has been used by more than 100 universities around the world to teach concepts related to business, economics, political science, and technology.

During the 2006-07 fiscal year libraries throughout Iowa made 15,963 requests for University of Iowa Libraries materials, including books to be loaned and copies of articles to be sent. Requests from both public and academic libraries came from 96 of Iowa’s 99 counties. Librarians are asked to make presentations about unique collections to various community groups. In 2006-07 librarians held more than 20 of these sessions for approximately 250 participants.

Public Health

UI faculty, staff, and students provide critical public health expertise in each of Iowa’s 99 counties through programs such as Worksafe Iowa, the Injury Prevention Center, the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, and the Upper Midwest Center for Public Health Preparedness.

College of Public Health-based programs, such as the State Health Registry of Iowa, the Prairielands Addiction Technology Transfer Center, and the Institute for Public Health Practice, along with many others, contribute to improved public health in Iowa by collecting and reporting health data, providing technical assistance, partnering with local health agencies, offering community-based education and evaluation services, and organizing special events such as policy conferences. From June 2006 to May 2007 there were more than 13,000 participants in non-academic credit educational activities provided by College of Public Health departments and centers.

Iowa’s Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH), a collaborative effort
involving The University of Iowa, Iowa State University, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, coordinates education and prevention programs to enhance the health and safety of Iowa’s agricultural community.

The University Hygienic Laboratory (UHL) tests the environment to provide air and water quality data, screens for diseases such as West Nile Virus, and screens newborns for abnormalities (UHL provided newborn screening for early two-thirds of today’s Iowans). The UHL is central to the state’s terrorism and emergency response plan.

Clinical Service

The College of Law’s Legal Clinic serves financially distressed Iowans in bankruptcy proceedings, assists victims of domestic violence, represents clients seeking unemployment compensation, helps immigrants to Iowa both with immigration issues and with other legal issues through Muscatine’s New Iowan Center, reaches out to those with disabilities and illnesses, and provides representation to defendants in misdemeanor cases.

The Seashore Clinic in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ Department of Psychology offers counseling services for individuals in the community. The Clinic serves about 200 individuals every year, about 20% of them University students or staff and 80% community members from Johnson County and surrounding counties. Fees are based on a sliding scale and no one is turned away because of inability to pay. The clinic serves many individuals who would otherwise be unable to obtain services in the area.

The Wendell Johnson Speech and Hearing Clinic in Speech Pathology and Audiology offers assessment and therapy for individuals with communication disorders.

The Assessment and Counseling Clinic (ACC) of the College of Education’s Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development is dedicated to providing clinical, outreach, and consultation services for gifted individuals, their families, and schools.

Sharing Knowledge and Expertise

Iowa was a pioneer in educational testing, thanks largely to the work of E.F. Lindquist, who developed the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development and co-founded the American College Testing (ACT) program. The Iowa Testing Programs (ITP) in the College of Education continue to develop standardized achievement tests for national use in grades K-12, and to administer statewide achievement testing programs for Iowa schools. The University provides tests and consultation to Iowa schools for only the cost of scoring services.

The University of Iowa Speakers Bureau connects service clubs, schools, senior centers, and other community groups with experts who will speak to their groups at no charge. During the Year of Public Engagement, the Speakers Bureau collaborated with the Faculty Senate to create a new program, the University of Iowa Engagement Corps, which takes a group of Iowa faculty on a three-day trip across Iowa to meet with, teach, and learn from educators, community leaders, and citizens across the state. In May 2007, 18 faculty members took part in the trip to northeastern Iowa.
Undergraduate students in the legislative policy research seminar in the Department of Political Science do background research and write position papers on proposed legislation for legislators, committees, and study groups in the Iowa legislature. While students gain experience in conducting policy research, legislators receive information that helps them serve Iowa citizens more effectively.

The Institute for Economic Research provides economic research services for government and industry. Each quarter, the institute produces the Iowa Economic Forecast, which contains quantitative forecasts of economic conditions and tax revenues for Iowa.

UI faculty members serve as consultants in a variety of ways. As one example, in 2006 21 Tippie College of Business faculty members provided 86 hours (10.75 days) of consultation to 26 companies and organizations.

Resources for K-12 Education

Among the resources listed in the K-12 section of the “Resources for Iowans” pages are campus tours, arts workshops, music camps, sports camps, other summer camps and residential programs, international programs, and training for high school teachers. A number of programs for high school students are considered, as well, in the special emphasis section of this self-study. The College of Education lists on its web site many individual faculty outreach projects that support K-12 education in Iowa.

The Multi-Ethnic Student Association (MESA) in the UI College of Engineering, in conjunction with the Iowa City Community School District, conducts a tutoring program for underrepresented and at-risk fifth through 12th grade students in the Iowa City community. The Johnson County Neighborhood Centers provide transportation for low-income students. In 2005-06, 32 MESA tutors (faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and community volunteers) and 80 K-12 “MESA scholars” participated in the program.

The College of Engineering also partners with the Cedar Rapids-based company Rockwell Collins and various school districts to implement the Corridor STEM Initiative, which provides after-school education in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Each semester nearly 50 tutors (mostly teacher education students) work individually with children experiencing a prolonged difficulty learning to read through the America Reads program, a collaborative effort involving the College of Education, the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of the Vice President for Student Services, and the Iowa City School District.

Each year approximately 75 junior high students and their teachers from across eastern Iowa visit the UI Libraries to conduct research for their National History Day projects. UI Librarians lead a research workshop that introduces students to the unique collections at The University of Iowa and help the students use the Libraries’ paper and online resources. UI Librarians also develop a publicly available web site based on the students’ research topics to give them a place to begin their research.

Adult, Continuing, and Distance Education

Since 1993 Professor Carolyn Colvin in the College of Education has directed a
free adult literacy program for the Spanish-speaking population in West Liberty, a community of about 3,500 with a Latino/a population of about 40%. The program is designed to assist residents with functional literary tasks and to link non-native English speakers with their community. Teacher education students learn “culturally responsive” pedagogy while helping the adult learners with parent-teacher conferences, preparing for citizenship tests, and other important goals. The program is endorsed by the West Liberty School District.

The Division of Continuing Education, in partnership with colleges and departments, offers credit and non-credit courses and programs, including distance education opportunities at sites around the state or via the Internet. Individuals may apply to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for non-credit programs earned through the Division of Continuing Education.

The Center for Credit Programs, (CCP) a unit within the Division of Continuing Education, is the “primary gateway to The University of Iowa for nontraditional students and others who seek access to University credit courses, programs and related services.” The CCP administers a new Bachelor of Applied Studies (B.A.S.) external degree program, approved by the Board of Regents in June 2005, designed for graduates of community college technical programs who want to complete a bachelor’s degree but cannot pursue traditional on-campus study because of family and/or employment obligations. Working with an advisor, students may choose to incorporate one of three certificate programs—public health, entrepreneurial studies, or nonprofit management—or choose an interdisciplinary approach to the degree program.

The Continuing Legal Education program in the College of Law and the Continuing Medical Education (CME) program in the Carver College of Medicine help professionals keep their expertise current and support the University’s commitment to lifelong learning. CME regularly surveys Iowa physicians. When provided with a number of options for improving CME programs, 60% of respondents to the 2006 survey selected “UI programs taking place in my local community.” Respondents also cited local delivery of CME programs when asked an open ended question about how UI can best meet lifelong learning needs of physicians and improve the care of patients. As a result, CME has developed an outreach program (CME-To-Go) and has delivered nine CME programs to various Iowa counties to date.

Other programs offer continuing education opportunities as well—such as the School of Social Work. In addition, students can pursue a Masters of Social Work (MSW) program, either full- or part-time, at the Des Moines Education Center in the Pappajohn Higher Education Center in Des Moines.

The Tippie College of Business offers Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programs in Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Davenport, Cedar Rapids, and Hong Kong.

Highlighted Recent Engagement Efforts

Iowa Centers for Enterprise

In fall 2005, the University of Iowa integrated its existing economic development activities into a new initiative, the Iowa Centers for Enterprise, with a mission “to foster economic development within the state and beyond by sharing The University of Iowa’s rich resources.”
The Iowa Centers for Enterprise serves as an umbrella organization for

The John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center (JPEC)
The UI Office of Corporate Partnerships
The UI Research Foundation (UIRF)
The UI Small Business Development Center
The Technology Innovation Center (TIC)
The Oakdale Research Park (ORP)

The unit also houses the associate vice president for economic development, and liaisons to the colleges.

The Iowa Centers for Enterprise team has developed indicators for success in the general areas of intellectual property promotion, new business development, existing business support, community support, and workforce and entrepreneurship development. These indicators will be tracked as part of the University’s strategic planning progress report, beginning in spring 2008:

Indicator #1: Construct and begin operations of a life sciences “wet laboratory” business incubator by 2009. Status: Design development almost complete; construction expected to begin early November 2008 with completion late October 2009.

Indicator #2: Attract, retain or expand (by at least 25% GSF) one to two companies per year at Oakdale Research Park. Status: One company attracted (NGI) and one retained (LMS CADSI) in FY 2007; in FY 2008 to date, one company attracted (Noel-Levitz) and one company in lease negotiations (Optherion).

Indicator #3: Attract two to three companies per year to the business incubator at Oakdale Research Park. Status: Five companies attracted to the incubator in FY 2007 (ASL Analytical, Soligence Corporation, KemPharm, Thomas Group, and JL MediTech). In FY 2008 to date, two companies attracted (UIQI2 and Bio::Neos).

Service Learning and Civic Engagement

During the Year of Public Engagement, The University of Iowa joined Campus Compact, a national coalition of more than 1,100 colleges and universities devoted to advocating for civic engagement in higher education.

Shortly after joining Campus Compact, the University launched the Civic Engagement Program (CEP), an office dedicated to facilitating volunteerism and service learning. A collaborative initiative between the Office of the Vice President for Student Services and the Office of the Provost, the CEP connects community organizations with UI faculty, staff, and student volunteers. More information about the CEP is provided in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

Since 2005, the Center for Teaching has offered two very successful Service Learning Institutes—also described in the special emphasis section of this self-study—to train and support faculty interested in developing service learning courses.

Included in our strategic planning indicators of progress are two that track enrollments
in service learning courses and numbers of student volunteers. In 2006-07, 2,200 students volunteered with community organizations, surpassing our target of 2,000. We also exceeded our target of 1,000 additional student enrollments in service learning courses. Between fall 2005 and spring 2007, 1,273 students enrolled in the 49 new service learning courses developed through the Service Learning Institutes. These courses resulted in more than 28,000 hours of community involvement. We do not have data about the number of students enrolled in service learning courses not developed thorough the Institutes.

For graduate students, the Obermann Center and the Graduate College sponsor the Graduate Institute for Engagement and the Academy, which teaches selected graduate students how to shape their teaching and research in ways that involve and benefit the community.

2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Program

As described in the special emphasis section of this self-study, in 2006 UI piloted a new 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan, designed to streamline the transition for community college students who choose to pursue a UI four-year degree. The pilot program, which involved three community colleges, led to an overwhelmingly positive response from participating community college administrators and counselors. In fall 2007 UI extended the program to the rest of Iowa’s community colleges.

President’s Award for State Outreach and Public Engagement

Another initiative launched during the Year of Public Engagement was the President’s Award for State Outreach and Public Engagement, to honor faculty, staff, or students—as individuals or in groups—for exemplary outreach to the state. The University made six $1,000 awards in 2004-05, four in 2005-06, and nine in 2006-07. Recent recipients include:

Joan Rinner, a counselor and organizational consultant with Faculty and Staff Services in UI Human Resources. Ms. Rinner has been instrumental in bringing the Alternatives to Violence Project to eastern Iowa prisons. The Alternatives to Violence Project is an international, nonprofit, educational initiative committed to reducing interpersonal violence through experiential conflict management workshops in prisons, schools, and communities. Ms. Rinner serves as a volunteer facilitator, counselor, and program recruiter, and has helped develop new workshop materials for use in teaching nonviolent conflict resolution to Iowa prison inmates across the state.

Don Coffman, professor of teaching and learning in the College of Education, and professor of music in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In 1995, Professor Coffman founded the New Horizons Band, which has provided opportunities for scores of older Iowans to develop musical skills and to continue their participation in musical activities. Under his leadership, the Iowa City area New Horizons Band has expanded rapidly, and the ensemble and sectional groups perform widely throughout the area. The band has become a model for the development of New Horizons Bands in a number of Iowa communities and throughout the country, and it is one of the few using a staff of college music students to provide instruction. UI School of Music undergraduates preparing for teacher licensure gain excellent experience through this initiative. For his efforts, Coffman received a Governor’s Volunteer Award for 2006 from Governor Tom Vilsack.
Yolanda Villalvazo, an MD and MPH student in the Carver College of Medicine and the College of Public Health. Ms. Villalvazo was elected to participate in the Medical Education Community Orientation (MECO) summer program, working with the Migrant Health Program run by Proteus, after joining UI’s Mobile Clinic and taking the Community Health Outreach elective course in her first year of medical school. She immediately initiated collaboration between Proteus and the Mobile Clinic that resulted in a joint clinic held at the Williamsburg Migrant Worker Camp. As the liaison between these organizations, she established a good working relationship that optimized their respective resources for serving this patient population, and she educated her fellow Mobile Clinic students on the issues affecting migrant farm workers so the services received at the joint clinic were delivered in a culturally sensitive manner. Villalvazo also developed a Women’s Health educational workshop targeting breast and cervical cancer. When Proteus budget cuts eliminated exam services, she arranged for the Emma Goldman Clinic to become the provider.

Core Component 5c: The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

The diversity of UI engagement activities—as reflected in the examples listed under Core Component 5b—in itself testifies that we respond to many needs of many different constituents. These activities often grow out of individual units building relationships with community partners. The individual units are in the best position to monitor and adapt to the changing needs of their constituents, and also to determine how well they are meeting those needs.

Highlights of Response to Changing Needs

Some highlights from the examples above that demonstrate UI’s responsiveness to changes in constituent needs and in the environment include:

- The Bachelor of Applied Studies program and the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan, which extend the University’s educational programs to a growing population of Iowans interested in earning a four-year UI degree but not able to pursue the traditional route to that degree

- The Iowa Centers for Enterprise, a new organization that responds to the increased emphasis over the last several years on economic development, and upholds the University’s responsibility to contribute to the state’s economic well-being at a time of increasing demands on state revenues

- The University’s increasing emphasis on translational research, supported by the NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award, which seeks to bring faculty research to bear more quickly on the treatment of today’s patients

- The CME-To-Go outreach program created by Continuing Medical Education (CME) in response to the Iowa physicians’ need for local delivery of CME programs

- College of Education and College of Engineering K-12 outreach programs that respond to emerging needs such as the growing population of Spanish speakers and the national need for more students to pursue the STEM fields

All of the University’s formal outreach programs evolve in response to constituent needs. In addition, individual faculty, students, and staff frequently respond to perceived
needs in the community by creating new programs or undertaking new projects, with examples ranging from the students who created the Mobile Clinic, to the adult literacy program in West Liberty, to the group of civil and environmental engineering students who recently designed and helped to construct a much-needed new footbridge across a river in a rural community in Peru.

**Emergency Response**

The University has at times been called upon to respond in times of urgent need.

In response to Hurricane Katrina, the University enrolled 13 undergraduate and 11 graduate and professional students displaced from the region, and made its distance education offerings available to others. The Office for the Vice President for Student Services, through the Women’s Resource and Action Center (WRAC), led a community-wide drive to ensure arriving students had household and personal items they would need to establish a temporary home while they studied at UI. Twelve displaced students lived in University-owned two bedroom apartments at no cost. To provide displaced students admitted to the University with tuition scholarships and help with expenses related to relocation, the Office of the Provost established a “Hurricane Katrina Academic Relief Fund,” to which faculty, staff, students, and friends of UI contributed. In collaboration with national academic and professional organizations, such as AAU, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the University worked to identify ways to assist faculty, scientists, post-doctoral students, and graduate students displaced by the hurricane who needed access to resources such as space and research materials. The University also offered expertise in critical areas, such as public health, hydraulic engineering, environmental health and safety, and health services, including counseling.

In April 2006 the University community experienced a disaster close to home when a tornado struck Iowa City. Again, members of the University banded together to help one another recover. The University offered counseling services, helped students and faculty affected by the storm make flexible arrangements for completing the semester, and directed students to short-term emergency loans and financial counseling. The Iowa Memorial Union served as a Red Cross shelter. At the suggestion of the University of Iowa Student Government, the University established a disaster relief fund to help tornado-affected students pay for temporary lodging and academic expenses. The fund remains today and will be used to assist students affected by future unforeseen events.

**Core Component 5d: Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.**

The units that engage with external constituencies assess the effectiveness and value of their activities in ways that differ as widely as the activities themselves. Some have developed systematic assessment methods, but far more rely on informal feedback from ongoing interaction.

**Assessment and Usage of UI Programs**

Some examples of units that assess their effectiveness systematically and regularly provide usage data include:

The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics not only provide a service record as part of their annual report, they also conduct satisfaction surveys of both inpatients
and outpatients. In 2004-05—the last available year before the survey instrument was changed (new reporting will begin shortly)—the mean satisfaction score for outpatients was 4.30 on a 5.00 scale. For inpatients, in 2005-06 the mean satisfaction score was 87.40 on a 100.00 scale. Both of these measures are among the indicators of progress associated with the UI strategic plan. The target for outpatient scores is 4.50, and the target for inpatient scores is 90.00.

The University makes an annual governance report to the Board of Regents about its economic development and technology transfer activities, including the indicators noted above (intellectual property disclosures, patent applications and patents issues, royalty and license fee income) and several others. The number of tenants in the Technology Innovation Center (15) and Oakdale Research Park (6) also gives an indication of the extent to which corporations and start-up businesses value the resources the University provides.

Continuing Medical Education (CME) develops an annual report that includes a summary of its activities. In 2005-06 (the most recent year available), the Carver College of Medicine sponsored or jointly sponsored 168 CME activities and offered 1,503 hours of instruction, with nearly 3,700 physicians and approximately 5,300 nurses and allied health care professionals participating. CME activities took place in 37 of Iowa’s 99 counties. Nineteen departments, along with the Center for Disabilities and Development, the College of Public Health, and the Student Health Service, offered 108 regularly scheduled conferences certified as American Medical Association (AMA) category 1 CME activities. In addition to monitoring participation trends, CME staff also rely on informal assessment and encourage comments and suggestions about their programs through mail, e-mail, and phone contact.

The Iowa Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH) publishes an annual report describing the major activities of the four I-CASH state institutional partners (the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa State University, The University of Iowa and the Iowa Department of Public Health), and providing data about use of the Center’s programs.

More than 200 agencies have registered with the Civic Engagement Program and are listed on the affiliated Corridor Volunteers website, an online service that matches volunteers to the agencies that need their help. As noted, both the number of student volunteers and the number of enrollments in service learning courses have already exceeded our strategic planning targets.

The Center for Teaching’s two Service Learning Institutes have led to the creation of 49 new service learning courses, as described in the special emphasis section of this self-study.

These data demonstrate that these UI resources are in high demand. Several indicators mentioned earlier—for example, the number of patients served by the UI Hospitals and Clinics, the number of Arts Share programs requested each year, requests for UI library materials, and participation in community based and continuing education programs—also demonstrate that constituents value University services.

Individuals, units, and programs regularly receive personal thanks and expressions of appreciation from those who value their services and the engagement opportunities they provide. The University does not collect such testimonials, but the November/December 2007 Compass newsletter for faculty and staff of UI Health Care provides an example: the issue is dedicated to “thank you” letters from grateful patients and families
to their UI health care providers.

**Internal Appreciation: Awards for Service**

Internally, there are various ways in which the University recognizes efforts to extend the University’s resources to the larger community. In keeping with the *Iowa Promise* strategy of “recognizing faculty, staff, and student contributions to the external community through, for example, performance evaluations, transcripts, and public recognition,” several prestigious awards recognize exemplary efforts in service and engagement:

**The Regents Staff Excellence Award.** The Regents Staff Excellence Awards are presented by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in cooperation with the staff councils of The University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa. The awards recognize six staff members at each university for outstanding achievements and contributions to their institutions and to the state.

**The David J. Skorton Staff Excellence Award for Public Service.** The David J. Skorton Staff Excellence Award for Public Service, named in honor the University’s president from 2003 to 2006, is given each year to individuals who have made significant contributions and have shown “exceptional imagination and dedication to improving the University community.” Service must include activities of high quality in staff governance, committee work, policy improvement, program creation, etc., and must be outside normal job responsibilities.

**The President’s Award for State Outreach and Public Engagement.** This is the second year for the President’s Award for State Outreach and Public Engagement. Suggested by President Emeritus Willard “Sandy” Boyd, this annual award honors faculty, staff, and students, as individuals or in groups, who demonstrate exemplary outreach and service to the public.

**The Michael J. Brody Award for Faculty Excellence in Service.** Named in honor of the late Michael J. Brody, president of the Faculty Senate from 1986 to 1987, this award was established to recognize outstanding faculty who have made exceptional contributions to the University and the community.

**The Hawkeye Awards.** These awards recognize student organizations and their leaders who have made meaningful contributions to students, the University, and/or the surrounding community. The awards are presented during the Student Leadership Development Conference.

**Summary and Conclusions**

This institutional section of our self-study provides evidence that The University of Iowa meets the criteria for accreditation established by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Moreover, the evidence reflects that UI fits the HLC’s description of what an accredited institution should be:

Distinctive. The University of Iowa is a comprehensive, nationally competitive public teaching and research university, a member of the American Association of Universities (AAU) and of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) and the Big Ten Division I athletic conference, offering more than 100 areas of study and strengths in both the sciences and the arts and humanities. With low tuition
compared to peers, UI offers an exceptional educational value.

Future-oriented. The University of Iowa’s strategic plan, *The Iowa Promise*, sets our priorities for the future and outlines how we will make resource decisions to support those priorities, even in the face of changes in the environment or in the availability of resources. The plan’s goals center on preparing UI students to succeed and serving the needs of our many constituents in a changing world. The plan informs UI programs, practices, policies, and resource allocation decisions.

Connected. University of Iowa faculty, staff, and students engage with the community in many very different ways, all of them bringing the extraordinary resources and distinctive strengths of the University—including health care, research, arts and humanities, and professional programs—more fully into public service.

Learning-focused. The University of Iowa is, above all—as clearly articulated in our mission statement—an institution devoted to the discovery, dissemination, and application of knowledge. In presenting evidence that UI meets the criteria for accreditation, we demonstrate and embrace our commitment to excellence as an institution of higher learning.
Section II: The Special Emphasis Self-Study Undergraduate Education

The University of Iowa has reached a defining moment in strengthening our commitment to undergraduate education. Faculty, staff, students, and friends are joining the conversation about promoting student success.
Iowa, like all public universities, has reached a moment in history where it must rededicate itself to its core function of undergraduate education . . . Public universities wouldn’t exist were it not for our role in educating undergraduate students and preparing them for responsible participation in their communities. We must, therefore, hold each other accountable for outstanding performance as undergraduate teachers, advisors, and mentors. We must explore new learning environments, encourage good citizenship through service learning programs, and create new research experiences that will enable our students to sample the value-added of an education at a major research university.

— Michael J. Hogan, University of Iowa Executive Vice President and Provost 2004-2007

Introduction

Overview of Special Emphasis

The Higher Learning Commission’s special emphasis self-study option affords a qualified institution a valuable opportunity to study in depth an area of particular, timely importance—to address an issue critical to its mission and aspirations. As University of Iowa leaders began planning for the current reaccreditation cycle, consulting broadly across campus, one theme quickly emerged as a likely subject for a focused self-assessment: undergraduate education, defined broadly.

National trends in higher education over the past several years have led many institutions—especially public institutions—to refocus on their core mission of undergraduate education. Feeling mounting pressure from expenses such as Medicaid, K-12 education, and the prison system, states have shifted a greater share of the costs of higher education onto students and their families. As tuition rises and students and their families borrow more to pay for college, the demand for greater accountability has grown. Students and families—and Secretary Margaret Spellings’ Commission on the Future of Higher Education—want to know if “our investment in higher education [is] paying off—are we getting what we paid for?” (Miller & Malandra, 2006, p.1). Meanwhile, the nation’s perception of higher education as a public good increasingly has taken a back seat to the idea that it is a private good, with the primary purpose of landing the eventual graduate a good job and a higher salary. Academic leaders have struggled to keep constituents aware of the value of a liberal education, not just for students but for the local, national, and international communities of which they will be citizens.

The University of Iowa has not been immune to these trends; nor have we ignored them. In fact, The University of Iowa has reached a defining moment in a decade-long process of strengthening our commitment to undergraduate education.

Developments in Undergraduate Education at The University of Iowa, 1997-98 to 2007-08

In 1997, then-Provost Jon Whitmore appointed the University’s first associate provost for undergraduate education. The University’s first two strategic plans, Achieving Distinction (1990 to 1995) and Achieving Distinction 2000 (1995 to 2000), had included among the institution’s top-level goals “comprehensive strength in undergraduate programs.” The creation of the new position in the Office of the Provost reinforced the University’s commitment to that goal.
Two years later, in her 1999 Convocation Address, then-President Mary Sue Coleman called the University community's attention to Iowa's four- and six-year graduation rates, which were lower than those of Michigan State and Indiana— institutions with student bodies comparable to Iowa's in terms of mean composite ACT scores and high school rank. "What can we do," she asked, "to encourage students to graduate in a more timely fashion?" This led to the appointment of a Task Force on Persistence to Graduation, chaired by Professor Lola Lopes, who later became associate provost for undergraduate education (and in 2007-08 is serving as the University's interim provost). In its September 2000 final report, the Task Force on Persistence to Graduation urged the University to do more "to integrate students into a scholarly culture and to provide them with the intellectual skills and strategies that make the difference between success and failure."

In 2005 a report to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, titled *Best Practices in Student Retention at the Regent Universities* examined how policies and procedures at the three state universities compare to those recommended in the ACT study *What Works in Student Retention? Four Year Public Colleges* (Habley & McClanahan, 2004). The report finds that many of ACT's "best practices" for retention have been in place at UI for many years—such as the oldest writing center in the U.S., for example, and one of the earliest residential learning communities. Many other efforts date from the 1990s, such as the addition of several new residential communities, the creation of the block scheduling program Courses in Common, and the inauguration of the *Four-Year Graduation Plan*. But it was after 2000, prompted by the recommendations of the Task Force on Persistence to Graduation, that UI experienced a "flowering of retention programs." The University expanded learning communities, strengthened academic advising, and implemented a variety of new programs to help new students develop the skills they need to succeed in college. The task force's counsel and then-Associate Provost Lopes's leadership began to bring about a cultural shift toward a focus on undergraduate education and the factors that affect student success.

One measure of the benefit the University and our students have realized from this cultural shift is the one that began it—the rate of graduation and retention. UI's one-year retention rate has increased from 82.0% for the 1995 entering cohort to 84.1% for the 2005 cohort. The six-year graduation rate has increased from 62.6% for the 1990 cohort to 65.5% for the 2000 cohort. And the four-year graduation rate has increased dramatically, from 32.3% for the 1992 cohort to 40.5% for the 2002 cohort.

Today, the commitment to undergraduate education and student success has a prominent place in the University's strategic plan, *The Iowa Promise*, and continues to guide University actions. Over the past year, Vice Provost Tom Rocklin (who prior to September 2007 held the title senior associate provost for undergraduate education) created a Student Success Team that includes broad representation from across campus. He also appointed the University's first director of student success initiatives. These and many other recent developments related to undergraduate education are detailed in the sections that follow.

**Choosing the Special Emphasis**

In choosing to use the reaccreditation process as an opportunity to make a focused, in-depth study of the many facets of undergraduate education at The University of Iowa, the University hopes to take the next step toward achieving our strategic goals more quickly and carrying out our mission more effectively. We believe that to take that next
step we must widen the conversation, bringing faculty, staff, and students more actively into discussions about making the best use of our resources, overcoming challenges related to undergraduate education, and promoting student success. We believe this process will help us to fulfill our promise to those we serve.

See Appendix II-A for the Memorandum of Understanding between The University of Iowa and the Higher Learning Commission regarding the University’s option to pursue a special emphasis self-study for its 2007-08 comprehensive evaluation.

Organization of the Special Emphasis Self-Study

Steering Committee

In fall 2005, Provost Hogan convened a steering committee to develop a self-study proposal and work plan, oversee the research and data collection process, and write the self-study report. The steering committee comprised five faculty members, a senior academic services staff member, and the senior associate provost for undergraduate education (now vice provost), who served as chair. The committee’s goal was to conduct and document a self-study that would support the University’s reaccreditation and serve as the basis for ongoing efforts to enhance undergraduate education.

In spring 2006 the steering committee appointed five subcommittees made up of faculty, staff, and students, each charged with conducting an in-depth study of one of five broad themes (as described below) over the 2006-07 academic year. The subcommittees received staff and research support from the Office of the Provost. They submitted their final reports in June 2007.

Later, the steering committee identified a need for a sixth subcommittee to study learning environments, which worked on a shortened timeline. That subcommittee submitted its report in September 2007.

The steering committee members prepared the final self-study report based on the research and evaluative reports presented by the subcommittees, along with input collected from a variety of content experts and other contributors from across campus. The committee shared several drafts of the self-study with the University community during fall 2007 and made many substantive changes in response to the constructive feedback received through that process.

Subject Areas and Subcommittees

The steering committee members identified six broad themes related to undergraduate education that they felt merited in-depth examination as part of the self-study process. A subcommittee was assigned to research and evaluate The University of Iowa in relation to each theme. The charges to each of the subcommittees may be found in Appendix II-B.

Entry and Transition

As stated by the Policy Center on the First Year of College, “The first college year is central to the achievement of an institution’s mission
and lays the foundation on which undergraduate education is built (2005). Research has demonstrated that the process of setting expectations, communicating values, equipping students with essential learning skills, and integrating them into the campus community—a process that actually begins with recruitment and extends through the student’s first year—is critical to student success (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005a). Therefore, the self-study includes an examination of The University of Iowa’s programs, policies, and practices related to recruitment, admissions, and orientation, as well as opportunities and experiences specifically geared toward the first-year student.

Common Academic Experiences

Faculty and academic leaders at colleges and universities throughout the country have many and conflicting opinions about how (or whether) to define the core educational experience every undergraduate should share, and about how to deliver it. Nonetheless, most would agree that we in higher education must ask ourselves—especially in times of rapid change—whether our curricula are in appropriate balance, whether we are advancing the objectives of liberal education, whether our expectations are too high or too low, and other key questions to ensure that we are meeting our students’ needs and preparing them for the world in which they will live.

In spring 2005, Provost Hogan announced his intention to initiate a review of the University’s General Education Program (GEP). As plans for the special emphasis self-study developed, the steering committee chose to incorporate that review into this larger assessment of the UI undergraduate experience. The committee’s goal was to collect information and provide a report that would serve as a basis, if necessary, for a more focused group to begin to redesign the GEP.

Education within the Major

The UI undergraduate curriculum consists of common academic experiences (the General Education Program), electives, and focused, specialized learning through one or more major programs. Major programs—usually department-based, though some are interdisciplinary—advise students, assess their progress, provide mechanisms to support effective learning, and become the nexus for student relationships with faculty and peers. This self-study includes an inventory of major programs at The University of Iowa.

Getting Involved

Higher education researchers have long understood that student involvement outside (as well as inside) the classroom benefits students. Alexander W. Astin’s (1985) extensive work with college students, for example, resulted in his well-known “theory of involvement,” which is “Stated simply: students learn by becoming involved” (p. 133, as cited in Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Moreover, Astin’s work suggested that an institution can be shaped and altered in ways that will encourage student involvement—a theory supported by later research (Strange & Banning, 2001).

The self-study steering committee felt it important, therefore, to take stock of the opportunities for co-curricular involvement currently available to undergraduate students at The University of Iowa.
Cultivating Student Potential

Many organizational units and programs on The University of Iowa campus contribute to students’ academic and personal growth outside of the classroom. Some—such as the University Libraries, Information Technology Services, and the Academic Advising Center—provide services used by most undergraduate students; other programs are more specialized, whether designed to support students who face particular challenges, or to challenge very talented and well-prepared students to make the most of their abilities. This self-study describes some of the programs that exist at The University of Iowa, targets a subset of them for further examination, and evaluates the effectiveness of the targeted programs in helping students reach their potential.

Learning Environments

An institution’s appreciation for the ways in which physical and virtual spaces and settings can enhance student learning has been shown to contribute to success in the areas of student engagement and graduation rates (Kuh et al., 2005a). This self-study includes a review of learning environments provided by the University, including spaces used for both formal and informal teaching and learning.

Charges to the Subcommittees

The general charge to each subcommittee (except for the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences) was to submit a written report accomplishing the following three tasks within the scope of its subject area:

*Inventory:* Identify and describe the programs, policies, and practices in place at The University of Iowa that relate to the scope of the subcommittee’s charge.

*Evaluate:* Collect information that addresses the effectiveness of these programs, policies, and practices in meeting the criteria for evaluation.

Collect real life stories from relevant constituencies to illustrate the findings of the subcommittee.

*Propose:* Suggest changes that will allow The University of Iowa to better meet the criteria for evaluation.

The charge to the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences was to produce a report addressing two key questions:

What learning outcomes should the University of Iowa’s General Education Program promote among our students?

To what extent does the current General Education Program succeed in promoting those outcomes?

The steering committee also asked the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences to keep the campus community involved and informed about its work, and to include among its research methods an examination of practices at other institutions; consultation of the relevant scholarly literature; and input from students, faculty members, alumni, and employers.

The steering committee asked all of the subcommittees to be mindful, as they carried
out their tasks, of two overarching questions related to diversity:

In what ways do the programs, policies, and practices under study support the goal of recruiting and retaining a diverse campus community?

How do the programs, policies, and practices draw upon the diversity of our campus community to promote excellence in undergraduate education?

**Organization of the Self-Study Report**

Although the steering committee members ultimately chose to organize the special emphasis self-study report around the broad themes they had identified (with the exception that “Cultivating Student Potential” and “Learning Environments” have been combined into a single chapter called “Environments and Resources for Learning”), they discussed at length concerns about perpetuating distinctions between “academic affairs” and “student affairs,” between “academic” and “non-academic” experiences, between “in-class” and “out-of-class” learning. Student success ultimately depends upon many factors. Universities need to recognize the interactions among these factors, rather than artificially compartmentalizing them.

While acknowledging that the organization of this report does to some extent rely on artificial categories and compartmentalizations, we affirm here one of the findings presented at the end of the self-study: we must do a better job of communicating across traditional barriers and work harder to break down the “silos” of focus we have built over time.

**Research Processes**

**The RISE Study (Research on Iowa Student Experiences)**

Executive Vice President and Provost Michael J. Hogan set the self-study in motion in June 2005 when he commissioned the University of Iowa Center for Research on Undergraduate Education (CRUE) to perform a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative study of undergraduate experiences at The University of Iowa. The center undertook the Research on Iowa Student Experiences (RISE) project during the 2005-06 academic year and the summer of 2006. Researchers collected quantitative data via a web-based survey instrument sent to all undergraduate first-year and senior students. They received completed surveys from 1,477 first-year students and 1,676 seniors, a response rate of 36.5%. To gather qualitative data, researchers conducted interviews with focus groups including 75 first-year students and 45 seniors who chose to participate. The center submitted its final report to the provost in fall 2006.

**Summary of RISE Study Findings**

Because the RISE study informed the work of each of the self-study subcommittees, a summary of its findings in several key categories is provided here in the hope that it will usefully inform the reading of the special emphasis self-study as a whole. The full report will be available to the HLC consultant-evaluators in the University’s resource room.

**Academic Engagement**

Two items on the RISE survey sought student impressions of the academic climate at UI: (1) “Students (at UI) spend a lot of time studying and completing academic assignments” and (2) “Academic work at UI is challenging and requires serious
intellectual effort.” Sixty-one percent of first-year students and 58% of seniors agreed that UI students spend a lot of time in academic pursuits; 82% of first-year students and 74% of seniors agreed that academic work at UI is challenging and requires effort.

Students also were asked to identify the number of books, term papers, and essay exams they had completed in the current (2005-06) academic year (that is, as of the end of March 2006). Twenty-five percent of first-year students and 34% of seniors said they had read 0 to 4 “assigned books and readings this academic year” (emphasis added); 44% of first-year students and 39% of seniors said they had read 5 to 10 assigned books or readings (the most frequent response for both groups). Sixty-five percent of first-year students and 68% of seniors had completed 0 to 4 essay exams. Fifty percent of seniors said they had completed 0 to 4 term papers or written reports; 30% said they had completed 5 to 10. In contrast, 47% of first-year students said they had completed 5 to 10 term papers or reports and 20% said they had completed 11 to 20.

Students also were asked to estimate the amount of time (in hours) they spent on a variety of academic activities during the current (spring 2006) semester. Students were asked, for example, to estimate how much time they spent “preparing for class in a typical week.” The most frequent response for both groups (25% of first-year students and 26% of seniors) was 6 to 10 hours per week. Twenty-three percent of first-year students and 22% of seniors said they spend 11 to 15 hours per week preparing for class. Twenty-one percent of first-year students and 19% of seniors said they spend more than 21 hours per week preparing for class; 10% of first-year students and 15% of seniors said they spend 0 to 5 hours per week.

The academic activities reported by the students could appear to be inconsistent with their assertions about the academic climate at UI. One could argue, for example, that reading 0 to 4 assigned books or readings in the first 7 months of the academic year (as reported by 25% of first-year students and 34% of seniors) contradicts the assertion that UI students “spend a lot of time studying and completing academic requirements” or that “academic work at UI is challenging and requires serious intellectual effort.” It might be the case, however, that the respondents were not referring to themselves when they said UI students spend a lot of time studying. Or the respondents might view 0 to 4 readings in 7 months as “a lot” or intellectually challenging.

All the RISE focus groups were asked to describe the quality and quantity of “academic challenge” they had experienced in their time at UI. How that term was defined was left to the students, but the discussions about it referred (among other things) to time spent studying and on homework, the pressure students felt to work hard in and prepare for their classes, expectations of faculty for student effort and performance, class attendance, and general feelings of being challenged (or not) academically and/or intellectually. Both first-year students and seniors described their UI experiences as lacking in academic challenge and characterized by low expectations (particularly their own, but also their peers’ and their instructors’) for time spent studying, preparing for class, studying for exams, writing papers, and, in general, focusing on the academic aspects of college. Many noted that “academic challenge is what you make it,” because they felt little external academic pressure.

Some first-year students asserted that this lack of academic challenge was a surprise and/or a disappointment: they expected more challenge than they encountered and many were surprised at the amount of free time they had in their first semester at UI. Many seniors noted a decline in perceived academic challenge over their time in college; most asserted that once they “figured out the system,” they needed to
spend little time on academic endeavors. This seemed to depend, to some extent, on a student’s major (e.g., some engineering majors described extensive and intensive academic challenge) or on whether the student was working on a senior thesis.

These data are in sharp contrast to responses to the survey questions about academic climate. Survey respondents (83% of first-year students and 74% of seniors) indicated they perceived academic work at UI to be challenging and requiring serious intellectual effort. They might not, however, contradict the survey data about time spent engaged in academic activities; the small numbers of assigned readings, essay exams, and papers reported by both seniors and first-year students and the low number of hours spent in class preparation could be viewed as supporting the focus group assertions about lack of academic challenge.

Non-Academic Engagement

Most RISE survey respondents—88% of first-year students and 83% of seniors—said they spent 0 to 5 hours per week on co-curricular activities (i.e., “student organizations or government, campus publications, art or music, etc.”) and almost all—94% of first-year students and 91% of seniors—spent 0 to 5 hours per week in community service or volunteer activities not related to class. First-year students were more likely than seniors to spend time using a computer “for fun.” Most of the respondents—62% of the seniors and 84% of the first-year students—reported working 0 to 5 hours per week on campus; 58% of the seniors and 88% of the first-year students reported 0 to 5 hours of paid employment off campus. Seniors were more likely than first-year students to work on or off campus, but particularly off campus. With the exception of employment, however, first-year students tended to report spending more hours on the activities identified in the survey than seniors.

The survey also asked students to identify the types of activities they had engaged in during their time at UI. They were to select from a list of experiences and activities, most of which are known to be associated with desired educational outcomes of college—for example, living-learning communities, leadership positions or training, racial or cultural awareness workshops, senior capstone experiences, or research with a faculty member (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). With a few exceptions, the “no” responses far exceeded the “yes” responses regarding involvement in this array of activities for both first-year students and seniors. One could infer from this that the choices given the students did not reflect the experiences and activities in which the respondents have been engaged at UI, and that another list might have yielded more “yes” responses than “nos.” However, given that the activities included in the survey were, for the most part, associated with high-quality college experiences and educationally-effective postsecondary learning environments (Kuh et al., 2005a; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), one might infer that these are desirable activities that ought to be characteristic of UI students’ experiences. One also might hope that such desirable activities are widely distributed among, and experienced by, UI students. The RISE results indicate they are not.

Analyses of the survey results did, however, demonstrate the impact of participation in some of these activities on the desired outcomes of college; that is, the students who did participate benefited in important ways. “Worked on a research project with a faculty member” (9% of first-year students and 24% of seniors) was associated, for example, with the following self-reported outcomes for both groups of students: cumulative grade point average, growth in general/ liberal arts education, growth in career/professional preparation, personal/interpersonal growth, and overall/composite
growth. Other detailed results of experiences and outcomes can be found in the full RISE report.

In the RISE interviews, first-year students described themselves, in general, as having a lot of free time, and surprisingly few described involvement in formal out-of-class activities such as student clubs or organizations (although this, too, is reflected in the survey responses). In addition to going to class, for example, a “typical day” for most first-year students included quite a bit of “non-academic” computer time, time on the phone with friends, napping, and “hanging out.” Many first-year students said they did not have a job on campus besides being a student; several, however, noted working off-campus in restaurants or retail.

Seniors described themselves as “overachievers” with regard to involvement in formal out-of-class activities, leadership positions, and campus life. When asked to describe a “typical Iowa student,” the seniors (who did not see themselves as “typical”) conjured a picture of “someone who maybe goes to class, watches a lot of TV, and parties a lot” but “who doesn’t really get involved in anything else, like leadership or student [organizations].” They referred to themselves as “the student leaders,” and as “a really small group—you see the same people at every meeting.”

Seniors also were asked why they had chosen to stay at UI, and one theme related to engagement stood out. For these seniors, “getting involved” with student organizations and with other people (other students, faculty, and staff), was the key to staying at UI. This is consistent with decades of research about student retention and points to the importance of finding ways to expand the numbers of first-year students who are actively engaged in academic and co-curricular aspects of college. This also emphasizes the need for concern—or, at least, further study—about the fairly low levels of first-year involvement in a range of college experiences and activities reported in the survey.

The RISE interview data were replete with this message: UI offers many opportunities for student engagement and success, but it is up to the individual student to find those opportunities and to create a positive experience for himself or herself. First-year students and seniors described as “challenging,” however, the processes of finding the opportunities and resources one needs to craft a successful and engaging college experience. Students said they relied mostly on other students (first-year peers and older students) to identify what an Iowa education could and should be, and made a wide range of decisions based on the example of other students.

The Impact of Effective Classroom Instruction

The RISE survey asked students a variety of questions about their perceptions of teacher quality. The survey questions referred to “teachers”; whether respondents interpreted this to refer only to tenure track faculty or to all classifications of instructors (e.g., teaching assistants, clinical faculty, tenure track faculty, staff in teaching roles) is impossible to determine.

Survey respondents reported very positive opinions about the quality of teaching they have experienced at UI. For example, 74% of first-year students and 77% of seniors agreed that “most teachers with whom they have had contact” at UI “are genuinely interested in students”; 69% of first-year students and 71% of seniors agreed that teachers “are genuinely interested in teaching.” About 60% of respondents from both groups agreed their teachers “are genuinely interested in helping students grow in more than academics.” Almost half of the first-year students and 58% of seniors agreed
that their teachers “are outstanding” and 74% of first-year students and 75% of seniors agreed that teachers are willing to spend time outside of class on issues of interest to students.

Students in the RISE interviews also talked extensively about the quality of instruction they encountered at UI. Comments were fairly evenly divided between positive experiences and negative. In general, both first-year and senior students felt that quality undergraduate instruction was a lower priority for the University than research. Class size was a factor in the nature of students’ experiences with instruction. Instruction in large classes tended to be described more negatively than instruction in small classes. Students—particularly first-year students—tended to be most positive about instruction that required active engagement with class materials and with other students, techniques that students described as occurring in small classes, not large. Students also were much more likely to feel their presence was noted and, therefore, important in smaller classes than in large.

Follow-up analyses of RISE data were conducted in fall 2006 to determine what (if any) factors influenced the return of first-year survey respondents to UI for the sophomore year. In the presence of statistical controls for student characteristics and experiences, two experiences predicted persistence to the sophomore year: (1) participation in a living-learning community, and (2) perceptions of having received effective teaching. Elements of effective teaching included clear course goals and explanations, good use of examples, well-organized presentations, effective use of class time, and so on. In fact, a one standard deviation increase in perception of the overall quality of teaching increased the odds of first- to second-year persistence 1.37 times (137%).

**Student-Teacher Interaction**

The RISE survey asked students a variety of questions about frequency of student-teacher interactions and the impacts of student-teacher interactions outside the classroom. Again, respondents may have interpreted “teachers” to refer to tenure track faculty or to all classifications of instructors.

Students reported a wide range of personal and academic gains as a result of interactions with faculty. Students agreed that “non-classroom interactions” between students and teachers had positive effects on personal growth (52% of first-year students and 62% of seniors), intellectual growth and interest in ideas (56% of first-year students and 68% of seniors), and career goals and aspirations (44% of first-year students and 61% of seniors). The survey left interpretation of the term “non-classroom interactions” to the respondents.

Unfortunately, student-faculty interactions outside of class appeared to be fairly uncommon among the respondents to the survey. Most frequent (“very often” or “often”) were interactions to discuss class assignments (first-year students: 41%; seniors: 47%) and to discuss ideas from reading or class (first-year students: 35%; seniors: 32%). Sixty percent of first-year students and 42% of seniors said they “never” interacted with teachers on non-coursework activities (e.g., committees, orientation, student life activities) and 54% of first-year students and 40% of seniors “never” interacted with teachers to discuss personal matters. In addition, 44% of seniors reported they had “rarely” or “never” interacted with teachers to discuss career concerns and plans.

Students also were asked in the RISE interviews about interactions with faculty. In general, as with the survey respondents, students in the interviews spoke in very positive
terms about these interactions. In fact, even a single interaction or a single individual could have a significant impact on a student’s satisfaction with the University and/or with herself or himself.

With few exceptions, interviewed students described faculty as approachable, available, and willing and able to help students. First-year students in particular often included teaching assistants in their discussion of “faculty.” Some distinctions were made between the availability and approachability of faculty in large classes and faculty in small classes, but some students noted positive interactions with faculty in the very largest classes. These faculty were exceptions, rather than typical, but the impact they had on students’ sense that students and undergraduate education mattered to these faculty was striking. When asked about advice they would give to prospective or new UI students, most seniors offered some form of “Get to know your professors” and “Go to office hours so they know you care.” Across the board, however, students asserted that positive, meaningful interactions with faculty had to be initiated by students.

**Diversity Experiences**

In the RISE study, students were asked to note the frequency with which they had been involved in a range of “diversity” experiences (e.g., conversations with students different than they in race, political perspectives, religion) during their time at UI. It is disappointing to note that 39% of first-year students and 42% of seniors reported they had “rarely” or “never” been encouraged to make contact with students from different economic, social, racial, or ethnic backgrounds. Thirty-six percent of first-year students and 30% of seniors had “rarely” or “never” had serious conversations with students of a race or ethnicity different than their own. Forty-eight percent of first-year students and 38% of seniors had “rarely” or “never” made friends with a student from another country. When asked about how often they engaged in “serious discussions” about major social issues or with students whose politics, religion, or philosophy of life were different than their own, students in both groups were most likely to say “occasionally.”

At the same time, however, the survey item “participated in a racial or cultural awareness workshop” was associated with several self-reported desirable outcomes of college for both first-year students and seniors: (1) growth in general/liberal arts education, (2) personal/interpersonal growth, and (3) overall/composite growth. Participation in a racial or cultural awareness workshop also had a negative relationship to binge drinking for both first-year students and seniors. Given the limitations of this form of survey research, it is not known to what specific workshop or workshops the students referred, nor what the workshops included that led to these outcomes. The data do indicate, however, that a very small number of students (6% of first-year students and 12% of seniors) reported participating in what seems to be a very valuable experience.

Similar but more detailed results about student experiences and attitudes regarding diversity can be found in the report of the UI undergraduate student diversity climate survey conducted in 2005.

**Binge Drinking**

The RISE survey included information about alcohol use. Students were asked (1) to
“Think back over a typical 2-week period when you were in high school. How many times did you have 5 or more drinks (a 12-ounce can of beer, a 4-ounce glass of wine, 1 wine cooler, 1 shot of liquor or 1 mixed drink) on one occasion?”, and (2) to “Think back over a typical 2-week period at The University of Iowa. How many times did you have 5 or more drinks . . . on one occasion?”

Ten percent of first-year students and 13% of seniors reported drinking five or more drinks six or more times (that is, at least 30 drinks) during a typical two-week period in college. This is roughly the equivalent of having five or more drinks every other night in a two-week period. The drinking reported might or might not, however, be spread evenly over the two weeks; the six or more reported binge drinking occasions could, for example, occur over two weekends.

For both groups (25% of first-year students and 29% of seniors), the most frequent response was three to five times in a typical two-week period. Therefore, 36% of first-year respondents and 43% of seniors reported binge drinking at least three—and as much as six or more—times in a typical two-week period in college. However, 31% of first-year students and 21% of seniors reported no binge drinking in a typical two-week period. Analyses included comparing first-year students’ reported binge drinking in high school with their binge drinking in college. There was a substantial increase (21.6 percentile points) in binge drinking behavior between first-year students’ reported high school drinking behavior and their drinking behavior at the University, suggesting that the major socialization to binge drinking at UI occurs sometime during the first year of college—perhaps as early as the first semester. The data indicate, too, that although reported binge drinking behavior shows a significant increase between high school and the second semester of the first year in college, that behavior does not decrease significantly by, or during, the senior year. This suggests that binge drinking behaviors, once established in the first year, did not change significantly over the respondents’ time in college.

Analyses were also conducted to estimate the net impact of binge drinking on desired outcomes of college. In each analysis, statistical controls were introduced for student characteristics and college and high school experiences. In the presence of the above statistical controls, level of binge drinking had no significant net link with any of the other outcome measures except cumulative grade point average. On this outcome, there was a clear inverse relationship between binge drinking frequency and grades for both first-year and senior students. As frequency of binge drinking increased, grade point average decreased. First-year students who reported binge drinking six or more times in a typical two-week period had average grades .284 of a grade point lower than their peers who did not binge drink; for seniors, the difference was .203 points.

Alcohol consumption by UI students—in the words of some, “a culture of drinking”—was raised by students in every RISE interview, even though the focus group protocols did not include questions about drinking. Alcohol use—or concern about alcohol use—clearly was in the forefront of these students’ UI experiences. In a few cases, “partying” (excessive alcohol consumption and underage drinking) was described as a positive attribute of student life at the University—e.g., as a reason to choose to attend UI, or as a highlight of one’s UI experience. Comments such as “Drinking is just part of undergraduate life [and] part of how students adjust to college” were typical from many students. Many others, however, indicated that the “drinking culture” is a distinct disadvantage in terms of its negative impact on social life, academic life, UI’s external reputation, and quality of life in the residence halls.
Self-Study Subcommittee Data Collection Efforts

The RISE study provided useful data about students’ undergraduate experiences. The study was limited, however, to first-year and senior students. It did not collect data about faculty or staff perspectives, and it was not designed to evaluate the effectiveness of UI programs, policies, and practices related to undergraduate education. The steering committee therefore organized the subcommittees around themes that addressed the undergraduate experience as a whole—from the transition to college life, through common academic experiences, to selection and entry into a major program, all the way through to graduation. The subcommittees carried out several new data collection efforts designed to gather information about student, faculty, staff, and employer perspectives and about the effectiveness of UI programs, policies, and practices related to the organizational themes.

Table II-1 below provides an overview of the research methods involved in the subcommittees’ data collection efforts, which are described in greater detail in Appendix II-C.

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<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry and Transition Office and Department Interviews</td>
<td>Information requests were sent to a variety of offices and departments that actively recruit and help transition new students. Informational interviews were held with 33 individuals representing 17 offices and departments. Written materials were obtained from an additional 11 offices.</td>
<td>II-C.1</td>
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<td>General Education Program (GEP) Student Survey</td>
<td>Web-based surveys were distributed via e-mail to 8,251 students, who were asked to indicate how they felt courses within various groupings (rhetoric, foreign language, interpretation of literature, historical perspectives, humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, quantitative or formal reasoning, the general education distributed area, and the major [for comparison purposes]) had contributed to their growth in eight major learning outcomes categories (critical thinking, communication skills, understanding of world complexity, appreciation of diversity, understanding of scientific inquiry, social responsibility, appreciation of the arts, and life of the mind). A total of 972 usable surveys were returned for a response rate of 12%.</td>
<td>II-C.2</td>
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<td>General Education Program (GEP) Faculty Focus Groups</td>
<td>Faculty were invited to participate in focus groups to share their perceptions about general education at UI. Invitations were extended to faculty with deep involvement in general education, and also to faculty who are involved with undergraduates but not necessarily in general education. The committee also sought diversity in length of experience at UI and in scholarly discipline. A total of 47 faculty from 25 departments participated in five focus group sessions, each lasting about an hour.</td>
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<td>General Education Program (GEP) Employer Interviews</td>
<td>Committee members interviewed 13 individuals representing nine “typical” employers who recruit University of Iowa students without requiring a given liberal arts major. They were asked to indicate how much value they place on specified skills when hiring, whether the UI students they hire are adequately prepared in those areas, and what skills not listed by the interviewer might also be especially valuable. Interviewees included individuals from middle to upper management as well as representatives of general hiring networks in their fields, and were identified through the Pomerantz Career Center and through committee member associations. Occupational spheres represented included corporate retail, the public sector, public relations and marketing, and staff positions in professional settings. Interviews were conducted in person when possible and over the telephone when not.</td>
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<td>Education within the Major Survey</td>
<td>Surveys were sent to 60 departmental executive officers (DEOs) of departments that offer an undergraduate major. A total of 54 responses were received for a 90% response rate. The survey asked a variety of questions about each major program, including questions about advising in the department, the percentage of courses in the major taught by specified categories of instructor, research opportunities available to majors, goal-setting and assessment, and efforts to promote diversity.</td>
<td>II-C.5</td>
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<td>Undergraduate Experience Focused Student Survey</td>
<td>Web-based surveys were distributed via e-mail to 8,250 students who were asked a variety of questions assessing their satisfaction with specified aspects of their major programs and their experiences at UI outside of their routine classroom experience. The first set of questions addressed the availability of majors, the effectiveness of advising when selecting a major, the availability of courses within a major, advising within a major, and the level of interaction with faculty within a major. The second set of questions was designed to first assess student experience broadly, and then to focus on experiences with a specified set of programs. There were 892 usable surveys returned for an 11% response rate.</td>
<td>II-C.6</td>
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<td>Co-Curricular Involvement Office and Department Interviews</td>
<td>Teams of committee members conducted 34 interviews with faculty and staff from offices and departments across campus. Using a prepared checklist of student involvement opportunities, the interviewers asked each department or program about the involvement opportunities it currently provides and those it plans to provide, how it encourages students to engage in those activities, the philosophy behind choosing to support those activities and how they align with strategic planning goals, and how they assess the effectiveness of student engagement in those activities.</td>
<td>II-C.7</td>
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<td>Co-Curricular Involvement Student Organization Focus Groups</td>
<td>Focus group interviews were conducted with the executive board members of four undergraduate student organizations and the members of an additional multicultural student organization. Interviewers asked the students about their involvement outside of the classroom, how that activity began, how it had benefited them, what factors encourage or hinder student involvement, and what opportunities are not available at the University that should be, as well as follow-up questions.</td>
<td>II-C.8</td>
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<td>Learning Environments Student Survey</td>
<td>Web-based surveys were distributed via e-mail to 3,000 randomly selected non-first year undergraduate students. There were 282 useable surveys returned for a response rate of 9%. Most questions used a Likert scale, although the survey did include some opportunities for write-in responses. The students who responded to the survey represented a wide variety of colleges and majors, and 74.5% reported having lived in a residence hall at one point.</td>
<td>II-C.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Environments Faculty Questionnaire and Focus Groups</td>
<td>Focus groups were conducted with faculty on the University of Iowa’s Classroom Committee. In addition, an informal e-mail survey was sent to 25 faculty who had received teaching awards over the last few years. Five usable surveys were returned.</td>
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**Other Data Sources**

In addition to the RISE report and the focused data collection efforts described above, several subcommittees relied on various existing data sources—such as the Profile of Students and other reports prepared each session by the Office of the Registrar, satisfaction surveys and evaluations conducted by various departments and programs, institutional data provided by the Office of the Provost, and many others as described throughout this report. The committees also gathered a wealth of information from conversations and interviews with knowledgeable individuals across campus, and took full advantage of the collective expertise of the committee members themselves.
Setting expectations, communicating values, promoting essential skills, and integrating new students into the campus community are critical factors in student success.

Undergraduate Education
I. Entry and Transition

Introduction

As the recent history of undergraduate education at The University of Iowa makes clear, UI planners understand how critical to student success and retention is the process of setting expectations, communicating values, equipping students with essential learning skills, and integrating them into the campus community—that is, the transition process that begins with recruitment and extends through the student’s first year (Kuh et al., 2005a).

The University’s strategic plan, The Iowa Promise, also demonstrates an understanding of the importance of a successful transition process. In the plan, the first of four main strategies related to enhancing undergraduate education focuses on entry and transition:

Recruit and retain a student population that can succeed at a comprehensive research university, and nurture their success, by:

- Tailoring admission policies to ensure that admitted students demonstrate both strong preparation and motivation for college-level work;
- . . . Providing access through an appropriate blend of merit- and need-based financial aid and by increasing the amount of aid available;
- Easing the transition for new students . . . .

This strategy reflects, moreover, the University’s movement toward what former Executive Vice President and Provost Michael J. Hogan called “access to success”—that
is, policies and programs that keep a UI education accessible to motivated students, but also ensure that more of the students we admit are truly prepared to succeed at a nationally competitive, research-oriented university. The main tenet behind “access to success” is the idea that every student who drops out of college because he or she was unprepared to succeed represents a terrible waste of resources for the University, the state that supports us, and especially for the student and his or her family.

Scope

The self-study steering committee asked the subcommittee on Entry and Transition to study programs, policies, and practices that define students’ experiences as applicants and as first-year students at the University. It was intended that the inventory and investigation would include recruitment programs, the admissions process, orientation, and experiences and opportunities designed for first-year students.

The subcommittee identified and examined the administrative units responsible for guiding most new students from recruitment through admission and orientation, as well as programs that perform these services for special populations of students. Then they investigated units and programs that integrate students—including those from special populations—into University life, and guide them successfully through the first stage of their undergraduate careers.

Research Process

The Entry and Transition subcommittee members met, as a group and in small teams, with key individuals in relevant units across campus, including central administrators and representatives of University offices that actively recruit new students and help them transition to college life. The committee also requested and received information in writing from several relevant offices and academic units. See Appendix II-C for details about how the interviews were conducted.

In carrying out its investigations, this subcommittee also made use of the RISE report and relied on evaluative data gathered previously by many of the individual programs, as described below.

Summary of Findings

The University offers an impressive range of programs and services to attract well-prepared, diverse undergraduates and support all students during the first crucial year on campus—many of them the result of major improvement efforts since the last re-accreditation, as described above and in the report Best Practices in Student Retention at the Regent Universities.

Our strategic plan strongly supports efforts to enhance student success, and our academic administrative officers have demonstrated their commitment to ongoing and future student success initiatives. The year-old, broadly representative Student Success Team and the appointment of a director of student success initiatives demonstrate the University’s commitment to planning and action in this area.

Entry and Transition Subcommittee Members:

Dennis Moore, Associate Professor, Department of Rhetoric, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (chair)
Dawn Bowlus, John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center, Henry B. Tippie College of Business
Tran Chau, Undergraduate Student
Brian Corkery, Senior Associate Director, Enrollment Services, Academic Advising Center
Jennifer Davis, Undergraduate Student
Jane Dorman, Admissions, College of Engineering
James Ehrmann, Undergraduate Student
David Gier, Associate Professor, School of Music, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Mary Hall Reno, Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Emil Rinderspacher, Senior Associate Director, Admissions
John Solow, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Henry B. Tippie College of Business
Though constrained by state-mandated admission standards, the University has met with some success over the last ten years in recruiting students who are better prepared to succeed and to take advantage of what a research-oriented university such as Iowa has to offer than were incoming students in previous decades. High school GPA, ACT score, and class rank have gone up slightly. Recent changes to the admission standards, detailed below, could lead to further increases.

A theme for improvement that emerges from our study of entry and transition programs is the need to find more and better ways to instill in our students, early in their transition, a sense of what it means to be a successful member of the University community.

**Description and Evaluation of Offices, Programs, Policies, and Processes Related to Entry and Transition**

**Recruitment and Admissions**

**Overview**

In this part of our study, we focus on activities aimed at the recruitment and enrollment of new undergraduates.

Some of these activities—from sports camps to summer programs at the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development—focus on potential pool development, by introducing prospective students and their families to our campus. Other activities, such as those coordinated by the Admission Visitors Center, focus directly on student recruitment.

The goal of our recruitment efforts, as described above, is to keep a UI education accessible for motivated students while ensuring that more of the students we admit are truly prepared to succeed here. Of equal importance, in recruiting and enrolling students we hope to advance toward another of the five top-level goals in *The Iowa Promise*, “to promote excellence in education by increasing the diversity of . . . students.”

**Why Students Select Iowa**

Although we do not have extensive data about why students choose The University of Iowa over other institutions, we do have feedback from the RISE study interviews of first-year and senior students, who were asked why they chose to attend UI. Although there were as many different answers as there were respondents, in general the answers focused on location, cost, and majors.

Most students stated that they chose UI because of its proximity to or distance from home. Some said they wanted (or needed) to attend an in-state school, and many expressed a preference for UI over the other Regent institutions. Some students were attracted to Iowa City itself.

In-state tuition was an important factor for Iowa students. Nonresident students also noted that UI’s tuition is reasonable. Some students mentioned scholarship and financial aid packages as incentives.

Many students were influenced by Iowa’s “good reputation” in major areas of interest. This included “good faculty” and good prospects for employment after graduation. Other students chose UI because they were uncertain about their major or career interests. The University offers a reasonably-priced option for exploration for those students.
Admission Requirements

Many factors play into predicting student success in college. The predictors available to us at UI are dictated by the factors considered in our admission standards, which are set by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa. The admission requirements adopted by the Board of Regents provide a high (and equal) degree of access to each of the three universities governed by the Board.

Admission requirements for entering first-year, transfer, and international undergraduate students are detailed in Appendix II-D or on the UI undergraduate admissions web page, and are summarized in Table II-2 and Table II-3, below. The Admission Index refers to the following calculation, used for students who have completed the course requirements but do not meet the class rank requirement:

\[
\text{Admission Index} = (2 \times \text{ACT composite score}) + \text{high school rank}
\]

The admission standards have posed a challenge to The University of Iowa. Each year, we admit some resident students who have graduated in the top half of their high school classes, but who present other credentials (e.g., ACT scores) that suggest they may be underprepared to succeed at a university like The University of Iowa. In fact, students who graduate in the 50th to 59th percentile of their high school classes have only a 53.7% chance of graduating even in six years.

Figure II-1 illustrates that in comparison to our peer institutions, UI admits more students, realizes a lower yield on those admissions, and has lower one-year retention and six-year graduation rates. Student success at The University of Iowa falls below the peer median, in other words, because our admission standards are less selective than those of our peers. We do better than our peers, however, in actual graduation rate compared to predicted rate—that is, our six-year graduation rate is higher than a predicted rate based on the academic profile of our students.

In summer 2006 the Board of Regents appointed a team to conduct an in-depth study of admission requirements at the Regent universities. At its December 2006 meeting, having received the Admissions Study Team’s report, the Board approved a change to the requirements that will take effect for students applying to enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) in fall 2009. The new standards use a calculation called the Regent Admissions Index (RAI), which takes into account ACT score, high
school rank, high school grade point average, and the number of high school courses completed in the core subject areas:

\[
RAI = (2 \times \text{ACT composite score}) + (1 \times \text{high school rank}) + (20 \times \text{high school grade-point average}) + (5 \times \text{number of high school courses completed in core subject areas})
\]

For guaranteed admission to CLAS, Iowa residents will need an RAI of 245 or above; nonresidents will need an RAI of 255 or above.

The University welcomes the change. The factors combined in the RAI were identified by the Admissions Study Team as good predictors of academic success at Regent universities, and consistent with the Iowa Department of Education’s goal of encouraging students to challenge themselves with a rigorous high school curriculum. We believe this change might lead to somewhat better prepared first-year students.

Bringing our admissions policies and practices into closer alignment with the educational support and challenge that we provide at The University of Iowa is a high priority, and we are working on both sides of the problem. Our 2 Plus 2 program (described below), for example, lets some students begin their studies at a community college with—if they so choose—a clear pathway to a bachelor’s degree in a total of four years. The work of the Student Success Team, described in the institutional section of this self-study, concentrates on providing an educational environment that supports the success of admitted students.

### Table II-2: Admission Requirements for Entering First-Year Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College*</th>
<th>High School Course Requirements</th>
<th>High School Rank/Admission Index</th>
<th>Minimum ACT Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (resident)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Current: Top 50% of high school class or Admission Index ≥ 95; Effective fall 2009: RAI ≥ 245</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAS (nonresident)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Current: Top 30% of high school class or Admission Index ≥ 100; Effective fall 2009: RAI ≥ 255</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Engineering</td>
<td>Yes, plus a year of higher math</td>
<td>Top 30% of high school class</td>
<td>Math and composite score ≥ 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tippie College of Business (direct admission)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Admission Index ≥ 148; Effective fall 2008; Admission Index ≥ 140</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Nursing (early admission)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Admission Index ≥ 148</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*About 90% of first-year students entering The University of Iowa enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). The College of Engineering also admits students directly in the first year (about 7% of the total entering student class, in recent years). A few very well prepared students are granted early admission as first-year students to the College of Nursing or the Tippie College of Business. In fall 2007, CLAS enrolled 3,875 first-year students; the College of Engineering enrolled 306; the College of Nursing enrolled 24; and the Tippie College of Business enrolled 82 first-year students (for a total of 4,287 entering first-year students).

Note: Admission requirements for entering first-year students who attended high school outside the U.S. include documented completion of upper secondary education; above-average grades in a university-preparatory program; completion of the high school course requirements (for CLAS or for Engineering, as appropriate); and ACT or SAT scores if applying to the College of Engineering. Applicants whose first language is not English must achieve acceptable scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or otherwise demonstrate proficiency in English.
Early/Direct Admission Programs

The College of Nursing and the Tippie College of Business require most students to complete substantial relevant course work before admission, which allows students to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II-3: Admission Requirements for Transfer Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Course Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAS (non-AA degree holders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAS (AA degree holders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAS (AS degree holders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tippie College of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Applied Studies degree program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Dentistry B.S. in Oral Health Science program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver College of Medicine B.S. degree program in Clinical Laboratory Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver College of Medicine B.S. degree program in Nuclear Medicine Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carver College of Medicine B.S. degree program in Radiation Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: International transfer students must meet the same requirements as entering first-year international students, and have earned above-average grades in recognized university course work.

Early/Direct Admission Programs

The College of Nursing and the Tippie College of Business require most students to complete substantial relevant course work before admission, which allows students to...
make better informed choices and helps those colleges maintain distinctive professional standards. Most undergraduates, therefore, enter the University via CLAS and are only later admitted to one of these colleges if they choose to apply. Both of these colleges do, however, admit a limited number of exceptionally promising first-year students directly. In fall 2007, the College of Nursing enrolled 24 students through its early admission program, and the Tippie College of Business enrolled 82 students through its direct admission program.

**Recruitment and Admission Process**

*Role of the Office of Admissions*

The University of Iowa’s recruitment and admissions functions, unlike at some institutions, are highly centralized.

The **Office of Admissions** manages the recruitment and admission of Iowa’s undergraduates (as well as most graduate and professional students). Its mission statement reads:

Through its programs and services, The Office of Admissions develops successful admission and orientation/transition strategies which serve the larger institutional objectives of teaching, research and service. A component of Enrollment Services in the Office of the Provost, Admissions works actively with central administrators, college deans, faculty, staff, students and alumni to attract and maintain a diverse, talented, multicultural student body of appropriate size and composition that will matriculate, persist, achieve academically and graduate from the University.

The Office has five divisions: Outreach Services, Pre-Enrollment Services, Admission Information Systems, Publications and Administrative Services, and New Student Orientation Services.

E-mail inquiries for the Office of Admissions as a whole reached 122,000 in 2006-07, an increase from approximately 6,000 in 1996. The office sends information to 3,500 high school counselors and educators several times a year via a newsletter. The office also seeks to ensure that information flows both ways: a 15-member board of high school counselors from across the state advises the office about how its members view trends in admissions.

The admissions process is the student’s gateway not only into the University, but also into the University’s system of academic records. The currently ongoing MAUI (“Made at The University of Iowa”) project, sponsored by the Office of the Provost, will replace the University’s 30-year-old home-grown, mainframe-based student information system with a new, integrated, web-based system. The new system will benefit students and administrators alike by integrating information about admissions, University academic records, progress toward graduation, registration, billing, and financial aid. The MAUI project is considered at somewhat greater length in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this report.

**Outreach Services and the Admission Visitors Center**

Outreach Services, the administrative unit in Admissions primarily responsible for recruitment, educates a diverse group of prospective students about the University, its policies and procedures regarding admission and enrollment, and academic and co-curricular opportunities available to UI students. One of its principal operations is the
Admission Visitors Center (AVC), which conducts activities both on- and off-campus. AVC is housed on the first floor of the recently completed Pomerantz Center.

The AVC actively encourages campus visits to help prospective students determine whether The University of Iowa fits them well. On-campus activities include

- Daily information sessions, individual appointments, and campus tours
- Hawkeye Visit Days (full-day programs for prospective students)
- Transfer day programs
- An overnight visit program for high-ability high school seniors
- Special events with the Center for Diversity & Enrichment aimed at recruiting a diverse student population

Almost 10,000 prospective students visited campus in 2006-07, along with more than 10,000 friends and family members. About 90% were high school students, and just over 45% were Iowa residents. Admissions coordinated nearly 1,900 visits to academic departments over that period. Many trained student employees and volunteers facilitated the campus visits by serving as tour guides and campus hosts.

Off campus, the AVC conducts high school visits (529 in 2006-07), participates in college fairs, and makes “virtual visits” to high schools using the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), which allows them to reach a large number of students. Admissions staff and alumni volunteers participate in more than 250 college fairs around the country. Through the Hawkeye Hometown Visit Program, undergraduate volunteers represent the University within their communities during winter break.

Outreach Services also works directly with alumni groups, such as the Iowa Black Alumni Association and the Latino/a and Native American Alumni Alliance. The UI Alumni Association co-sponsors a program called Alumni Seeking Iowa Students (ASIST), which involves approximately 700 alumni volunteers who help extend the geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic range of recruitment efforts.

The AVC communicates with prospective students and their families via e-mail, online chats, instant messaging, and recruitment phone call projects. Taking all of its activities into account, the AVC contacted nearly 63,000 prospective students during 2006-07.

Pre-Enrollment Services

The division of Pre-Enrollment Services handles admission processes for most first-year undergraduates and transfer students (as well managing many aspects of graduate and professional admissions).

Pre-Enrollment Services processes a vast amount of data every year: over 38,000 applications and 167,000 transcripts and placement reports in 2006-07, in addition to answering 73,000 phone calls and more than 120,000 e-mails. Many University units send mailings to admitted students to provide additional information and to demonstrate the University’s interest in its newest undergraduates and their families; the division of Pre-Enrollment Services coordinates those mailings, ensuring a regular flow of information, minimal duplication, and a high quality and consistency of presentation.

Recent developments in information technology have forced change in this area. For
students entering in fall 2007, for example, more than 80% of first-year applications were submitted online—but, as in many admissions offices around the country, staff had to print them out and key the data into the UI student information system manually. Beginning in August 2007, the data from online applications have been loaded directly into the system. Because of the direct upload process the University has needed to hire fewer temporary and student workers. The hours that used to be spent by full-time staff on data entry are now being spent on imaging and indexing documents and on other tasks associated with the increasing need for holistic review of applications without a high school class rank.

In spring 2008, the University will implement new student relationship management software to track and manage communications with individual students. This new functionality will be incorporated into MAUI.

Role of the Undergraduate Colleges

All of the undergraduate colleges work in various cooperative roles with Admissions.

The College of Nursing works closely with the Admission Visitors Center (AVC). Nursing Student Services Program staff participate in on- and off-campus AVC outreach programming. In addition, Student Services staff attend events sponsored by various health care agencies, and engage in outreach activities with community colleges and hospitals in the state.

Tippie College of Business staff also participate in on-and off-campus AVC outreach programming, including AVC outreach to community colleges. The College participates in Hawkeye Visit Days, Transfer Days, and college fairs.

Because the College of Engineering is the only UI College besides Liberal Arts and Sciences that admits most of its students directly in the first year, it has its own director of admissions and outreach. The College hosts campus visits for prospective students. In 2005-06, about 375 students and their families met individually with the College’s admissions director. The College also hosts group visits, organized through programs such as Explore Engineering@Iowa!, Hawkeye Visit Days, and the Workplace Learning Connection. In 2005-06, about 850 students took advantage of one of these group visits.

A key component of the College of Engineering’s outreach, recruitment, and retention efforts is the Student Ambassadors, a group of student employees who work three to five hours a week and serve as a resource for current students as well as for prospective high school and transfer students.

The College coordinates its recruitment efforts related to diversity—both racial/ethnic and gender diversity—with the Office of Admissions. The Ethnic Inclusion Effort for Iowa Engineering, aimed primarily at recruitment and retention of diverse graduate students, helps with undergraduate recruitment as well—as does the College’s publication, Invent Your Future: Women and Minorities in Iowa’s College of Engineering. An engineering faculty and staff organization, Faculty and Staff Fostering Inclusion, works to evaluate and improve recruitment and retention of students.

Role of the Office of Student Financial Aid

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Aid—which supports both The Iowa Promise and the theme of “access to success”—is:

To address the financial needs of students in a way that enables student access to
The University of Iowa, facilitates enrollment of a high-achieving, culturally diverse student body, and encourages timely graduation rates.

The office seeks to provide access to the University while minimizing the amount of debt incurred by students.

The director of the office is an assistant provost for enrollment services. Senior staff members meet regularly with the Financial Aid Advisory Committee (a UI charter committee), which consists of six faculty members, six students, and two staff members. Their charge is to advise the president regarding all forms of student financial aid and to assist the Office of Student Financial Aid in communicating relevant policies to the University community.

The total financial aid administered by the office has increased by 79% in the last 10 years, as illustrated in Table II-4:

**Table II-4:**
**Student Financial Aid Comparison, 1997 and 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aid</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Aid</td>
<td>$96,514,115</td>
<td>$176,287,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Aid</td>
<td>$2,365,675</td>
<td>$2,394,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UI and Private Student Aid</td>
<td>$89,207,824</td>
<td>$158,836,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Financial Aid</td>
<td>$188,087,614</td>
<td>$337,517,289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: UI tuition set aside allocations are included in these totals.*

The University also has increased its internal tuition revenue set aside program. The actual percentage of tuition revenue set aside for University grants and scholarships has risen over the past ten years from 15% to more than 18% for FY 2008. In dollar figures, this represents a $30 million or 181% increase from approximately $17 million to approximately $4.8 million.

More than 80% of undergraduate tuition funds set aside for financial aid go to students who filed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrated financial need.

Unlike many states, Iowa does not provide a substantial appropriation-funded student financial aid program for Iowans attending the Regent universities. According to a recent survey published by the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs, in FY 2006 93.7% of state-appropriated student aid dollars were only available to students attending private colleges and universities in Iowa, while only 6.3% was available to students attending public colleges and universities, including the Regent universities and all Iowa community colleges. The appropriation shared by these public institutions amounted to $3.4 million of the more than $53 million appropriated.

In addition to increasing the amount of tuition set aside, Student Financial Aid also undertook a major initiative for new scholarship and grant money through the UI Foundation's comprehensive campaign. Several major initiatives directed toward “access for success” are being funded by substantial new commitments from the tuition set aside and campaign efforts.
The Office of Student Financial Aid works closely with the Office of Admissions to ensure that financial aid allocations support the goals of The Iowa Promise and “access to success.” The directors of the two offices conducted a systematic review of undergraduate aid programs with respect to these goals during 2005-06. This review led to the creation of new scholarship programs aimed at increasing the diversity of the student population (see below), as well as a restructuring of the University’s two largest competitive, merit-based scholarships—the Presidential and Old Gold Scholarships—in an effort to help recruit more top scholars. These new aid allocations are being financed by the increase in tuition set aside funds (Old Gold program) and new funding from the UI Foundation’s comprehensive campaign (Iowa Pathways Program). Available to the fall 2006 entering class, the newly restructured Presidential and Old Gold Scholarships, coupled with new initiatives for recruiting top scholars, appear to be effective.

Scholarships to Increase Diversity

The University offers grants and scholarships directed toward underrepresented students. For example:

The new Advantage Iowa Awards are given to well-prepared first-year students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and whose enrollment will contribute to a diverse learning environment (students eligible for Advantage Iowa Awards include racial and ethnic minorities and TRiO eligible students). The award is offered in three tiers based on Admission Index ([2 x ACT composite score] + high school rank).

Several campus offices work to provide post-enrollment activities, both required and voluntary, that provide support and work to build a sense of community. The Center for Diversity & Enrichment (CDE) provides academic support in the form of mentoring, tutoring, mid-term progress reviews, supplemental instruction, and community-building activities for Advantage Iowa awardees. Recipients are required to enroll in either a first-year seminar or “The College Transition” course (described below) in their first semester at UI. For the award to be renewed each year the recipient must maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA, complete 12 credit hours each semester, meet with his or her academic advisor three times each semester and with a CDE staff member at least once each semester, and attend a minimum of three programs sponsored or cosponsored by the CDE each academic year.

Iowa Pathways is an innovative program designed to serve economically disadvantaged students from Iowa who graduate in the top 10% of their class (or present an Admission Index of 136 or higher). It includes a four-year commitment to cover direct educational costs not met by federal, state, and University scholarships; requires that the student maintain a 3.0 GPA; and includes financial aid and financial management counseling sessions each year.

The Iowa Promise Scholarship, announced by President Mason in December 2007, will pay the second, third, and fourth year tuition and fees of students who come to UI with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission’s new All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship (which covers one year of tuition and fees) if they maintain a 3.0 GPA. These are students who have done well in high school and who have demonstrated financial need.

The Iowa Minority Academic Grants for Economic Success (IMAGES) program offers need-based scholarships funded by tuition set-aside funds and awarded according to state guidelines.

The First Nations Resident Tuition Program allows members of tribes and nations...
The Halas-Sayers Scholarship recognizes academic achievement and community service among underrepresented students majoring in science who demonstrate financial need.

The Office of the Provost offers a scholarship to National Hispanic Scholars who enroll at UI.

The Iowa Pathways and new Advantage Iowa Awards, announced in December 2006 and offered for the first time to students entering the University in fall 2007, were developed as a result of the aid allocation review by Admissions and Student Financial Aid. Our fall 2007 enrollments indicate that these awards are making a difference. Table II-5 shows that we attracted 32.1% more first-year African-American students and 15.5% more first-year Latino(a) students in 2007 than in 2006.

Table II-5:
Fall 2007 Entering First-Year Students, Undergraduate Transfers, and Total Undergraduate Enrollment by Ethnicity (Compared to Fall 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Students</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino(a)</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>No Report</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>2,144</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>3,655</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>4,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(End of 3rd Week 2006)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>3,780</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>4,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% Change)</td>
<td>-25.0</td>
<td>+32.1</td>
<td>+15.5</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
<td>-3.3</td>
<td>+87.5</td>
<td>+69.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Transfers</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino(a)</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>No Report</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1,137</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(End of 3rd Week 2006)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% Change)</td>
<td>+83.3</td>
<td>-8.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+16.3</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>+47.1</td>
<td>+3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Undergraduate Enrollment</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Latino(a)</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>No Report</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>1,2137</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>13,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>5,692</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>7,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>747</td>
<td>17,829</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>20,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(End of 3rd Week 2006)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>17,832</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>20,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% Change)</td>
<td>-4.1%</td>
<td>+4.7%</td>
<td>+3.1%</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5.9%</td>
<td>+12.6%</td>
<td>+0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As another way to help gauge the Advantage Iowa program’s impact in its first year, the Office of Admissions applied the award criteria to the fall 2006 entering class for comparative purposes. As Table II-6 shows, the total number of students who were offered Advantage Iowa awards and enrolled was 225 in fall 2007, compared to 146 of the students who would have met the criteria for the award if it existed in fall 2006. The yield on offered awards was, in other words, 10% higher in 2007 than it would have been in 2006. The yield on the highest level of award (Admission Index of 130 or higher) was 44% in fall 2007, and would have been 28% for that group in 2006.

### Table II-6:
**Number of Fall 2007 Applicants Offered Advantage Iowa (AI) Awards Compared to the Number of Fall 2006 Applicants Meeting Current AI Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index Range</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met Advantage Iowa Criteria</td>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>Yield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110-119</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120-129</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130+</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>521</strong></td>
<td><strong>146</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Merit-Based Scholarships**

University of Iowa scholarship programs aimed at attracting academically gifted students include the Presidential Scholarship, the Old Gold Scholarship, the UI National Scholars Award, the Advantage Iowa Award, and the National Merit Scholarship. Each of these programs seeks to attract and support students who are well prepared to succeed at The University of Iowa. Even though these programs and other University merit scholarship programs do not have explicit need-based tests, they play an essential role in removing financial barriers to attending The University of Iowa. Overall, approximately 38% of all undergraduate merit scholarship dollars in FY 2007 were awarded to students with demonstrated financial need.

Individual colleges also offer scholarships (the College of Engineering offers the greatest number of them). These collegiate scholarships play a key role in recruiting stellar students—both by offsetting the cost of a college education and, sometimes more critically, by giving students recognition and a sense of how much the institution values them.

**Conclusions—Recruitment and Admissions**

Admission standards for most new undergraduates are set not by the University, but by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, which believes admission requirements for the three Regent institutions must be identical. The limits placed on the University by those standards have constrained progress toward our goal of raising the level of preparation of our incoming students—a goal that matters to us because better-prepared students are more likely to succeed, and more likely to take advantage of the opportunities available at a research-oriented university such as The University of Iowa.
Nonetheless, we have seen slight improvements over the last several years in average high school GPA and class rank, and mean ACT composite scores for entering first-year students are at their highest point (25.1) since 1974. These changes can be expected to lead to improved retention and graduation rates. The recent changes to the state admission standards—developed by a task force with representation from all three Regent universities—should lead to further improvement. More important, high school counselors have told us that they expect the adjusted Regent Admission Index (RAI) to help them motivate better preparation for college during high school.

UI sustains an active outreach and recruitment enterprise, and it works well. Our recruitment efforts are paying dividends in the form of increasing applications, larger entering classes, better-prepared students, and more diverse classes, as described in the conclusion to this section of the self-study.

Building the Foundation for a Successful University Experience

Overview

Not only do we want motivated students to come to The University of Iowa, we want them to succeed here. Because we understand the importance of setting expectations and integrating students into the University culture as early as possible, our goal is to promote engagement in educationally purposeful activities both in and out of the classroom at the very start of a student’s undergraduate career.

This part of our self-study discusses orientation, initial advising and academic planning, and early academic opportunities that help new undergraduate students learn about the University and develop skills that will help them succeed in their new environment.

Orientation: Laying the Foundation

Orientation Services

The mission of the Orientation Services division is to provide a “comprehensive introduction to the University” for incoming first-year, transfer, and international students.

All entering students must attend an orientation session. From winter 2005-06 through fall 2006, Orientation Services worked with 4,357 first-year students, 1,917 transfer students, and 6,348 parents and guests. Most first-year students and their guests attended one of nine two-day summer programs offered during June and July. A one-day program welcomes transfer students and the smaller number of first-year students who could not attend the two-day orientation session.

Focused primarily on academics, the first-year student orientation program is designed to educate students about academic expectations, the General Education Program, requirements for majors, course selection, and factors to consider in developing a schedule for their specific academic interest. Students use this information—with guidance from student and academic advisors—to create their first semester schedules and to register. In addition, the program introduces students to campus and to student organizations while highlighting issues related to social networking, residence hall living, and being independent. Parents, meanwhile, take part in a program designed to inform them about academics, campus support programs, and aspects of the transition ahead for their new college students.

The two-day orientation programs for first-year students and their families require
extensive coordination by Orientation Services and collaboration with other units. Some units offer information sessions for their affiliated students and their parents (e.g. the University of Iowa Honors Program, the Center for Diversity & Enrichment [CDE], Student Disability Services, the Office of Student Financial Aid, University Housing, the Office of Student Life, Information Technology Services); some conduct individual meetings (e.g. Athletic Student Services); and some host social events (e.g., “Night Games” in the Field House, sponsored by the Office of Residence Life and Recreational Services). In addition, Orientation Services and the Academic Advising Center (AAC) work closely together to ensure that students have the guidance they need to develop schedules appropriate for their programs, interests, and levels of academic preparation.

Orientation Services makes extensive use of undergraduate students as peer mentors (or Student Advisors) in their programming. First-year students attending Orientation are placed into small groups (according to their major interest) for the duration of the program. Orientation Student Advisors facilitate the orientation process for their small groups by helping students form new friendships, learn basic academic information (by partnering with professional academic advisors for the “Introduction to Academics” session), and build their course schedules. Student Advisors also present information and answer questions about being a college student and about the transition to college life. Because staff who participate in orientation programs—including student staff—serve as University representatives and role models for new students, Orientation Services tries hard to ensure that students and families feel represented in that group by recruiting a diverse team of people who come from large and small towns all over the country and participate in a wide range of campus organizations and activities. Team members undergo extensive diversity training and are well informed about the variety of University programs and activities that support diversity. Staff from the Center for Diversity & Enrichment participate in the orientation process.

Student Disability Services participates in an information session as part of orientation for incoming students. The session covers information regarding registration for services at The University of Iowa and general information about academic accommodations available to students. All students and their parents are welcome to attend.

Orientation Services invites both students and parents/guests to evaluate the orientation experience, and many do. In the last cycle, nearly 4,000 students and more than 1,300 parents/guests submitted evaluations. The evaluation questions focus on staff qualities, program elements, knowledge gained, and whether the program has helped students/parents feel more prepared to attend UI. The questionnaire uses a four-step Likert scale.

The student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Student Advisors were friendly and approachable (98%), able to answer questions (96%), and organized (95%). They felt confident (somewhat confident, confident, or extremely confident) that they could use ISIS (the web-based student information system—92%), build a schedule (88%), contact their academic advisors (86%), and seek out University resources (73%). The most common concerns were that some felt the program spent too much time on schedule building, others felt there was too much “down time,” and some information was deemed repetitive.

More than 90% of parents and guests also found the staff friendly, approachable, and able to answer questions. They found all sessions valuable. The most common themes emerging from written comments included “too much down time after check-in,” a desire for students to see all of the parent program, more information on financial aid,
and more structure during the University Social. Parents/guests also reported feeling better informed, less overwhelmed, and more comfortable about sending their children to college after the orientation session.

**International Student Orientation**

The Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) works closely with the Office of Admissions, the Iowa Intensive English Program, Orientation Services, Student Health Service, and others to offer a welcoming orientation program for incoming international students. The goals of the program include:

- To provide international students with opportunities to get to know each other and begin forming support systems
- To ensure that the University has obtained and recorded the legally required information related to their visa status
- To teach new students about their rights and responsibilities related to their F or J visa status as well as those of their accompanying dependents
- To provide them with information on adjusting to a new culture and academic system
- To assist Student Health Service in making sure that the students are given the required immunizations
- To advise them about resources available through OISS as well as elsewhere on campus

In addition, OISS offers a series of programs and workshops for first year international students called “Life in Iowa.” This ongoing orientation program provides students with continued support, timely information, and opportunities for reflection as they progress through the first year on campus and away from home. Program topics include local idioms and slang, relationships “American-style,” and preparing for Iowa’s four seasons.

Programs for fall 2007 international student orientation and for the 2007-08 “Life in Iowa” series will be available to the HLC consultant-evaluators in the University’s resource room.

**Integrating Students into University Life: Building on the Foundation**

**Academic Options for First-Year Students**

The University has developed a number of formal academic options designed to integrate first-year students into academic life and to help them overcome some of the challenges of the transition from high school to college. Several of these—the college success initiatives courses, which includes the “College Success Seminar,” “The College Transition,” “Transfer Transition,” and “Online@Iowa”—are housed within the University College (the administrative umbrella for various credit-bearing programs, described in the institutional section of this self-study). The Academic Advising Center also administers Courses in Common. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences administers the University-wide first-year seminar program, to which the University of Iowa Honors Program has added a set of courses for honors students.

The opportunity to be part of a learning community also represents a valuable academic option for first-year students, as described below.
“The College Transition”

A two credit hour course designed to help students make a smooth and successful transition to the college environment, “The College Transition” (CT) is taught in small sections of 19 students with an emphasis on class discussion and small group activities. Assignments stress self-reflection and self-improvement, and build skills that students need in order to be successful at The University of Iowa. Topics include goal setting, study skills, time management, diversity, personal finances, and wellness, all addressed within the theme of developing personal responsibility—one of the key developmental challenges for new college students. Course sections are taught by University staff members from offices across campus. Enrollment in the course grew from 476 students in fall 2002 to 1,165 (27% of entering students) students in fall 2006. In end-of-semester evaluations, students rate the course very highly. More than 95% of respondents report that the course helps them feel more comfortable as new students at the University.

The course’s primary goal is to improve student persistence from the first to the second year. A recent retention study by the UI Center for Research on Undergraduate Education found, controlling for a host of background variables, that some students who enrolled in “The College Transition” were slightly more likely to return for their second year than those who did not. Among students with higher than average high school GPAs who completed CT, the probability of returning for the following fall was 4.7% greater than for students who did not complete the course. This holds true regardless of a student’s gender, race, ACT score, or spring 2006 cumulative GPA. Among students with lower than average high school GPAs, there was no statistically significant relationship between completing CT and returning for the following fall.

Another positive outcome of the course is that it has heightened instructors’ awareness of the first-year student experience, which in some cases is leading to enhanced services for students within departments.

“The College Transition” is administered by the Academic Advising Center; course development and instructor training are done collaboratively by AAC and Orientation Services. Eager to build on the success of the program, CT administrative staff have been working to define learning outcomes for the course, and have restructured course assignments to better assess achievement of those desired outcomes. Assessment also includes a portfolio learning project.

An issue of emerging concern is maintaining the instructor pool for “The College Transition.” A portion of the cohort of staff members who signed on to teach the course over its first several years are now moving on to other responsibilities, and fewer available instructors lead to diminished capacity. In fall 2007, CT enrollments dropped to 890 students. The University will consider involving faculty members in teaching the course among the options for addressing this problem.

“Transfer Transition”

Because the vast majority of transfer students live off campus, they can feel isolated and disconnected from campus life. The two credit hour “Transfer Transition” course, built on the success of the “College Transition” course and closely modeled on it, is designed to introduce transfer students to the University and help them make a smooth and successful transition to a new academic and social culture. Assignments and activities parallel the “College Transition” course, with a heavier emphasis on exploring majors and careers.
To date, enrollment in the “Transfer Transition” course has been very small, averaging about 60 students per semester since fall 2003. Students asked to evaluate the course in 2005 rated it highly. More than 98% said the course helped them feel more comfortable as new students at the University, and 95% said they felt more connected to the University as a result of the course.

“College Success Seminar”

The one credit hour “College Success Seminar” (CSS) helps first-year students who have been placed on academic probation to develop the skills, habits, and attitudes that are essential for college success. Topics include self-assessment, goal setting, problem solving, motivation, time management, study skills, test taking, and campus resources. Taught by academic advisors in small sections with an emphasis on discussion and small group activities, the course integrates probationary students into the University in part through assignments requiring interaction with faculty and staff.

Academic Advising Center tracking of CSS participants suggests that students who enroll in the course are more likely to return to the University for the second year than their peers who were on academic probation at the end of the first semester but did not enroll in the CSS (see Figure II-2). This study does not control for entering academic profile.

Of 101 respondents to a spring 2007 questionnaire, 90% said they would recommend CSS to a friend on academic probation. More than 90% said that as a result of the course they are better at setting achievable goals for themselves, are more resourceful in solving problems, and are more likely to seek help if they experience a problem at the University.

“Online@Iowa”

In fall 2007, nearly 2,700 students signed up for the one credit hour “Online@Iowa” course, which helps new undergraduates learn to navigate the University’s digital landscape. The online course includes lessons about library databases, web sites, course management systems, ISIS (the web-based student information system), e-mail, and the HawkID, and emphasizes responsible use of digital tools with topics such as e-mail etiquette, security, and plagiarism.
Of students who completed course evaluations in 2005 and 2006, 97% agreed that the course content was useful.

A spring 2007 study by the UI Center for Research on Undergraduate Education found that, controlling for gender, race, age, and ACT score, students who completed “Online@Iowa” were 2% more likely to return to UI the following fall than students who did not complete the course.

**Courses in Common**

Courses in Common (CIC) allows cohorts of 20 first-year students to take two or three required courses together. In fall 2007, more than 1,200 students enrolled in one of the 58 different CIC options. CIC helps participating students integrate more quickly into the University by quickly establishing social and academic connections with one another.

More than 92% of respondents to a fall 2005 online survey of CIC participants indicated they would recommend CIC to a friend. More than 80% of respondents reported that their CIC involvement was a good way to meet people, made it easier to participate in class discussions, and was one of the most positive experiences of their first semester at the University. Respondents to a survey of CIC instructors reported that their CIC students demonstrated better class participation and interaction with peers compared to first-year students in general.

The RISE study showed that, controlling for background characteristics, participation in CIC had a statistically significant positive effect for first-year students on three of the seven outcome measures: growth in general/liberal arts education, personal/interpersonal growth, and overall/composite growth.

**First-Year Seminars**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences offers first-year seminars designed to introduce new undergraduates to the intellectual life of the University and help them make the transition to college-level learning. Each seminar (offered for one credit hour) gives 15-16 students the chance to work closely with a faculty member on a topic related to his or her current research. Many departments offer the seminars, giving students a wide range of choices. Some of the seminars use upper-class students as peer mentors.

The College has not conducted an evaluation of the program, but has noted growing interest from both students and faculty. In 2006-07, 43 seminars enrolled 539 students. The College intends to increase the number of seminars to 50 per year, serving 750 students.

The RISE study showed that, controlling for background characteristics, participation in first-year seminars had a statistically significant positive effect for first-year students on four of the seven outcome measures: growth in general/liberal arts education, personal/interpersonal growth, growth in career/professional preparation, and overall/composite growth.

**Honors Seminars**

Beginning in spring 2006, the University of Iowa Honors Program has added to the first-year seminar program a series of sections reserved for honors students. The program has grown from three honors seminars in spring 2006 to nine in fall 2007, with topics such as “crafting electronic identities,” “doing good and doing well,” “Supreme Court cases that changed everything,” and “apes, earth, and the ethics of environmental citizenship.”
Residential Learning Communities

Residential learning communities—clusters of students with the same major or similar interests who live in a reserved section of a residence hall—are widely recognized as a critical means of integrating first-year students into university life. Research has demonstrated that students who participate in learning communities show an “increase in academic achievement, retention, motivation, intellectual development, learning, and involvement and community” (Kellogg, 1999).

The University currently has 12 learning communities, each focused on a theme or field of study:

- Art and design
- Citizenship, leadership, and service
- Explorations in computing, mathematics, and science
- Health sciences
- Honors
- International crossroads
- Iowa writers
- Leadership community in business and entrepreneurship
- Men in engineering
- Multicultural studies and leadership
- Performing arts
- Women in science and engineering

A 2006 study by the UI Center for Research on Undergraduate Education found that participation in a first-year living/learning program (17.5% of the sample, which included 1,357 students) increased the odds of persistence 2.84 times (284%).

Academic Advising for Entering Students

The Academic Advising Center and Entering Students

The Academic Advising Center (AAC), initially created in 1979 to advise open major or undecided students and pre-medical students, now advises almost all CLAS first-year students including: declared majors, open majors, pre-professional students (pre-med, pre-law, etc.), and special status non-degree seeking students. The Departments of Physics and Astronomy, Speech and Hearing Science, and Biochemistry are the only departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that advise their own first-year students. AAC also advises many entering transfer students. The AAC developed and implemented a number of the retention programs considered in this section of this self-study, including “The College Transition,” “Transfer Transition,” IowaLink, and Courses in Common.

Most students eventually are transferred to colleges and departments for advising according to timetables agreed upon by the center and academic departments, although some students remain with advisors in the AAC until graduation.

The AAC, in other words, plays a key role in helping students transition to college, but also advises a number of students all the way through their undergraduate careers. See the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study for detailed description and evaluation of the Academic Advising Center and its services for both entering and continuing students.
First-Year Advising in the Colleges and Transfer Student Advising

Although advisors in the Academic Advising Center advise almost all first-year College of Liberal Arts and Sciences students, first-year students in the other colleges are advised in those colleges.

The largest population of new first-year students outside of CLAS is in Engineering. From orientation until declaration of a major, new engineering students receive advising from professional staff in the College’s Student Development Center (SDC). Upon declaring a major, the student is assigned to a faculty advisor in that major. First-year engineering students must enroll in a one credit hour seminar taught by the associate dean for academic programs, with the assistance of SDC staff and advanced engineering students. The seminar covers knowledge of the field, success strategies, and personal goals.

The Tippie College of Business also admits a small number of first-year students, as described above. All first-year admits receive advising from professional staff in the College’s Undergraduate Program Office. In addition, students attend a weekly seminar throughout their first year to assist with their transition to college and selection of a major. Direct admit students are encouraged to form a relationship with a faculty mentor.

The executive associate dean in the College of Nursing advises all new undergraduates admitted directly to that college.

See the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study for additional information about academic advising at the University.

AlcoholEdu

As considered at greater length in the Environments and Resources for Learning section of this self-study, prevalence of binge drinking is a serious problem among UI students, and one of the University’s most significant challenges.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) report A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges (2002) indicates that many students increase their alcohol consumption during the critical first six weeks of college, which contributes to difficulties with the college transition.

Beginning in fall 2006, the University joined several other colleges and universities in administering to all first-year students an online, science-based alcohol abuse education and prevention program called AlcoholEdu. The program, based on recommendations outlined in the NIAAA A Call to Action report, focuses on alcohol’s impact on the mind and body and gives students information and support they need to make smart decisions regarding alcohol use. In requiring first-year students to complete the course, the University hopes eventually to instill in all students a common understanding about alcohol as it relates to expectations for being a member of the UI community.

A survey of fall 2006 AlcoholEdu participants found that after completing the course, 77% knew more (in contrast to when they started) about blood alcohol concentration; 46% knew more about the ways in which alcohol affects someone’s ability to give consent for sex; and 76% knew more than a “moderate amount” about the effects of alcohol, as compared to only 39% before the course. Most also found the course a positive experience: 77% said it helped them feel more prepared to handle situations involving alcohol that might come up during college. This information is echoed
student self-reports on high-risk behaviors as well as departmental statistics. The cohort that completed AlcoholEdu reported blackouts or hangovers at significantly lower rates than previous “untreated” cohorts. In addition, fewer first-year students were transported to the Emergency Treatment Center due to alcohol use than in previous fall semesters.

Like prior cohorts, this first AlcoholEdu cohort did experience an increase in the rate of drinking from the summer of the senior year to the fall of the freshman year at UI. When compared to prior cohorts, however, they experienced fewer negative consequences and a decrease in some risky behaviors.

Conclusions—Building the Foundation

We cannot overstate the importance of programs that introduce new students to the University and integrate them into what the 2000 Task Force on Persistence to Graduation described as UI’s “scholarly culture.” Current research about college impact leaves no doubt that starting off “on the right foot” can make a tremendous difference to a student’s ultimate success in college.

Orientation Services evaluations indicate that both students and parents/guests benefit from the current orientation program, and find it a positive and informative introduction to the University. Academic advising for first-year students (and beyond) is addressed at greater length in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study, as are topics related to alcohol education. Requiring first-year students to enroll in the online AlcoholEdu course seems to be showing signs of success as a step in dealing with the critical problem of binge drinking.

UI’s college success courses and first-year seminars are the centerpiece of the University’s post-Task Force on Persistence to Graduation efforts to enhance transition programs for first-year students, and they have been very successful. The University will continue and build on these programs. Also, we will build on the success of our highly effective learning communities. We expect valuable guidance toward the latter goal from the work of the Task Force on Learning Communities (described in the conclusion to this self-study).

Recruitment, Admission, and Supporting the Transition of Selected Student Populations

Recruiting and Supporting the Transition of Underrepresented Students

The Iowa Promise recognizes that diversity is an integral component of the University’s goals for educational excellence. The plan identifies a diverse learning environment as a major strategic goal, and further identifies building a critical mass of students, faculty, and staff from communities underrepresented in higher education as one important strategy for advancing that goal. As noted in the institutional section of this self-study, a particular challenge for The University of Iowa is that Iowa has much less diversity in its population than many other states.

Like all recruitment efforts, the recruitment of underrepresented students involves a collaborative effort. Many offices and academic units on campus contribute to the effort to recruit and support the transition of underrepresented students—including the colleges, the Academic Advising Center, the Pomerantz Career Center, the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, the University of Iowa Honors Program, and the Office of Student Financial Aid. In addition, faculty from a wide range of disciplines contribute personally to the effort by participating in events intended to keep pre-college minority
students on track for higher education, and to support them once they transition to college. In 2007 the University initiated the Iowa FIRST (“faculty investing in recruiting student talent”) project, to provide structure, support, and recognition for faculty involved in student recruitment. The effort is co-sponsored by the vice provost and the special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity and associate provost for diversity.

The Center for Diversity & Enrichment and Pipeline Development

The demographic challenge of Iowa’s relatively un-diverse population is compounded by the fact that in Iowa, as in other states, there is a gap between the numbers of college-prepared and college-going minority students and their majority counterparts. Pipeline development is therefore an important programming initiative for the University.

As part of a significant reorganization (described in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study), in July 2006 two existing student diversity-focused units, Opportunity at Iowa and Support Service Programs, merged into the new Center for Diversity & Enrichment (CDE). CDE provides leadership and coordination for outreach and service to historically underserved students, including students of color, first-generation students whose parents have not received a baccalaureate degree, and students from low-income families. The center sponsors individual programs and initiatives organized around three major purposes: 1) outreach and “pipeline development” of pre-college students, 2) enhancing the social and educational environment for students new to the University, and 3) academic support. The CDE and its role in supporting students who have enrolled at UI are described in detail in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study.

The CDE’s pre-college “pipeline development” programs are not explicitly focused on recruiting minority students to Iowa, but are intended to increase the number of minority students who graduate from high school with the skills they need to succeed in college. The UI Office of Admissions and the CDE do remain in contact with students who participate in “pipeline development” programs. CDE also reaches out to high school counselors and to teachers to identify prospective students.

Pre-college programs sponsored by the CDE range from programs for elementary students, such as the Pen Pal program, to programs for high school students, such as Upward Bound.

In the Pen Pal program, current University students correspond with fourth and fifth grade students, acting as positive role models and increasing the younger students’ motivation for academic success.

The federally supported TRiO program Upward Bound serves eight southeastern Iowa high schools. During the academic year, students enrolled in the Upward Bound program meet once a week at their local high schools to develop their academic skills, and visit UI and other colleges during scheduled “campus days” to learn about college and university life. They also participate in a summer residential program at the University, living in a residence hall and taking classes in math, science, and language as well as participating in sports and creative arts programs. Outcomes assessment for the 2005-06 academic year shows that Upward Bound students made considerable progress, and most (93%) achieved the target grade point average of at least 2.5 (see Appendix II-E). Eighty-six percent of participants continued in the program, and all graduating seniors enrolled in an institution of postsecondary education the fall after
graduating. The Upward Bound program supports economically disadvantaged and first-generation college students as well as minority students.

The CDE encourages high school students to attend special campus visits, and invites them to participate in a variety of minority-focused activities as well as the wide variety of opportunities the University offers to all prospective students. Examples of CDE-sponsored programs that help students become familiar with the University experience include:

- **Iowa First Nations Summer Program**—students pursue training in the life sciences, focusing on the environment, health sciences, and the relationship between science and Native American cultures

- **Life Science Summer Program**—students pursue laboratory training in biology

In addition, the CDE provides support to other summer programs to ensure participation by diverse students:

- **Secondary Student Training Program**—students work on an individual project with a faculty mentor

- **National Summer Institute in Forensics**

- **Iowa Summer Music Camp**

- **High School Journalism Workshops**

- **Iowa Young Writers Studio**

**The Iowa Talent Project**

The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development (the Belin-Blank Center, described in greater detail below) sponsors several programs that focus on academically gifted minority students, including the Iowa Talent Project (ITP). A partnership between the Belin-Blank Center and the Des Moines School District, the program identifies talented minority and economically disadvantaged students from Des Moines, encourages them to make the most of their abilities, and familiarizes them with the University environment. Students take classes designed to improve their critical communication skills during a three-week summer residential program on campus, with costs covered by the University. A student who graduates from high school having successfully completed the ITP residential program, earned a grade of B or above in at least eight academic courses at the Des Moines Central Academy (a magnet school for top-performing students), and achieved a score of three or higher on at least three Advanced Placement exams will be awarded an ITP scholarship to attend UI. The student participates in the University of Iowa Honors Program, lives in the Honors House, and meets regularly with Belin-Blank staff. The student may also choose to participate in the Iowa Edge orientation program.

Six ITP students enrolled at UI in 2006-07. ITP’s success rate is impressive; 78% of ITP students graduate within six years.

**The Iowa Edge**

As part of its Iowa Diversity in Business Initiative, The Henry B. Tippie College of Business implemented The Iowa Edge in fall 2006. The program brings approximately
50 minority and first-generation students new to the University to campus for five days, just before the opening of fall classes, for an extended orientation to campus. Although the Tippie College of Business is the sponsor of this program, it is open to students who have not identified business as a major. Students who participate move into their dormitories early, at no charge. Lodging, meals, and program expenses for all participants are paid by grants and donations.

The program gives students a chance to learn about the University—the campus and its social and academic components—and to build community with one another. Many University departments have collaborated to make this what we believe is and will be a highly successful program; although it is too early in the program to have quantitative data to illustrate its effectiveness as a retention and success tool, participants report feeling connected to the University community and better informed about campus support mechanisms.

Iowa Biosciences Advantage

The Iowa Biosciences Advantage (IBA) program identifies and supports talented, underrepresented minority students interested in pursuing careers in research. The five to 10 students selected yearly enjoy significant academic and transition support, including participation in The Iowa Edge. They also receive long-range academic planning and peer mentoring by older IBA students. A key component of the program is connecting each IBA student with a faculty member and a research project, which gives students a unique learning experience and the support and encouragement of a faculty mentor.

Along with the Iowa Talent Project described earlier, this program provides an excellent model for reaching out to minority students and encouraging their enrollment at UI, where they have the opportunity to receive ongoing support toward their success. It is important to note, however, that these programs serve a very limited number of students.

Role of the Office of Admissions in Recruiting and Admitting Underrepresented Students

The Office of Admissions has the ultimate responsibility for our efforts to recruit students from underrepresented communities to The University of Iowa. An assistant director has direct responsibility for activities and strategies designed to increase the population of minority students on campus. The Office of Admissions develops targeted publications, plans strategic mailings, and makes visits to target schools and community organizations.

College of Education Diversity Committee

Every December, the College of Education Diversity Committee makes a visit to an area high school to meet with underrepresented sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The committee then arranges with the local school counselor for the students to come to campus for a tour, class visits, and meetings with Admissions staff.

In 2006-07 the committee visited the high school in West Liberty (a small community in southeast Iowa with a large Latino/a population). From that senior class, a total of 17 students chose to come to UI—the largest group ever from one class. The group includes 10 Advantage Iowa (AI) scholarship recipients.

To help ensure the success of the West Liberty AI students, the College worked with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity to create a
mentoring program for them, with formal and informal meetings throughout the fall 2007 semester. The program included meetings with and campus visits by teachers and administrators from the high school. The teachers, principal, and counselor have all indicated that these interactions have enhanced their knowledge of issues such as course requirements, the importance of taking college entrance exams sooner rather than later, and financial issues, and this has influenced how they advise students.

**Recruiting and Supporting the Transition of Top Scholars**

“Strengthening the honors program and other opportunities for high-achieving students” is another key strategy in *The Iowa Promise*. Highly motivated and well-prepared students set an example for their peers and enrich the intellectual life of the community.

Several offices play key roles in recruiting and enrolling academically gifted students, including the Office of Admissions, the University of Iowa Honors Program, the Office of Student Financial Aid (by administering merit-based scholarship funds), and the College of Engineering. Other offices play supporting roles, such as the Belin-Blank Center, which offers many activities for talented K-12 students; and the College of Nursing and Tippie College of Business, with their early/direct admissions programs. Some College of Liberal Arts and Sciences departments also play a role in recruiting academically gifted students by providing significant scholarships for top incoming undergraduate scholars (e.g., the Departments of Chemistry and Physics and Astronomy).

**Director of Scholar Recruitment**

The Office of Admissions employs a director of scholar recruitment who works closely with the Honors Program and coordinates many of the activities on campus for prospective “top scholar” students and is the primary personal contact for most. She meets with them individually during campus visits and communicates with them and their families throughout the recruiting year. Her goals include involving more alumni in recruiting top scholars and personalizing the recruitment experience for these stellar students. The director of scholar recruitment meets regularly with staff in the University of Iowa Honors Program to coordinate their joint efforts.

The Office of Admissions also develops targeted publications, plans strategic mailings, and makes visits to target schools and community organizations.

**The University of Iowa Honors Program**

The University of Iowa Honors Program has two primary goals: enrolling academically talented and well-prepared students at The University of Iowa, and creating an exceptional academic experience for those students.

Incoming students with an Admission Index of 148 or above are eligible to join the University of Iowa Honors Program. In fall 2007, 17% of the incoming first-year students—735 in all—will join the program.

Prospective students learn about the Honors Program through a variety of means, including the Admissions or Honors web sites, Admissions mailings, campus visits, admission counselors, or other students. Some students first learn about the Honors Program after admission, when they receive welcome letters from the director.
Honors Program staff respond to interest from prospective students by sending program summaries and hosting about 240 individualized visits per year. In an effort to engage in more active recruiting, the Honors Program has recently worked with Admissions to incorporate a 90-minute Honors presentation in the middle of each Hawkeye Visit Day. Also in partnership with Admissions, Honors this year inaugurated an overnight visit called Iowa Live! for prospective Old Gold Scholars. Honors and Admissions will kick off Presidential Days, a series of overnight events to bring candidates for Iowa’s top merit scholarship to campus, in 2008-09.

The University of Iowa Honors Program does not dictate a curriculum, but provides a collection of optional programs and experiences under the guidance of dedicated staff members and with the benefits of excellent facilities. Students can take Honors course sections, live in the Honors House, or participate in scholarship workshops, for example. The program connects students to one another from orientation onward, through peer mentoring, social events, a listserv, and so on. Every department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences designates an honors advisor. The Tippie College of Business and the Colleges of Engineering, Education, and Nursing each designate an honors advisor for the college.

The University of Iowa Honors Program is described in greater detail in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study.

The Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development

The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development (the Belin-Blank Center) interacts extensively with academically talented K-12 students. The center provides summer programs and year-round weekend activities for gifted students, as well as many resources for their teachers. Students who participate in Belin-Blank Center programs become familiar with the University, and many later choose to enroll here: from 1997 through 2007, between 31 and 76 Belin-Blank program participants enrolled at UI each fall, for an average of about 61 a year. Information about Belin-Blank participants is entered into the Admissions database so staff can maintain communication in these students’ pre-college years.

The Belin-Blank Center engages in a great deal of “pool development,” particularly through its Talent Search programs designed to identify students who can benefit from greater academic challenge. The center maintains a 50,000-name database of fourth to 11th grade students from Iowa, contiguous states, and Florida, and also purchases names from comparable programs at such universities as Johns Hopkins, Duke, and Northwestern.

The Blank Summer Institute (BSI) is a highly competitive summer program for seventh and eighth grade Iowa students nominated by their schools. The Belin-Blank Center chooses 80 to 130 participants from a pool of about 400. Participants are awarded a $1,000 scholarship if they decide to attend The University of Iowa after graduating from high school, and about a third of them do enroll.

The National Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering (NAASE), in existence since 1999, offers very well prepared students (identified primarily through the Blank Summer Institute nomination process) the opportunity to begin their college studies early, enrolling at The University of Iowa after their junior year in high school. The student’s college credit transfers back to the high school, and the student graduates with his or her high school class, having already completed a year of college.
Participants in the highly competitive program live in the Honors House, have one-to-one meetings with Belin-Blank staff members, receive priority registration, attend a year-long first-year seminar, attend cultural events together, and receive guidance from older students, in addition to other benefits. Each also receives a $1,000 scholarship for the first year at the University, and becomes eligible for other University scholarships.

In 2006-07, nine new students enrolled at UI as participants in NAASE.

**Recruiting and Supporting the Transition of Student Athletes and Other “Recruited Students”**

Recruited students include student athletes, musicians, minority students, and first generation/low income students who are members of TRiO programs. These students have exceptional talents that are not necessarily reflected in their academic backgrounds, and they contribute to the diversity of the campus in many ways.

The admission of students who are recruited as part of the University’s Educational Opportunity Program or because of their exceptional achievement or skills related to University programs, performing groups, or other areas of institutional priority is addressed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Policy on the Admission of Recruited Students (1994). Most recruited students meet the standards for regular admission to the University. The small numbers of recruited students (typically 36-42) who do not meet UI admission standards are admitted to the IowaLink program.

**IowaLink**

IowaLink is a year-long academic support program that helps students develop the skills necessary to succeed in college. Admission to the program is based on a holistic review by an admission committee. Applicants must have an overall record that contains reasonable evidence that they can earn a degree in five to six years if they effectively use available academic support and other services. All students admitted to IowaLink must meet College of Liberal Arts and Sciences standards for good standing and/or continuation of enrollment at the end of their first year.

Students admitted through the program work with an “academic support team” made up of student services and instructional staff. They enroll in a two-semester first-year seminar, participate in study groups, must complete specified general education courses in the first year, and receive supplemental instruction, as recommended by the Task Force on Persistence to Graduation.

IowaLink students persist at a much higher rate than their academic profiles (see Table II-7) would predict—in fact, they persist at about the same level as the regularly admitted student cohort (see Figure II-3).
Recruiting and Supporting the Transition of Transfer Students

The four-year graduation rate for transfer students who come to Iowa holding an associate of arts degree is significantly higher than for those who come without an associate’s degree. The four-year graduation rate for the 2002 cohort of AA-degree holders was 67.0%; for those with no associate’s degree, it was 56.8%.

In 2006 UI piloted a new program, the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan, designed...
to streamline the transition for community college students who choose to pursue a UI four-year degree. The pilot program involved three community colleges. In fall 2007 the University completed the process of extending the program to the rest of Iowa’s community colleges.

Working in close collaboration with participating colleges, 2 Plus 2 Plan coordinators create “templates” for specified majors, outlining the courses students need to take to fulfill UI requirements and prepare themselves for additional study in their fields. Students who sign up for the program, if they meet specified graduation checkpoints, are guaranteed early registration at the University and guaranteed graduation within four years. In addition, participating students get guidance from UI admission counselors and academic advisors, a UI e-mail account, library privileges, access to the Pomerantz Career Center, and the opportunity to purchase discounted tickets to University cultural and athletic events. In short, the program helps students set goals, and then provides support to help them reach those goals.

**Conclusions – Recruitment, Admission, and Supporting the Transition of Selected Student Populations**

Recent developments in the effort to recruit students from selected populations are encouraging, particularly the Advantage Iowa Awards, the bolstering of the University of Iowa Honors Program, and the creation of the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan. All these initiatives are designed to support our movement toward “access to success.”

In fall 2006 the first-year honors class set a new record (15% of the class), and more minority students attended the University than ever. In fall 2007 we surpassed both records, with honors students comprising 17% of the entering class, and the total number of minority students (including graduate and professional students) increasing from 2,741 to 2,841 (an increase of 3.6%). The number of minority students among new undergraduates (first-year and transfer students) in fall 2007 grew by 8.2% over fall 2006. By ethnicity, the largest percentage increase was in African-American students—up 19.8% among first-year students and 4.7% among all undergraduates.

**Summary and Conclusions—Entry and Transition**

**Signs of Success**

The University has met with some success in moving toward the recruitment goals outlined in *The Iowa Promise*—for example, toward recruiting more students who are truly well prepared to succeed, and who can take advantage of a research-oriented university such as The University of Iowa. The number of first-year applications has increased by 35% in the last 10 years (from fall 1997 to fall 2007); during that same period, the number of entering students who have met all of the University’s high school course requirements has increased from 91.0% to 96.5%. We have ceased the practice of admitting some students with “core deficiencies” in math and science, have begun reviewing (and sometimes withdrawing) offers of admission for students who perform poorly during their final year of high school, and raised the Admission Index used for students who do not meet the class rank criterion (from 90 to 95). The last two fall semesters have seen record numbers of incoming first-year students, and record numbers of honors students among them. Overall high school GPA and class rank have edged up slightly, and mean ACT composite scores for entering first-year students are at their highest point in more than 30 years—even though state-mandated admission standards limit rapid progress on these measures. The recent change in
admission standards bodes well for further improvement.

Diversity among undergraduates continues to grow, albeit more slowly than we would like. In fall 2006 the University enrolled the largest total number of minority students ever. Fall 2007 set a new record for the number of minority undergraduates, and minority undergraduate enrollment as a percentage of total undergraduate enrollment increased to 8.9%. Among first-year students, 9.8% identified as members of minority groups in fall 2007, compared to 9.0% in fall 2006.

Some recent positive developments with potential for considerable impact in the near future are:

- Creation of the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, which will allow us to take advantage of synergies among various programs that work to recruit, enroll, and support underserved students
- Creation of the Student Success Team and appointment of the director of student success initiatives
- Strengthening of the University of Iowa Honors Program, including its move into the Blank Honors Center—which made UI the first university in the nation to offer programs, services, and support for academically talented students from kindergarten through college under one roof
- Revamping of our scholarship programs, including the creation of the Advantage Iowa and Iowa Pathways awards and the restructuring of the Old Gold and Presidential Scholarships
- Creation of the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan, a partnership with Iowa’s community colleges, which will ease the transition to UI for community college students who choose to pursue a four-year degree

We also expect the work of the Task Force on Learning Communities to help the University build on a highly successful program that bridges the gap between academic study and extracurricular life.

**Moving Forward**

Evidence from the last few years suggests that our recruitment efforts are having a positive effect, and we hope these successes will lead to some improvement in retention, as well. At the same time, however, our data show that retention has not improved as quickly as we would like in response to our efforts. We need to dedicate increased resources to student success initiatives that can make a real difference in helping students work successfully all the way through to graduation.

A theme for improvement that emerged during our study of entry and transition programs is the need to communicate to our students a consistent message about what it means to be a successful member of the University of Iowa community, and to do so early. Current research (Kuh et al., 2005a) and our own RISE study strongly reinforce our sense that we need to do a better job of creating appropriate expectations among new undergraduates. We must find new ways to teach what it means to become an Iowa student. What kinds of learning do we want them to seek? What kinds of relationships do we want them to build? What kinds of community do we want them to create?

One special concern related to this need is the problem of alcohol. We are struck by the
suggestion made by seniors interviewed for the RISE study who, according to the report, “asserted that Iowa’s ‘reputation as a party school’ was associated with its perceived lack of academic challenge; that is, if UI provided more academic challenges, students would not be able to spend so much time partying as they do.”

This compelling observation lends a sense of urgency to the goal of engaging students in the life of the University. It also spotlights the RISE study finding that about half the work faculty say they expect from students leads to a B average. That is, when students were asked to estimate how much time they spent preparing for class in a typical week, the modal response for first-year students and seniors was six to 10 hours per week; the mean GPA for seniors was 3.14 and for first-year students 3.02.
To prepare students for life and work, we must continually examine and shape the experiences we want and expect for all our undergraduates.

Undergraduate Education
II. Common Academic Experiences

Introduction

Derek Bok has written that “It is . . . difficult to find any period during the past century and a half when educators were united around a common unifying vision of liberal education” (2006, p. 22). Nevertheless, faculty and academic leaders at colleges and universities throughout the country continue to engage in this pivotal conversation—how to define the skills and qualities we hope to instill in all of our students, and how best to do so. Especially in times of rapid change, we need to regularly reexamine the structure of core, common academic experiences we require of our students, to ensure that that structure is meeting our students’ needs and effectively advancing our view of the goals of liberal education.

Many higher education institutions within the United States have recently assessed and restructured their general education programs, which represent the heart of a liberal education and account for almost a third of the credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree. Perhaps most famously, Harvard University—after a complex self-study—developed a general education program that incorporates eight subject areas that emphasize the importance of internationalization and the communication of science. Other universities have made use of themes that lend coherence and distinction to their programs without creating what they see as an unduly homogenous core—for example, by using diverse disciplines to solve social problems.

The Iowa Promise includes a strategy that calls for a reexamination of our General Education Program (GEP):

Ensure that all students graduate with strong core skills, a broad liberal arts education, and concentrated study in one or more majors by:

1c: Mission pervades organization
1e: Institutional integrity
2d: Mission-aligned planning
3d: Support for learning and teaching
4b: Knowledge, skills, and inquiry
4c: Useful curricula
Promoting their facility for critical thinking, writing and other communication skills, creative endeavor, and the use of information technology;

Providing them with opportunities to develop leadership and teamwork skills and an understanding of business and other organizations;

Reexamining our general education requirements to ensure that course requirements foster an appreciation of the arts and humanities; an understanding of science, technology, and mathematics; an ability to work within and across disciplinary boundaries; and the skills needed to participate in an increasingly global environment;

Augmenting support for the research collections, libraries, museums, and information technologies, broadly defined, that are critical to teaching and learning;

Continuing efforts to internationalize the educational experience.

As plans for the special emphasis self-study developed, we chose to incorporate the GEP review called for in the strategic plan into this larger assessment of the UI undergraduate experience.

**Scope**

The self-study steering committee asked the subcommittee on the Common Academic Experiences to make a thorough assessment of the General Education Program (GEP) in the undergraduate colleges (the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Tippie College of Business, and the Colleges of Education, Engineering, and Nursing).

The subcommittee members were instructed that if their assessment should suggest a need to revise the GEP, their recommendations should address the principles that might guide that revision, as well as an appropriate process for carrying it out. The design of a new GEP did not fall within the scope of the subcommittee’s charge.

**Research Process**

The Common Academic Experiences subcommittee members, in addition to researching the evolution and current status of the UI GEP, relied on data gathered through the GEP student survey, the GEP faculty focus groups, and the GEP employer interviews described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study.

This subcommittee also made use of the RISE report.
Summary of Findings

The University has much to be proud of in its General Education Program (GEP), including cooperation among the colleges, a good system of oversight, and a flexible curriculum. Evidence shows that the distributive system in place is working well.

Some students and faculty find the organization of this ambitious GEP confusing, however, and it lacks a sense of coherence. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), working with the other undergraduate colleges, is reviewing the structure and intended outcomes of the GEP and revising the criteria for approval of GEP courses, with an eye to creating a more focused and better integrated program.

The GEP might also be achieving some of its desired learning outcomes better than others. CLAS should examine those that are under-represented, and should consider ways to address the frequently-cited obstacles to teaching communication skills within large GEP courses.

Description and Evaluation of the General Education Program

Evolution of General Education at The University of Iowa

The University of Iowa’s General Education Program (GEP) has evolved slowly since its earliest years, when students could choose either a departmental plan of instruction—with departments determining the requirements—or the “class plan,” which prescribed a fixed four-year curriculum. By 1905, the class plan was replaced with a fixed curriculum for the first two years, followed by two years of course work in the major. Over the following decades, this two-year core curriculum maintained a focus on essential skills and breadth requirements necessary for advanced learning, and inspired the core structure of the University’s GEP.

The GEP morphed incrementally from a core to a more pluralistic distributed model for a variety of reasons including overlap of major requirements with GEP requirements and concerns about diversity and the internationalization of the curriculum. That evolution was mostly complete by 1979; since then, the colleges have revised and refined the program almost every year.

Vestiges of the old core model remain—for example, all UI students must take one or more rhetoric courses that focus on reading, speaking, and writing. Almost all students also complete interpretation of literature—offered either by the Department of English or one of the foreign language departments—which emphasizes reading, analysis, and writing.

The rest of the GEP courses, however, represent a wide range of disciplines and topics, and range from introductory to advanced, as is usually the case in a distributed model.

This hybrid model of general education has allowed faculty and academic administrators to give students a common academic experience in their rhetoric and interpretation of literature courses, but also to keep the program vital by regularly updating the selection of courses available to fulfill the remainder of GEP requirements.

A more detailed history of the UI General Education Program will be available to the HLC consultant-evaluators in the University’s resource room.
Overview of the Current General Education Program

Goals of the General Education Program

The goals of the General Education Program (GEP), as stated by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, can be seen as falling into two categories: the acquisition of essential skills, proficiencies, and familiarities; and the development of enduring qualities and habits of mind.

The GEP intends to facilitate the acquisition of essential proficiencies and skills in and familiarity with:

- Use of language (both English and a second language)
- Manipulation and analysis of symbols (both mathematical and verbal)
- Critical reasoning
- Modes of thinking and basic information across the liberal arts and sciences disciplines
- Discipline-appropriate research and inquiry

The GEP also aims to develop in every student enduring qualities that mark a liberally educated person, including:

- A lifetime pursuit of personal intellectual growth and social responsibility
- Tolerance and open-mindedness, facilitating the ability to question and evaluate one’s own attitudes and beliefs
- Sufficient general knowledge and proficiencies to adapt to new vocations and opportunities
- An ability to understand and to cope with the complexity and diversity of contemporary life

The two categories are, of course, interrelated and essential to one another.

General Education Program Requirements by College

The five UI undergraduate colleges are the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), by far the largest; the Tippie College of Business; and the Colleges of Education, Engineering, and Nursing. As outlined in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study, most first-year students enroll in CLAS. CLAS traditionally has designed and managed the GEP while the other, smaller colleges have adapted the CLAS program to fit their missions and accreditation requirements.

The CLAS GEP requires students to complete up to 47 semester hours selected from nine general education areas (the GE areas), including 6 hours from what is called the “distributed” area. The GE areas are foreign language, historical perspectives, humanities, interpretation of literature, natural sciences, quantitative or formal reasoning, rhetoric, and social sciences. The distributed area encompasses seven sub-areas: cultural diversity, fine arts, foreign civilization and culture, health and physical activity, historical perspectives, humanities, and social sciences.

Students enrolled in the College of Education’s teacher education programs must complete the CLAS requirements.

Students in the Tippie College of Business and the Colleges of Nursing and Engineering fulfill nearly the same requirements as CLAS students, but some of that course work is built into their major programs and therefore does not need to be included in their GEP. The differences between these three Colleges’ programs and the CLAS GEP are:
None of the three colleges requires any additional foreign language beyond the requirement for admission to the University (two years of a single language).

Business and Nursing require students to choose their “distributed” courses from either the sub-area of foreign civilization and culture or the sub-area of cultural diversity (or, in Nursing, students may select from four additional anthropology courses).

Students in the Tippie College:

Do not complete quantitative or formal reasoning course work as part of the GEP since that area is covered in the requirements for all business majors

Must complete one GEP social science course and two GEP courses in economics (a requirement of all business major programs), which adds up to more social sciences semester hours than required of CLAS students

College of Nursing students:

May substitute any GEP humanities course for interpretation of literature

Must complete a total of six semester hours of GEP humanities or fine arts courses, or any philosophy courses

Must take an introductory statistics course or math for the biological sciences in order to meet the three semester hour requirement for mathematics

Must take the CLAS GEP psychology course to fulfill the three semester hour requirement in social sciences

The College of Engineering refers to its GEP as the General Education Component (GEC). Engineering students:

Must complete a total of 15 semester hours selected from a list of Engineering-approved humanities and social sciences courses offered by CLAS (not necessarily courses that CLAS has designated part of its GEP), as described in Table II-8

Must take rhetoric, but may choose whether to take Interpretation of Literature as one of their humanities choices

Do not complete quantitative or formal reasoning or natural sciences course work as part of the GEC since those areas are covered in the requirements for all engineering majors

Table II-8:
College of Engineering General Education Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
<th>Either Humanities or Social Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 s.h. lower level</td>
<td>3 s.h. lower level</td>
<td>3 s.h. of either humanities or social sciences at the upper level from the same department as one of the previously selected lower-level courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 s.h. any additional upper or lower level humanities or social sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 s.h. any additional upper level humanities or social sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II-9 illustrates the similarities and differences in GEP requirements for the five UI undergraduate colleges.

**Table II-9: General Education Areas and Requirements by College**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE Areas</th>
<th>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS)</th>
<th>Tippie College of Business</th>
<th>College of Education</th>
<th>College of Nursing</th>
<th>College of Engineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Language</strong></td>
<td>Through 4th semester level **</td>
<td>None beyond UI admit req.***</td>
<td>Through 4th semester level **</td>
<td>None beyond UI admit req.***</td>
<td>None beyond UI admit req.***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Perspectives</strong></td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Possible choice for 6 s.h. of humanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanities</strong></td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Possible choice for 6 s.h. of humanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpretation of Literature</strong></td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Possible choice for 6 s.h. of humanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural Sciences</strong></td>
<td>7 s.h. One lab required</td>
<td>3 s.h. No lab required</td>
<td>7 s.h. One lab required</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements in natural sciences</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quantitative or Formal Reasoning</strong></td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetoric</strong></td>
<td>4-8 s.h.*</td>
<td>4-8 s.h.*</td>
<td>4-8 s.h.*</td>
<td>4-8 s.h.*</td>
<td>4-8 s.h.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Sciences</strong></td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>3 s.h.</td>
<td>Fulfilled by program requirements</td>
<td>See Table II-8 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distributed</strong></td>
<td>6 s.h. from 2 areas</td>
<td>3 s.h from one area</td>
<td>6 s.h. from 2 areas</td>
<td>6 s.h. from 2 areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE Areas</th>
<th>College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS)</th>
<th>Tippie College of Business</th>
<th>College of Education</th>
<th>College of Nursing</th>
<th>College of Engineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cultural diversity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fine arts</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Possible choice for humanities requirement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreign civilization and culture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health and physical activity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>historical perspectives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humanities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social sciences</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X = available option for distributed requirement

*Hours and course placement for rhetoric depend on student ACT or SAT score and AP English Composition exam score (i.e., students with an ACT English score of 24 or above or an AP Language and Composition score of 4 or 5 are placed in accelerated rhetoric).

**The foreign language requirement may be satisfied by high school coursework.

***UI requires 2nd level proficiency for admission to the University. Please note that UI accepts exam credit for some GE requirements.
Number, Organization, and Format of Courses

In fall 2007, CLAS departments and programs offered more than 260 courses in the General Education Program. The College of Education offered one additional GEP course, and the Tippie College of Business offered two in the Department of Economics. For a list of approved course titles and the departments that offered GEP courses, see Appendix II-F.

During the 2006-07 academic year, departments added 18 courses to the GEP (and dropped 5), which illustrates how the program can respond quickly to current student interest and to developments in faculty research.

A GEP course takes one of two formats:

- A small discussion course is taught by a faculty member, instructor, or teaching assistant (TA) and usually enrolls fewer than 25 students.
- A lecture course is taught by a faculty member or instructor, and usually incorporates separate discussion or lab sections, usually led by TAs. These sections may enroll anywhere from 26 to more than 500 students.

Each semester, several sections of small GEP discussion courses, such as accelerated rhetoric, are offered as honors sections. The University of Iowa Honors Program also offers several interdisciplinary GEP Honors Seminars, with enrollment limited to 20 or fewer students. In addition, 15 to 20 lab/discussion sections associated with GEP lecture courses are designated as honors sections. Frequently, these sections are led by the faculty member in charge of the lecture. Students enrolled in an honors designated section attend the same lectures and take the same exams as all other students in the course, but the lab or discussion section is smaller and designed to provide more of an intellectual challenge.

Criteria for Approval of General Education Program Courses

For a course to earn and retain GEP status, it must clearly satisfy the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ comprehensive criteria for course quality and consistency, as well as area-specific criteria for its content and intended outcomes.

Comprehensive Criteria for General Education Courses

The comprehensive criteria for General Education courses—provided in full in Appendix II-G—address issues related to teaching, course content, and consistency. The criteria:

- Establish the expectation that the College’s most effective and experienced teachers will be involved with the GEP
- Lay out guidelines for the use of TAs
- Require evidence of how the course will help develop each student’s critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills
- Require that GEP courses provide a “breadth of experience in content and/or in methods,” because a GEP course may represent a student’s only exposure to a given subject area
- Dictate that when a course’s content or structure changes significantly, its GEP status will be reviewed
Require departments to ensure that various versions of GEP courses—such as Saturday & Evening or Guided Independent Study courses—are comparable to “regular” versions of those courses, that multi-section courses offer “consistency of instruction and focus,” and that grading across sections is consistent.

State that because GEP-approved courses must be readily available to students, they should normally be offered at least every two years.

**Intended Outcomes by General Education Area**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) has established criteria to define appropriate content and intended outcomes for courses in each GE area.

From 2003 through 2006, the CLAS Educational Policy Committee (described below) reviewed the content and intended outcomes criteria for each GE area, and worked with the CLAS faculty (through the College’s central faculty governance body, the Faculty Assembly) to implement changes.

Regular review by the faculty has helped to maintain the GEP’s relevance, allowing its content and policies to adjust when needed without destabilizing its structure. At the same time, the nature and number of the intended outcomes, detailed below, reveal a GEP that is ambitious but diffused, perhaps attempting to satisfy too many differing audiences.

The following intended outcomes are taken from the CLAS GEP page: [http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/gep/areas.shtml](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/gep/areas.shtml).

**Foreign Language**

Courses in this area provide students with speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in a second language. These courses also provide knowledge of the culture(s) in which the language is spoken.

Intended outcomes:

Students will be able to read, speak, and understand the language as described in the course descriptions, and will develop enhanced understanding of the culture(s) in which the language is (was) used.

**Historical Perspectives**

Courses in this area help students understand a period of the past in its own terms, comprehend the historical processes of change and continuity, sharpen their analytical skills in the evaluation of evidence, and develop their ability to generalize, explain, and interpret historical change.

Intended outcomes:

Students will understand one or more periods of the past in its/their own terms.

Students will comprehend change and continuity in history.

Students will improve their ability to evaluate evidence using the tools of historical investigation.

Students will gain experience and improve their skills in generalizing, explaining, and interpreting historical change.

(Revised March 2004)
Humanities

Courses in this area focus on the ways individuals and cultures have interpreted and understood themselves, others, and the world. Courses exploring the nature and meaning of artistic forms (across the spectrum of the fine arts and literature of the past and present), human values and value systems (including current and historical ideas in philosophy and religion), and other expressions of human aspiration, belief, and creation may be approved in this area. Interdisciplinary courses that explore these topics may also be approved. Courses approved in this area teach verbal, analytic, perceptual, and imaginative skills needed to interpret and examine culture, community, identity formation, and the human experience.

Intended outcomes:

Students will learn about one or more specific cultural topics, problems, artistic forms, value systems, philosophical concepts, or religious ideas in relation to the larger human context in which they become meaningful.

Students will become familiar with one or more methods of humanistic research, critical inquiry, and analysis and have an opportunity to practice these methods.

(Revised March 2004)

Interpretation of Literature

Building on previously acquired skills of reading and writing, courses approved for the interpretation of literature area seek to reinforce in every student a lifetime habit of frequent, intelligent, and satisfying reading. These courses, taught in English in small sections, focus primarily on “ways of reading,” asking students to become aware of themselves as readers, to learn how to deal with different kinds of texts, and to understand how texts exist within larger historical, social, political, and/or cultural contexts. These “ways of reading,” while growing out of various critical approaches to literature, are also transferable to other fields of study.

Intended outcomes:

Students use and refine their skills of reading, speaking, and writing to respond critically and sensitively to literary texts.

Students learn to see themselves as readers, recognizing the influence of individual differences (such as gender, ethnicity, and geography) and past experiences on interpretation.

Students consider the connections between individual texts and broader cultural contexts.

(Revised March 2005 and April 2006)

Natural Sciences

Courses in this area explore the scope and major concepts of a scientific discipline. In these courses students learn the attitudes and practices of scientific investigators: logic, precision, experimentation, tentativeness, and objectivity. In courses with a laboratory component, students gain experience in methods of scientific inquiry.
Intended outcomes:

Students will come to understand a significant segment of natural science and will become familiar with its major concepts and ways of framing questions. In laboratory courses, students will use laboratory investigations and appropriate procedures to generate accurate and meaningful data and derive reasonable conclusions from them.

Students will understand and appreciate (if not adopt) the attitudes of science: logic, precision, experimentation, tentativeness, and objectivity.

Students will develop and practice those communication skills that apply to the relevant discipline.

Rhetoric
Rhetoric helps student to develop skills in speaking, writing, listening, and critical reading. It also builds competence in research and inquiry as well as in analysis and persuasion, especially in the area of understanding public controversies in their social contexts.

Intended outcomes:

Students will learn to read with understanding and enjoyment.

Students will write and speak about reading with personal authority and analytical skill.

Students will be able to write and speak to discover, explain, question, and defend ideas.

Students will be able to take into account fundamental rhetorical concepts when writing or speaking.

(Under review for 2007-08).

Quantitative or Formal Reasoning
Courses in this area help develop analytical skills through the practice of quantitative or formal symbolic reasoning. Courses focus on the presentation and evaluation of evidence and argument, the understanding of the use and misuse of data, and the organization of information in quantitative or other formal symbolic systems including those used in the disciplines of computer sciences, linguistics, mathematics, philosophy, and statistics.

Intended outcomes:

Students will learn and practice a method or methods of analytical or formal symbolic reasoning, for example a specific set of mathematical, statistical, computer programming, or logic skills.

Students will learn to evaluate arguments made in the symbolic system embodied in the course and will become familiar with its major concepts and ways of formulating questions.

(Revised May 2003)
Social Sciences

Courses in this area focus on human behavior and the institutions and social systems that shape and are shaped by that behavior. Courses provide an overview of one or more social science disciplines, their theories, and methods.

Intended outcomes:

Students will examine the strengths and weaknesses of at least one method of inquiry distinctive of the social sciences, and become familiar with its major assumptions, concepts, and ways of formulating questions. Students will learn to evaluate data, generalizations, and hypotheses in the discipline. Students will have the opportunity to practice the methods of the discipline.

Students will be given practice in developing positions and supporting their ideas with evidence and reason.

Distributed Area

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Courses in this area foster greater understanding of the diversity of cultures in the United States and provide knowledge and critical understanding of these cultures, focusing on one or more non-dominant cultures or peoples of the United States. Some courses include comparative study with cultures outside the United States, but the primary focus is on United States experience.

Intended outcomes:

Students should develop a critical understanding of the culture of a group or groups in the United States.

Students will become familiar with one or more methods of research and critical inquiry into culture.

In courses that examine the artistic production of a group, students should develop an understanding of the relationship between the artistic production and the culture of the group.

Some courses will provide a comparative perspective on specific groups.

In some courses students will develop a greater understanding of the dominant culture, in the context of the dominant culture’s interactions with the focus culture(s) that form the primary content of the course.

FINE ARTS

Courses in this area provide students with knowledge of the history, theory, and appreciation of various disciplines in the creative arts. Courses in this area may also provide students with studio, performance, and production experiences.

Intended outcomes:

Students should develop the ability to recognize the constituent parts of an artwork and of the processes of producing that art.

Students should have ample opportunity to observe the performance of an art, or
when feasible, be actively engaged in the making of that art.

Students should be able to recognize how aesthetic and critical meanings are attached to artworks and be introduced to some of the ways in which quality can be recognized and assessed.

Students should be able to recognize aspects of the context (e.g., historical, social, ethnic, economic, geographic) in which artworks are made, particularly how an artwork is linked to the identity of both the artist and the artist’s culture.

FOREIGN CIVILIZATION AND CULTURE

Courses in this area seek to provide students with knowledge about one or more foreign civilizations, cultures, or societies; stimulate their desire for further study of foreign civilizations, cultures, and societies; and foster international and intercultural understanding.

Intended outcomes:

Students will develop an understanding of an aspect of a culture or civilization not their own.

Students will be introduced to concepts and artifacts important to or created in the culture or cultures being studied.

Students will become familiar with one or more methods of research and critical inquiry into civilization and culture.

Students will be given practice in articulating their understanding and interpretations of another culture.

(Revised March 2004)

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Courses in this area help students acquire knowledge and skills that are conducive to good health and well-being.

Intended outcomes:

Students will understand the theoretical groundings of good health practices, become cognizant of major health risks, and learn strategies for overcoming those risks.

Students will develop critical skills for assessing various structural factors that constrain good health practices and for making informed choices about health behaviors.

Students will learn and practice the physical and mental skills associated with a specific activity or activities.

(Revised spring 2004)

Note: historical perspectives, humanities, and social sciences courses within the distributed area have the same intended outcomes as described above.
Oversight of the General Education Program

As the largest undergraduate college and the administrative home for all but a very few courses within the GEP, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) has had oversight of the program. CLAS carries out that responsibility through two committees, the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the General Education Curriculum Committee, which are described in detail in the College’s Manual of Procedure, Articles VI and IX.

The Tippie College of Business and the Colleges of Education and Nursing generally accept and share the CLAS-approved GEP course offerings. The College of Engineering, however, does not limit its GEC offerings to courses approved for the CLAS GEP.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

The Educational Policy Committee (EPC), chaired by the associate dean for academic programs and services, has primary oversight of the GEP. The EPC comprises nine faculty members elected from and by the faculty, including three members from the humanities and fine arts, three from the natural and mathematical sciences, and three from the social sciences. A student representative, selected by an appropriate student group designated by the dean, sits on the EPC as a voting member.

The EPC meets weekly while the University is in session to examine and develop collegiate policy and procedures, including those related to the GEP.

The EPC appoints members to the General Education Curriculum Committee (described below), which recommends courses for GEP status and monitors GEP policy and procedural issues. The EPC gives final approval on all recommendations from that committee. Where changes are indicated, the EPC works with the CLAS faculty, through the Faculty Assembly, to implement them.

In the last two decades, the EPC has been active in its stewardship of the GEP, recommending several significant changes:

In 1989, the University began permitting students to use courses to satisfy both major requirements and the requirements of the GEP.

In 1994, a two-year review of the GEP by the EPC resulted in the creation of the comprehensive General Education Curriculum Committee, to replace multiple committees that had previously had oversight of individual areas of the program.

The 1994 review also led to ongoing revision of the GEP’s comprehensive criteria and area-specific content and outcomes criteria.

In 1996, the “distributed” area was added to the program, offering courses in cultural diversity and foreign civilization and culture.

In 2005, foreign language units began offering courses that fulfill the Interpretation of Literature requirement if they are taught in English, are introductory, and meet the content and outcomes criteria for Interpretation of Literature.

GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) makes recommendations to the Educational Policy Committee regarding GEP course offerings and GEP-related policies and procedures. The committee consists of two faculty members from each of
the three CLAS voting divisions (humanities and fine arts, natural and mathematical sciences, and social sciences), as well as a student with voting privileges. A liaison from the Educational Policy Committee serves as a nonvoting member, as does a representative from the Academic Advising Center.

A department or program wanting a course approved for GEP status submits a request to the GECC, including:

- An explanation of the intended audience for the course, and of the department’s vision for how the course complements other GEP offerings or helps the department fulfill its mission
- An explanation of how the course meets the comprehensive criteria for General Education courses
- An explanation of how the course meets the content and outcomes criteria for each relevant GE area
- An explanation of how consistency will be maintained if the course is offered in different modes or by different instructors
- An explanation of plans for TA training and supervision, if TAs will be involved with teaching the course
- A syllabus for each format in which the course will be taught
- Sample assignments, including two representative and/or important assignments
- A sample quiz
- A sample mid-term or other major test
- A sample final exam or final assessment project or paper

For a course to take on GEP status, the Educational Policy Committee must approve the GECC’s recommendation.

The GECC also reviews previously approved GEP courses on a five-year cycle, examining the offerings of five to eight departments each year. This rigorous review process requires departments to submit:

- A statement from the department about the rationale for the courses
- An explanation of how courses and assignments fulfill the program’s comprehensive and content criteria and intended outcomes
- Evidence of consistency of content and evaluation standards across offerings
- Evidence that courses are regularly taught by well-qualified faculty, instructors, or TAs
- Evidence of TA training and oversight
- A syllabus for each format in which courses are taught
- Sample assignments
- A sample quiz
- A sample mid-term or other major test
A sample final exam or final project

Courses that do not fulfill the GEP criteria are removed, either by the request of the offering department, by the GECC, or by the associate dean of academic programs and services.

The committee also develops and periodically reviews suggested modifications in the comprehensive criteria and area-specific content and outcomes criteria.

This review process is thorough and substantive, and evaluates courses by measuring assignments, syllabi, and learning activities against the stated intended outcomes of the GEP. It does, however, generally evaluate teaching rather assessing learning outcomes.

QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION WITHIN THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

When departments submit materials for the five-year review of their GEP offerings, they must include evidence of the quality of teaching within the General Education (GE) courses. The General Education Curriculum Committee examines the submitted materials for evidence that the department is satisfying the requirements of the comprehensive criteria as they relate to teaching:

The Educational Policy Committee expects the College’s best and most experienced teachers to participate in General Education as instructors and as conscientious guides and supervisors to teaching assistants (see below). Participation by each department’s best and most experienced faculty members helps ensure the quality and consistency of the courses offered for General Education.

They also help to ensure that GE-approved courses provide a consistent educational experience, across semesters and when multiple sections of a course are offered within a semester. Consistency within a department can be developed by common expectations for courses and by sharing materials and syllabi.

Departments may, on occasion, find it advisable or necessary to assign a visitor or adjunct to teach a GE-approved course. Whenever possible, these instructors should be provided with materials and advice from the tenured faculty who have taught the course. Departments should not routinely assign GE-approved courses to visitors or adjuncts.

The criteria also provide guidelines for the use of teaching assistants in GE courses:

When teaching assistants are used in General Education courses, faculty supervisors must ensure that they are adequately trained and supervised. In reviewing courses in which teaching assistants are used, a description of the methods used to select, train, and supervise the teaching assistants must be included with the review materials. It is especially important that teaching assistants who are given responsibility for individual sections (as in language instruction, Interpretation of Literature, and rhetoric courses) have comprehensive preparation and ongoing oversight. The General Education Curriculum Committee and the Educational Policy Committee will expect additional information on the training and supervision of teaching assistants in these courses.

Departments must describe in their review materials how they train and oversee TAs who teach GEP courses. The General Education Curriculum Committee pays particular attention to the course syllabi, assignments given, and the description of the TA training or professional development program, looking for evidence of consistent supervision by the department.
The Department of Rhetoric’s summary of its professional development program provides a good example of TA oversight within the GEP:

The Professional Development Program (PDP) begins with a three-day workshop in August, the week before classes begin. Groups of about a dozen new teachers are led by a faculty member and one or two experienced TAs. During this workshop, teachers begin developing general plans for the semester and detailed plans for the opening weeks, all in the context of discussions of larger issues, from rhetorical principles to pedagogical approaches.

These discussions begin a conversation about teaching that continues in the required PDP colloquium, 3:30-5:20 Thursdays through the fall semester. Attendance and satisfactory performance in the August workshop and Thursday colloquium are conditions of employment—part of every new TA and faculty member’s contract.

Every rhetoric TA has a teaching advisor. For PDP participants, it is the PDP faculty leader; for others, it is a faculty member assigned by the chair of the department. Before the start of the semester, the advisor reviews and responds to a draft of the course policy statement. By the end of the first week of classes, each TA provides the advisor with a written course description or tentative plan, which should include a schedule of major assignments and indicate the role of other planned activities. At some point, the advisor calls for, reviews, and responds to a sample of student folders. The advisor confirms that teachers are on pace to meet the requirements for major assignments; that students are engaging in a variety of other relevant activities; and that the folder of teaching materials (including assignment sheets) is complete. For PDP participants, this review occurs at midterm and includes grade distributions. Before the beginning of the spring semester, PDP participants give advisors a self-evaluation and response to student evaluations. Advisors are available for conferences and classroom visits, and instructors should make themselves available if the faculty member requests a meeting, a class visit, or materials beyond the minimum outlined above.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Because rhetoric courses help students develop reading, writing, and speaking skills necessary for the completion of assignments in other courses, students must fulfill the rhetoric requirement in their first year. Most also take interpretation of literature in the first year. For most new first-year students, in fact, GEP courses compose more than half of their schedules.

The University and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) work together to ensure enough open seats in GEP courses to accommodate the needs of first-year students. Every year in March, for example, representatives from the Office of the Provost, CLAS, the Office of Admissions, Orientation Services, the Office of the Registrar, and the Academic Advising Center meet to go over enrollment projections, enrollment data from previous years, declared majors, and other information to plan how many seats to reserve for new students. If it looks as though a course may run short of space entirely, the collegiate dean or associate provost allocates funds to the department to hire additional instructors. Likewise if a course is scheduled for a room that is a bit too small for the projected enrollment, a new room can be sought. The timing of the meeting allows the Registrar to hold seats in advance of early registration in April.

As orientation progresses through the summer, these same offices track enrollment to
identify areas that need adjustment, sections that need additional funding, or sections that can be released to general enrollment.

The group works especially hard to ensure the availability of rhetoric courses, which students must take in the first year, and of GEP courses that function as prerequisites for the next level of courses required for a major or for entry into a professional college. The Four Year Graduation Plan (described in greater detail in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study) expresses the University’s commitment to course availability. In the 12 years that the Four Year Graduation Plan has existed, no participant in the plan has failed to graduate in four years because of lack of course availability.

### Relationship of the General Education Program to the Major

Until 1989, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) disallowed the use of GEP courses as part of the major program. Since then, however, the GEP has become integrated into most majors.

A GEP course may serve as an introduction to the major in a broad historical or social context; as a foundational prerequisite for major level-coursework; or as a required cognate. This is especially true in the natural and social science majors.

If a given GEP course is not a requirement for the major, it may nonetheless be on the menu of electives a student might choose to fulfill a category requirement within the major. Some students may use several GEP courses to also satisfy category requirements, and others may not use any. This variation is pronounced in the fine arts, humanities, and some social sciences (such as history), where students choose from a particularly large menu of courses, only some of which are GEP-approved.

Almost all major programs allow—or even require—students to count at least one course toward both GEP requirements and major requirements. Most major programs allow up to two such “double countings.” The one exception is the Department of English, which does not allow students to double count any courses. Neither the GEP nor CLAS has a policy limiting or requiring the application of GEP courses toward major requirements.

Selective and limited admission majors at UI include those offered by the Tippie College of Business and the Colleges of Education and Nursing, all of which generally admit students after they have fulfilled certain requirements and established a satisfactory academic record at the University, including earning at or above a minimum GPA (see the “Education within the Major” section of this self-study for more about selective and limited admission programs). CLAS also offers some selective majors, including actuarial science, athletic training, communication studies, health promotion, integrative physiology, journalism and mass communication, social work, and sport studies. Since most first and second year students take a lot of GEP courses, and since the selective admissions majors tend to require GEP courses to fulfill prerequisites or cognate requirements, the GEP has the unintended function of screening applicants for these majors.

### Perceptions of the General Education Program

In considering what data would be needed to make a thorough assessment of the General Education Program (GEP), the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences identified three groups likely to have different and valuable perspectives on the GEP and how effectively it accomplishes its goals: students, faculty, and employers.
Student Perspectives

Development of the General Education Program Student Survey

In recent publications, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has offered some helpful direction for colleges and universities working on assessing their general education programs. Prominent in the AAC&U’s advice is the suggestion that strategies and measurement protocols be designed in ways that reflect the distinctiveness of a given university’s particular program of general education. The subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences tried to follow that advice in developing a survey instrument to measure student perceptions of the GEP.

One ready framework for examining the University’s GEP is embodied in the stated goals for the program, as described above. As written, however, the goals are too diffuse and abstract to be used as measurement statements in a closed-response questionnaire. The subcommittee members therefore chose to use as the basis of measurement in the questionnaire a set of eight objectives derived from those stated goals, but informed by their reading of the comprehensive criteria and the content and outcomes criteria, by their conversations with GEP course instructors, and by their own discussions about “goals in use”—that is, how the abstract goals for the program translate into more specific, measurable objectives.

Thus they identified the following as eight major desired learning outcomes of the UI GEP:

- **Critical thinking** includes skills in evaluating bodies of information and analyzing and judging values expressed by oneself and others.
- **Communication skills** include the ability to organize thoughts clearly and to communicate them effectively in words, writing, and visual displays.
- **Understanding of world complexity** includes understanding distinctive characteristics of different countries and the varied ways countries interact with each other.
- **Appreciation of diversity** includes understanding one's own uniqueness and also the uniqueness of persons different from oneself.
- **Understanding of scientific inquiry** includes the ability to collect and use dependable sources of data and follow standards of scientific method while evaluating results.
- **Social responsibility** includes understanding the importance of bringing one's educational skills to contribute to my local community and society as a whole.
- **Appreciation of the arts** includes understanding how visual, written, and performing arts help us think and enhance our emotional lives.
- **Life of the mind** includes developing interests and habits for life-long learning and enjoyment of creations of others and ourselves.

A description of the methodology used in developing and administering the GEP student survey can be found in Appendix II-C.

Key Findings of the General Education Program Student Survey

Confirming the Logic of the Distributive System

The GEP survey asked students to report to what extent each of the GEP areas had contributed to their growth in the eight learning outcome categories listed above (the
Table II-10 shows the two highest scored learning outcomes in each GE area (bold, in red). Six of the eight learning outcomes achieve “top two” status in at least one GE area; only two do not, social responsibility and life of the mind.

The non-bold scores in Table II-10 illustrate all cases where a learning outcome scored a three or better on the Likert scale. Here, all eight learning outcomes are represented; critical thinking, understanding world complexity, and appreciation of diversity appear several times.

Yet another way to test the rationale of the distribution matrix is to note which learning outcome scored its highest rating against each GE area. The arrows in Table II-10 mark those highest ratings, showing that respondents to the survey believe that each GE area achieves one of the learning outcomes better than any of the other areas. This seems to confirm the logic behind the distributive matrix.

Table II-10:
Top Scoring Outcomes by GE Area

Note:
• Bolded scores in red are the top two scoring outcomes in each GE area.
• Where an outcome received a score of three or greater on the Likert scale, that score is also shown in this table.
• These arrows † mark the GE area in which each desired learning outcome received its highest rating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Goals</th>
<th>GE Areas</th>
<th>Rhetoric</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
<th>Interpretation of Literature</th>
<th>Historical Perspectives</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Natural Sciences</th>
<th>Quantitative &amp; Formal Reasoning</th>
<th>Social Sciences</th>
<th>Other (Distributed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ 2.8 ]</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4 †</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 †</td>
<td>3.4 (†)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding World Complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2 †</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of Diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 †</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Scientific Inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 †</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of the Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 †</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 †</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(†) Foreign language actually scored highest in this category, but one can assume that the score was related to the teaching of communication skills in a foreign language, thereby making rhetoric the key distributive GE area for the teaching of communication skills in English.
Under-Represented Goals

If the objective of the GEP is to advance each of the eight desired learning outcomes equally, we should have some concern that students did not rank social responsibility or life of the mind within the top two areas of growth in any of the GE areas. We may take the view, however, that some learning outcomes (such as critical thinking) apply to multiple areas more obviously than others, and some imbalance in representation among the learning outcomes is not a cause for concern.

We should address this question, and if necessary determine how to strengthen these two learning outcomes within the GEP.

General Education and the Goals of Thinking and Communicating

According to student survey responses, communication skills do not have the pervasive presence in the GE experience that thinking skills have.

Table II-11 shows that mean scores for communication skills in the history, natural science, and quantitative or formal reasoning categories were about a standard deviation removed from the highest mean score achieved by any one learning outcome. This was not the case for critical thinking skills (see Table II-12).

This suggests that if we consider communication skills a priority learning outcome for the GEP, such skills may require more attention in a number of key areas. History, for example, is an area where written communication skills would seem to be particularly important—but the student perception data indicate that our GEP history courses may have considerable room for improvement in teaching writing skills. (It is important to note that the survey did not ask about writing in particular—it asked about “communication skills,” which students might have interpreted in ways that do not reflect what actually happens with regard to all the communication skills in GEP courses.)

If we choose to implement any changes to give communication skills a stronger representation in the GEP, we must pay attention to how those changes could interfere with things the GE area does especially well.

Table II-11: Mean Scores for Communication Skills and Rank Within General Education Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Comm. Skills Rank Among Outcomes Within GE Area</th>
<th>Highest mean for any one GE desired learning outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of Literature</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative or Formal Reasoning</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Distributed)</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II-12:
Mean Scores for Critical Thinking Skills and Rank Within General Education Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Crit. Thinking Rank Among Outcomes Within GE Area</th>
<th>Highest mean for any one GE desired learning outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of Literature</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Perspectives</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative or Formal Reasoning</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Distributed)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty Focus Groups

In February 2007, the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences invited faculty to participate in focus groups to share their perceptions about the University’s General Education Program (GEP). A total of 47 faculty from 25 departments participated in five focus group sessions. Details about these sessions can be found in Appendix II-C.

The groups discussed two questions: What are the goals of the GEP, and are we achieving those goals?

Faculty Perceptions of Intended Outcomes

The focus group interviews suggest that faculty perceptions of the GEP’s intended outcomes align closely with the GEP’s stated criteria and goals.

The faculty focus group participants reported, for example, the belief that the GEP aims to produce “educated persons” who have acquired both skills and knowledge. They also expressed that the GEP fosters the development of “life skills,” which contribute to learning outside of the classroom. Faculty expectations for the GEP thus correlate with the two categories of the GEP goals—acquisition of essential skills and knowledge, and the development of enduring qualities that mark a liberally educated person.

Faculty demonstrated substantial consensus around some specific goals under the umbrella of “producing educated persons,” including (1) providing breadth of study before specialization, (2) broadening students’ horizons, (3) providing a common core of knowledge, and (4) facilitating understanding of different modes of inquiry.
Obstacles to Achieving Outcomes

The focus groups spent considerable time discussing obstacles to achieving the perceived desired outcomes of the GEP. Four obstacles came up repeatedly: (1) the challenges of teaching communication skills, especially writing, within the GEP; (2) problems related to large classes; (3) the University’s system of recognition and reward for teaching; and (4) the organization of the GEP curriculum. In general, faculty saw all of these as related to one another.

Challenges in Teaching Communication Skills

In discussing the challenges associated with teaching communication skills in GEP courses, faculty focused primarily on writing skills. Many focus group participants addressed these issues. This faculty member’s comments are typical:

In a class of 240 students, . . . if we have only one writing assignment . . . essentially all we are doing is evaluating students based on the skills they come in with. We are not actually doing anything to teach the students how to write, nor are we establishing any type of baseline for students in terms of what they came in with and how you make progress from where you started.

There was consensus among the faculty that students lack adequate writing skills and need extensive work to build them, but the time-consuming nature of teaching writing and the difficulty of doing so in large courses makes this a difficult obstacle to overcome within the GEP.

Large Classes

Faculty expressed considerable concern about the difficulty of achieving desired outcomes related to communication skills (especially writing) and critical analysis in classes of more than 50 students. They do not expect, however, that the answer lies in creating more small GEP courses. Faculty understand that small courses require extensive resources, including faculty to teach them.

Recognition and Reward for Teaching in the GEP

Each group discussed “disincentives” for teaching GEP courses at UI, mostly focused on the University’s recognition and reward system for tenure track faculty.

One faculty member asserted that “there’s a disincentive in that [GEP courses] tend to be big. If the idea of [GE] is communication, then that is a difficult task. And the [University’s] administrators don’t recognize how much work it is to teach one of these courses.” Another echoed those comments: “There is a disincentive. Teaching [GEP courses] is a different kind of work than the ‘research and publications’ enterprise that we are in . . . . The University needs to recognize the struggle between the research and publication mission and the teaching mission.” In response to that comment, another faculty member said, “We’ve lost people because of this disconnect.”

Faculty, in other words, see a tension between the University’s focus on research and its teaching mission, with rewards and recognition going more readily to outstanding research faculty than to excellent teachers within the GEP.

Organization of the Curriculum

Faculty pinpointed the organization of the GEP curriculum as another obstacle to
achieving its desired outcomes. One faculty member commented:

I think the list of categories seems a little bizarre. It feels too specific to me . . .
Historical perspectives feels like it would be a subcategory to one of these broader categories.
So does rhetoric. Interpretation of literature feels like it should be an option under
humanities . . . So the list feels like it combines specifics and categories.

Another noted, “I think [the GEP curriculum] is very difficult to understand. I think
if there were a way to simplify it that makes logical sense . . . it would make far more
sense to students and to me. We all find it enormously cumbersome.”

**Strategies for Achieving Intended Outcomes**

The focus group interview questions also elicited descriptions of effective GEP practices.
Some instructors have found ways to overcome the problems presented by large course
sections with creative teaching strategies such as “one-minute” in-class papers, or
with the use of technology, such as online assignments and class participation and
communication using “clickers” (audience response devices, addressed further in the
“Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study).

**Employer Perspectives**

**Employer Interviews**

Subcommittee members interviewed 13 employers who typically recruit students from
UI and other Midwestern colleges and universities, without specifying any particular
liberal arts and sciences major. The subcommittee chose interviewees who:

- Had some prior association with the Pomerantz Career Center or with
  subcommittee members
- Had general knowledge of the UI philosophy of general education requirements
- Were associated with the local office of an organizational entity that has national or
  international expanse, or were professionally integrated into national professional
  networks
- Came from firms requiring a bachelor's degree as a minimum educational requirement

Appendix II-C provides additional detail about the subcommittee's approach to these
interviews.

**General Comments**

The employers commented, in general, that applicants with baccalaureate degrees
who have general education experience are notably different from applicants trained
in community colleges, or those with an educational background based on an array of
technical courses. More specifically, the employers volunteered their observations about
the high quality of UI graduates they interview and hire, in terms of the eight GEP
desired learning outcomes.

Every interviewee said in some unequivocal manner that all of the eight desired learning
outcomes matter in hiring and promotion. A retail manager from an international
corporation, for example, says “I could map your eight [learning outcomes] with the
list of priorities we have for training our corporate leaders [management positions].”
A public safety director said, “We prefer college graduates; the level of maturity,
perspective, intellectual capacity from these applicants is night and day compared with those trained only in technical skills.”

Communication and Critical Thinking Skills

All interviewees ranked communication skills and critical thinking skills as their first and second priorities, though the order differed among them.

A retail employer said about communication skills, “I am responsible for answering impromptu and often highly consequential requests from the media about a product or service. I cannot duck the question and I have to respond with information that is accurate, timely, and confronts the problem or complaint.” An example of such a scenario might be fielding a question about a stocked product that enters the news as defective or dangerous.

Writing and public speaking were repeatedly mentioned as essential for law enforcement personnel: “Officers must be able to write clear, concise, complete, and compelling accident and crime reports in order to meet prosecutor (or plaintiff) and magistrate requirements.”

Employers made many comments about critical thinking as well. Managers in a corporation have to be able to “get to the bottom of problems” quickly, for example. Police officers (or public employees) have to be able to “connect the dots.”

Comments in Workplace Context

It is interesting to note statements employers made about each of the learning outcomes in the context of their respective workplaces:

Critical thinking: “I see that as problem solving, getting to the root cause. If you have that skill, you communicate better, you understand processes, you can improve conflict resolution, you know how to develop labor pools” (corporation, manufacturing).

Communication skills: “The majority of our business depends on communication. This is communication over the phone or e-mail, and our employees have to know how to communicate effectively without visual cues” (corporation).

Understanding of world complexity: All but one of the corporate firms whose representatives we interviewed are currently developing international offices; hence, international skills (foreign language, cultural awareness, knowledge of different political economies) are salient. “You wouldn’t think it was so, but our officers frequently encounter situations where they must be aware of laws and customs of foreign countries pertaining to driving, use of mandated auto safety devices, and family interaction norms [speaking specifically of issues associated with migrants from Latin America, Southeast and East Asia, and Eastern Europe]” (recruitment and training of public safety officers).

Appreciation of diversity: “Our people have to be able to live and be effective outside their comfort zone” (corporation; philanthropic organization). “Much of our work is done in teams; teams must bring together and thrive on diversity” (corporation). Two representatives of large corporations described major diversity initiatives in recruitment and training (both to enlarge and refine labor pools and to develop adequately sensitivity to changing audiences and markets).
Understanding of scientific inquiry: “All our employees must be able to read and evaluate all kinds of media that purport to be true. They have to sort out the wheat from the chaff” (corporation).

Social responsibility: “We raise money in a wide variety of ways. But a big emphasis now is to alert students to philanthropy as a basic life responsibility; giving back to the community” (philanthropic organization). “All our employees must be committed to and in kind give back to the community, e.g., Big Brothers, Big Sisters, etc.” (corporation).

Appreciation of the arts: “My dream is for every one of your students to have the opportunity to attend live artistic events” (philanthropic organization). “The arts are big for us. We give a lot of money each year to support artistic endeavors, and we have to know what we are doing” (corporation).

Life of the mind: “The life of the mind is terribly important, in ways that may not be obvious to you. This is very, very important to us. We look for intellectual curiosity; people eager to learn. We want people who are constantly asking, ‘why?’” (corporation).

Conclusions—Perceptions of the General Education Program

The results of the General Education Program (GEP) student survey indicate that students perceive each General Education (GE) area as doing especially well in achieving at least one of the desired learning outcomes, which suggests that the distributive model is efficacious. Respondents perceive that the GE areas contribute more to their growth in critical thinking skills than to their growth in communication skills, however—a finding that deserves further study.

Faculty support the intended outcomes of the GEP but identify several obstacles to achieving them, including challenges related to teaching communication skills, especially in large classes; perceptions that teaching GEP courses is not valued sufficiently by the University; and a lack of logic in the naming and organization of the GE areas.

The responses of the employers interviewed, with their consistent emphasis on the value of general education learning outcomes, seem to mediate the presumption that the academy and the market are very separate cultures. Compelling writing, critical thinking, and appreciation of differences are at the core of the liberal education tradition. Successful products and services require critical thinking; institutional survival depends on the successful communication of ideas; and the necessity of group work in these settings requires individuals to practice mutual respect. One high-ranking labor strategist in an international corporation expressed what drives that organization’s hiring in a way that seems to encompass regard for all eight general education learning outcomes: “We hire the whole person.”

Summary and Conclusions—Common Academic Experiences

Signs of Success

The University does many things well in its General Education Program.

The undergraduate colleges do a good job of cooperating with one another to share GEP courses and requirements. Students not accepted into one of the professional colleges will, in many cases, find themselves well prepared to enter a major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) instead.
CLAS provides strong oversight for the GEP, and has implemented a structure to ensure its quality by requiring documented adherence to the GEP’s goals, consistency of course offerings, and quality teaching. The College and the University also manage GEP enrollment issues to ensure that enough seats are available in first-year GEP courses.

Course offerings in the GEP change frequently, allowing a flexible curriculum. Although not every GEP course is offered every semester, they are offered consistently, allowing students many choices in almost every field of undergraduate study. At the same time, the rhetoric and interpretation of literature requirements provide a stable counterpoint to curriculum flexibility, creating a common academic experience for nearly all first-year students.

The results of the GEP student survey suggest that the distributive model is working well. Employers speak well of the education students receive at The University of Iowa, in part because of the GEP’s strengths.

**Moving Forward**

The UI GEP is ambitious, and its many detailed criteria and intended outcomes can be difficult for students and faculty to understand or to see as achievable. Faculty find the names of the GE areas unclear and inconsistent, and the organization confusing. Our study suggests that students agree.

The University should identify and implement improvements to the General Education Program, with the goal of creating a more focused and integrated program that consistently achieves all of its desired learning outcomes consistently. This effort has begun, and will continue as described in the “Initiatives for Progress” section at the end of this special emphasis self-study.
A renewed focus on outcomes assessment complements a diverse range of options for specialized study.

**Undergraduate Education**

**III. Education Within the Major**

**Introduction**

The specialized study programs at UI, as administered by departments and colleges across campus, play critical roles in implementing many of the strategies laid out in *The Iowa Promise*, including the following examples:

**Strategy:** Recruit and retain a student population that can succeed at a comprehensive research university, and nurture their success, by:

- . . . Guiding all students through their majors, and providing excellent academic advising

**Strategy:** Promote excellent teaching, effective learning environments, and learning opportunities that leverage the University’s strengths by:

- Introducing students to the process by which research, scholarship, and creative work are produced and enabling their participation in that process, which is the key “value added” of a comprehensive research university
- Developing more . . . honors courses, and other small class venues where students can interact with tenured faculty
- Strengthening the honors program and other opportunities for high-achieving students

**Strategy:** Ensure that all students graduate with strong core skills, a broad liberal arts education, and concentrated study in one or more majors by:
Promoting their facility for critical thinking, writing, and other communication skills, creative endeavor, and the use of information technology

Providing them with opportunities to develop leadership and teamwork skills and an understanding of business and other organizations

... Continuing efforts to internationalize the educational experience.

**Strategy: Help undergraduates prepare for life within and beyond college by:**

Instilling in them a respect for the life of the mind and a habit of lifelong learning

Communicating to them the value of community involvement and participation in democratic governance

... Providing curricular and cocurricular opportunities that will enable them to understand and succeed in a multicultural and global community

Departments and administrative units provide their declared majors with advising personalized to their particular academic interests and curricular needs. They organize student learning environments and opportunities, promote effective teaching, and serve as focal points for the allocation of resources and processes for evaluation and planning. They provide both a pedagogical and administrative means of fulfilling the University’s mission, improving the quality of its education, and responding to emerging challenges and opportunities.

**Scope**

The self-study steering committee asked the members of the subcommittee on Education within the Major to study programs, policies, and practices that define students’ experiences as they pursue the specialized learning available in the University’s major programs. The subcommittee was asked to consider issues such as how students select major programs, how advising is handled within departments and colleges, the definition and assessment of learning outcomes, and mechanisms for supporting effective learning.

The subcommittee inventoried the major programs offered at the University and compared key components of them, including enrollments, admission requirements, and curricular structures. They then examined the processes in place for reviewing, assessing, and improving these programs, particularly with regard to teaching, advising, and key resources that support student learning and progress.

**Research Process**

To analyze enrollment patterns in the University’s major programs, the subcommittee on Education within the Major relied on the “Undergraduate and Graduate Enrollment by Major Department” tables in the fall 2006 and fall 2007 Profiles of Students (pages 23 to 28).

The subcommittee gathered much of its data from the survey of departmental executive officers (DEO survey) and student satisfaction
survey described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study, as well as from student interviews they conducted as a supplement to the student survey. They also collected some data from the Office of the Provost.

Summary of Findings

The University offers a wide range of major programs and other opportunities for specialized study. The number and diversity of these programs are a strength of the University, and students express satisfaction with the availability of programs and courses that interest them.

Faculty are responsible for the design and implementation of the curricula in the major programs, and the systems of assessment and review in place give them flexibility to introduce innovations and respond to developments in their disciplines.

An effort is under way to create formal outcomes assessment plans for every undergraduate major, which should help faculty identify areas for improvement within their curricula. This effort must become part of a larger effort to foster a culture of evidence-driven assessment in all parts of the University.

Description and Evaluation of Undergraduate Majors and Programs

Overview of Undergraduate Majors and Programs

Programs Offered

The University of Iowa’s five undergraduate colleges offer 68 undergraduate majors and 13 certificate programs. An additional seven undergraduate major programs and three certificate programs are housed partially or wholly outside the traditional undergraduate college structure. (Note: In the listing that follows, majors and certificate programs offered jointly by two colleges are listed under only one of them. Also, several major programs offer more than one degree, such as a B.A. or a B.S. in anthropology. The total number of degree programs the University offers is, therefore, larger than the number identified here.)

The Tippie College of Business offers six undergraduate majors: accounting, economics, finance, management, management information systems, and marketing. In addition, it offers three certificate programs: an entrepreneurship certificate; a risk management and insurance certificate; and, jointly with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, an international business certificate. A student from any other UI undergraduate college may pursue a minor in business.

The College of Education, in cooperation with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, offers one undergraduate major: elementary education. Students earn certification in secondary education in conjunction with the College, but pursue majors within CLAS. The Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations in the College of Education offers a minor program in educational psychology, and the Department of Counseling, Rehabilitation, and Student Development offers a minor in human relations.

The College of Engineering offers six undergraduate majors: biomedical engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering, industrial engineering, and mechanical engineering. In partnership with the Tippie College of Business, the College offers a certificate program in technological entrepreneurship.
The College of Nursing offers one undergraduate major and admits two types of student cohorts: the traditional bachelor of science in nursing (B.S.N.), and the registered nurse-bachelor of science in nursing (R.N.-B.S.N.).

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) offers 54 undergraduate majors (three of them, in addition to those already mentioned, in collaboration with other colleges) and nine certificate programs. Among the majors CLAS offers are several interdisciplinary programs, including African American studies, environmental sciences, informatics, interdepartmental studies, leisure studies, and women's studies. Certificate programs offered by the College include: aging studies; American Indian and native studies; American Sign Language and deaf studies; global health studies; Latin American studies; medieval studies; philosophies and ethics of politics, law, and economics; sexuality studies; and a post-baccalaureate certificate in classics. Several of these are offered by the College's Division of Interdisciplinary Programs. Students in CLAS may also choose among many minor programs.

The undergraduate major and certificate programs housed partially or wholly outside the undergraduate colleges are:

The international studies program is offered by CLAS and International Programs.

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies (B.L.S.) and Bachelor of Applied Studies (B.A.S.) programs are coordinated by the Center for Credit Programs in the Division of Continuing Education; the B.L.S. degree is awarded by CLAS and the B.A.S. degree by the University College.

The Carver College of Medicine offers three programs leading to a baccalaureate degree: the B.S. in clinical laboratory sciences, the B.S. in nuclear medicine technology, and the B.S. in radiation sciences. Students intending to apply to these programs enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The College of Dentistry offers a B.S. in oral health science, which is a degree completion program for students who hold an Associate in Applied Science degree from an accredited dental hygiene program.

The University College offers additional certificates in museum studies and nonprofit management.

The College of Public Health offers a public health certificate program, which is primarily directed toward individuals employed in public health practice.

Declaring a Major

Upon admission to the University, entering students indicate their intended area of study by declaring:

A major in a program without selective admission standards

A pre-major or major interest in an undergraduate program with selective admission standards (see below)

A pre-professional designation such as pre-medicine, pre-physical therapy, pre-dentistry, pre-law, or pre-physician assistant program. These are post-baccalaureate programs for which academic advising is provided at the undergraduate level. (Note: Students with pre-professional designations must also select a major; students
cannot graduate under a pre-professional designation.)

An open major if they have not yet decided on a major area of study

With a few exceptions (for re-entering or transfer students), a student must declare a major or be admitted to a selective or limited access major or program by the time he or she has earned 72 semester hours of credit.

Enrollment Patterns

In fall 2007, 16,667 undergraduate students enrolled in major programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 1,751 in the Tippie College of Business, 1,300 in the College of Engineering, 666 in the College of Nursing, and 350 in the College of Education.

Table II-13 summarizes the pattern of undergraduate major enrollments at The University of Iowa. Pages 23 to 28 of the fall 2007 Profile of Students give a complete breakdown of undergraduate and graduate declared majors by gender and ethnicity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std.Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th Percentile</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th Percentile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median</td>
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<tr>
<td>75th Percentile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90th Percentile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range of student enrollments in majors is wide, and the distribution skewed. In fall 2007, the mean number of declared students in a major was 176, but the median was only 71. Among a few exceptionally large major programs, the three largest had more than 800 declared students each: psychology (n=1,130), English (n=844), and communication studies (n=840). In contrast, 14 majors had 20 or fewer declared students.

In 2006-07, 4,219 students earned undergraduate degrees, 559 with second majors and 9 with third majors. More than 1,200 students earned minor degrees.

Selective or Limited Admission Programs

As described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study report, almost all first-year students at UI enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) or the College of Engineering. Except for the small number of students who receive direct or early admission to the Tippie College of Business or the College of Nursing, students must apply for admission to those colleges after establishing a record of academic success in CLAS. The same is true for students wishing to apply to one of the elementary or secondary Teacher Education Programs (TEPs) in the College of Education. There are also several selective or limited access major programs in CLAS to which students must apply for admission.

Tippie College of Business

Most students enter the Tippie College of Business the first semester of their junior year. Interested students enter The University of Iowa as pre-business majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. For guaranteed admission to the Tippie College, pre-business students must complete 60 semester credit hours and six prerequisite
courses including calculus, statistics, micro- and macroeconomics, financial accounting, and managerial accounting. They must achieve a 2.75 GPA in the prerequisites (as well as no grade lower than a C in any prerequisite course), in all U1 courses overall, and in all college-level courses attempted (cumulative). An admitted student whose grade falls to 2.0 or lower will be placed on academic probation.

Effective fall 2007, the Tippie College offers an “accelerated admission” option for pre-business students who have earned at least 12 but fewer than 60 semester hours of UI credit. To apply for accelerated admission, students must complete three prerequisite courses with no grade lower than a C, and achieve 2.75 prerequisite, UI, and cumulative GPAs. One goal of this new option is to encourage students to participate in co-curricular activities that will enhance their academic degrees. Students who enter the Tippie College late in their undergraduate careers often have become involved in activities outside of the College and have little time available for involvement in College-related student organizations, events, and opportunities. In addition, the College plans to guide students to choose their coursework in CLAS so that it integrates with coursework in the Tippie College, which is only possible if advising in Business begins earlier.

College of Education

Undergraduate students wishing to earn elementary/secondary school teaching licensure must first enroll in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and begin work toward a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Music degree (they must eventually complete the requirements for one of those degrees in order to earn licensure). Before they can enroll in required professional education courses, they must apply to one of the elementary or secondary Teacher Education Programs (TEPs) in the College of Education, which admit a limited number of students. To be considered for admission, students must have completed a minimum of 40 semester hours of course work, with a UI and cumulative GPA of at least 2.70. Some subject areas may have additional admission requirements.

The application process includes submission of an application form, a writing sample, an Iowa criminal history check request form, and two letters of recommendation. Applicants must submit PRAXIS I test scores in mathematics, reading, and writing. Applicants must also complete a 10-hour volunteer experience in a classroom setting in order to be granted final admission review.

If at any time after admission a student’s GPA falls below 2.70, the College will place the student on probation for one semester. If at the end of the probationary semester the GPA remains below 2.70, the College will drop the student from the TEP.

College of Nursing

Admission to the Bachelor of Science degree program in the College of Nursing is also selective. Through 2007-08, the College has admitted an average of 75 students each fall and spring semester. Beginning in fall 2008 the College will admit 80 undergraduate students each fall. To be considered for admission, students must have completed prerequisite courses in rhetoric, animal biology, microbiology, human anatomy, psychology, human development and behavior, and general chemistry, with no grade lower than a C in any prerequisite course, and a minimum cumulative GPA no lower than 2.70.

Table II-14 summarizes the minimum requirements that must be met for admission to the Tippie College of Business and to be eligible to apply for admission to the Colleges of Nursing and Education.
Students must apply for admission to the following selective or limited admission major programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:

- Actuarial science
- Athletic training
- Communication studies
- Dance
- Health promotion (in the Department of Health and Sport Studies)
- Integrative physiology
- Journalism and mass communication
- Sport studies (in the Department of Health and Sport Studies)
- Leisure studies (therapeutic recreation emphasis)
- Music
- Social work

Requirements for admission to each of these programs can be found in the UI General Catalog.

Limited Enrollment Programs and the “Ripple Effect”

Undergraduate student major enrollment patterns reflect a combination of student interest, resource allocation, and external factors such as accrediting bodies. Student interest in any given major program increases and decreases over time; allocation of resources to programs and departments does not necessarily follow these patterns of student interest. To ensure that students can graduate in a timely manner, departments with consistently high student interest but limited resources have managed enrollments by requiring students to meet course, credit hour, and/or grade point standards to gain admission to the major. The average grade point average in areas which there is strong student interest is well above 3.0. For example, in fall 2006 the average GPA for students admitted to actuarial science was 3.55; for students admitted to the College
of Nursing the average GPA was 3.56; for journalism and mass communication it was 3.29; and for students admitted to teacher education programs in the College of Education the average GPA was 3.13.

Other programs limit enrollments because of external factors. For example, to meet accreditation standards the School of Journalism and Mass Communication must limit the size of its writing courses (and, as a result, the number of majors it can accept). Undergraduate enrollment in the College of Education is in part limited by the number of student teaching opportunities available (and the number of such opportunities for which College staff are available to provide oversight). Undergraduate enrollment in the College of Nursing is limited in part by ability to provide clinical supervision that meets accreditation standards.

Roughly 35% to 37% of recent entering first-year cohorts (2005, 2006, and 2007) had declared interests in selective admission or limited enrollment programs. If entering first-year students with pre-professional declarations are included, the percentage rises to about 45% of each entering class. Selective admission programs therefore have a substantial impact on UI major enrollment patterns, time to declaration of major, and student satisfaction with some aspects of their University experience, such as the process of major selection.

When students are not admitted to selective programs it creates a “ripple effect” as they migrate to different programs of study. Students not admitted to certain selective admission programs have tended to migrate to related departments. For example, pre-business students who are denied admission to the Tippie College of Business tend to move to economics or communication studies; students who are not admitted to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication frequently move to communication studies or English; and students who are not admitted to pharmacy might declare a science major or opt for business. The impact on the departments that serve as frequent secondary choices is significant, especially when interest in certain selective admission programs peaks, or when those programs raise admission standards.

For some selective admission programs there is a less clear pathway to another UI major. Students who are denied admission to the College of Nursing, for example, must decide whether they want to pursue a different major at The University of Iowa or transfer to another institution to pursue nursing. Elementary education majors face a similar choice.

Selective admission programs might increase the time to graduation for some students. Some programs require students to earn up to 60 semester hours before they may apply. Students who are denied admission “start over” with those credit hours already earned.

Addressing the “Ripple Effect”: The Interdepartmental Studies Initiative

In 2005, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) explored options that would create viable, educationally and intellectually sound alternative pathways for students in programs with large numbers of “displaced” students (nursing, business and pharmacy) and ameliorate the “ripple effect” on secondary departments. By fall 2006, new options were made available to students within interdepartmental studies—an existing interdisciplinary major program. Traditionally, the interdepartmental studies major has targeted motivated students who wish to design their own program of study under the guidance and approval of a faculty committee. In 2005, CLAS created two new pre-approved tracks within the major: business studies and health sciences studies. Foundational coursework in each track builds on courses students have completed in their efforts to qualify for admission to major programs in nursing, pharmacy,
or business. In addition, the interdepartmental studies major draws on the strong emphasis on interdisciplinary research and study at The University of Iowa. The new tracks appear to be meeting CLAS objectives; in fall 2007 there were 425 declared interdepartmental studies majors, and the enrollment of at least one of the departments affected by student migration—communication studies—was down 10%, from 935 in fall 2006 to 840 in fall 2007. UI is monitoring the impact of the program on the University’s second to third year persistence and on four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates.

Curricular Structures

Departments structure the curricula for their majors(s) according to the logic and pedagogy appropriate to the discipline. It is possible, however, to identify a set of basic curricular structures used by the vast majority of undergraduate majors at UI: strictly sequential, sequential with flexibility, and non-sequential.

Majors designed to adhere to specific accreditation requirements—such as accounting in the Tippie College of Business, and the majors offered by the Colleges of Education, Engineering, and Nursing—offer rigorously articulated sequences of coursework that delineate a student’s passage through the major semester by semester.

Many majors in the Tippie College and in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences structure their curricula sequentially, but provide varying degrees of latitude regarding when exactly a student must enroll in a particular course, or the range of courses that may fulfill specific requirements. This structure might involve a core sequence followed by a declared concentration or track, as in many technical majors and foreign language majors; a core sequence followed by open electives from discrete categories, as in some other foreign language majors and communication studies; or multiple sequential clusters, as in many of the natural sciences.

Many majors in the humanities and some in the social sciences are not structured sequentially, except that an introductory course or cluster of courses must be taken first. Then, students may fulfill requirements in a range of categories in any order. African-American studies, American studies, anthropology, art and art history, English, history, linguistics, philosophy, religious studies, and sociology all fall into this category. Many of these majors also require a capstone course, senior seminar, and/or final portfolio project.

Conclusions—Overview of Undergraduate Majors and Programs

The University of Iowa offers a wide variety of opportunities for specialized study in its major programs and through other formal academic options such as certificate and minor programs. Major programs differ to a great extent in size, admission requirements, and structure, though this report identifies some basic patterns among curricular structures that might help us approach future comparative analyses.

The University develops new academic programs in response to emerging student needs. Over the past ten years, in recognition of the growing need for study across traditional academic boundaries and in response to emerging internal and external priorities, the University has created interdisciplinary major programs, including international studies (2002), informatics (2007), performing arts entrepreneurship (2003), and environmental sciences (1997). New tracks in interdepartmental studies, described above, also promote interdisciplinary work and respond to the needs of students whose plans toward graduation might be interrupted by not being admitted into their desired major. Degree programs such as the Bachelor of Liberal Studies
(B.L.S.) and Bachelor of Applied Studies (B.A.S.) provide opportunities for non-
traditional students to complete a college degree without interrupting their careers to 
attend classes full time on campus. These programs illustrate that The University of 
Iowa is responsive to student needs and environmental factors.

**Processes for Assessing and Improving Undergraduate Majors**

Processes of strategic planning and regular curriculum review, described later in 
this section, ensure that departments consider how, and how effectively, their major 
programs advance the University’s mission and goals. Together, these processes should 
ensure that curricula respond to developments in the disciplines and to students’ needs, 
without compromising academic standards or the overarching goals of the department, 
college, and University.

In addition, the University is now in the midst of an intensive effort to institute clearly-
stated outcomes assessment plans across the undergraduate majors.

**Outcomes Assessment**

*Impetus for Development of Formal Outcomes Assessment Plans*

In June 2006, in response to discussions with staff of the Board of Regents, State of 
Iowa, national discussions on accountability, and internal discussions about improving 
undergraduate education, the Office of the Provost initiated the development of 
outcomes assessment plans in each of the University’s undergraduate majors, to be 
completed by May 2007.

These plans were expected to:

1. Be consistent with the norms and disciplinary practices of the departments
2. Represent the views of the department’s faculty
3. Clearly define the intended learning outcomes of the department’s major(s)
4. Describe a system for collecting both direct and indirect assessments of student 
   learning
5. Guide periodic examinations of the effectiveness of the department’s major and 
   plans for improvement based on those examinations
6. Be documented and published
7. Be revised from time to time

Ultimately, the provost will approve the outcomes assessment plans, on 
recommendation of a faculty group.

As of the writing of this report, a few plans are still being drafted but most have been 
received by the Office of the Provost. Below, we describe plans that either are already in 
place or are in the process of being developed and implemented.

*Mechanisms for Defining Goals and Assessing Outcomes*

**Emerging Common Features of Outcomes Assessment Plans**

A few “pioneer” departments, including Spanish and Portuguese, chemistry, finance,
and psychology, agreed to complete their plans early in the year and share them with the campus.

The plans the “pioneer” departments developed share some key features, including: learning outcomes that focus on knowledge and skills unique to the discipline, assessment strategies that incorporate testing within designated courses, and projects or portfolios that students prepare at the end of their studies in the major.

The Departments of Chemistry, Finance, Psychology, and Spanish and Portuguese begin their assessment plans by first outlining desired learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills students should acquire in order to succeed in the major and in broader professional, social, and cultural domains.

The Department of Finance in the Tippie College of Business conceives of its learning goals in terms of the application of principles, the use of technologies, the analysis of situations, and the communication of findings.

The Department of Chemistry seeks to impart a working knowledge of chemistry vocabulary, analytical models, and basic laboratory skills, and a content knowledge across the major disciplines and sub-disciplines of the field. The chemistry curriculum also aims to develop advanced research skills, independent and creative thought, and an understanding of the mechanisms of the profession.

The Department of Psychology wants majors to gain understanding of scientific methodologies for examining psychological questions, a content knowledge across the principle theories and perspectives in the field, the ability to apply such knowledge to a range of situations, and an appreciation for ethical standards and diversity goals within the discipline.

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese articulates its goals in terms of knowledge (linguistic, literary, historical, and cultural) and skills (conversation, writing, literary, linguistic, and cultural analysis).

All of these departments have developed similar plans for assessing learning outcomes, mostly using a combination of exams, projects, portfolios, and surveys.

The Department of Finance uses specific examination questions to evaluate students’ ability to apply principles to quantitative and conceptual problems. Faculty and practitioners assess student competence in tools and methods by evaluating write-ups and presentations. The department’s assessment plan spells out the standards for evaluation clearly, and the mechanisms for evaluation are well integrated into the program.

The Department of Chemistry will administer standardized exams to all juniors and seniors; require a final poster presentation, report, or paper from graduating seniors; and is creating a final “capstone course” that will be required of all majors near the completion of their studies.

The Department of Psychology, in addition to tracking graduating students’ plans through a survey, will construct standard examination questions to be embedded in the exams for core required courses at every level. Furthermore, the department will assess the curriculum as a whole for its introduction, extension, and refinement of the key learning outcomes, and will engage in regular reflection and adjustment based on examination results and faculty feedback.
The Department of Spanish and Portuguese, in addition to giving basic exams in oral and written competency in the language, is developing a portfolio system that will require students to collect coursework from different stages in their studies and compose reflective essays concerning individual courses, their coursework as a whole, and their experience with study abroad.

Assessment and Accreditation Requirements

Outside of the “pioneer” departments, existing mechanisms for defining educational goals and assessing outcomes vary across campus. In many colleges and departments (such as the Tippie College of Business and the Colleges of Education, Engineering, and Nursing), goals and outcomes are strongly influenced by national accreditation requirements in the field. This is also the case for some departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, such as the Schools of Music and Journalism and Mass Communication.

In the College of Nursing, for example, standards for both curriculum and outcomes are set by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). A standardized exam administered at the conclusion of every course, a second predictive exam for the licensing examination, and the state licensing exam itself test the learning outcomes.

The College of Education, as another example, requires teacher education program graduates to demonstrate competence according to eleven University of Iowa teaching standards derived from the ten Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards, and aligned with the eight standards used to evaluate teachers in the state of Iowa. Subsets of the required teacher education courses focus on each of the standards; in order to pass core courses in a given semester, students must document attainment of the courses’ “focal standards” and include that documentation in their electronic portfolios. The College also assesses teacher education program students in other ways at regular checkpoints. Each semester they must maintain a minimum UI and cumulative GPA of 2.70. They must earn satisfactory supervisor and cooperating teacher evaluations during all field experiences. In order to student teach, they must have met all prerequisites and also have program area recommendation (students who wish to teach outside of the immediate geographic area must meet additional requirements). Faculty monitor students’ professional dispositions regularly; even where academic performance is satisfactory, a student may be dismissed from the program for a pattern of poor evaluations in this area. Finally, in order to be recommended for licensure, students in the elementary TEP must meet or exceed the state-established criterion score on one of two Praxis II tests that assess content knowledge.

The College of Engineering is held to external standards regarding its objectives and outcomes by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Chemical engineering, for example, is required to assess student achievement—in terms of scientific and technical knowledge, problem solving skills, and the ability to pursue professional and advanced studies in the field—on a continuous basis. Engineering departments, like their counterparts in Education and Nursing, assess student learning at both the micro and macro levels, through exams and quizzes in individual courses and a sequence of program-level assessment tools designed to gauge a program’s overall performance. Such assessment tools include interviews and surveys of students, employers, and alumni, and faculty retreats held at the end of every semester.
Common Strategies for Developing Assessment Parameters

Departments not subject to accreditation processes that dictate outcomes assessment parameters use several common strategies to develop their own. Many departments use more than one of these strategies.

Several departments require students to produce portfolios as they progress through the major. These portfolios typically contain several examples of a student’s writing and creative abilities, and serve a dual purpose in that they can also be shown to prospective graduate programs or employers. In some cases students decide what to include in the portfolio, and in others departments strictly define the contents. Sociology, French and Italian, history, journalism and mass communication, and classics are examples of departments that use portfolios.

Finance, marketing, communication studies, and psychology use embedded questions or testing of students in specific courses. These performance measures help these departments determine what percentage of students in a course show mastery of given concepts.

Some departments measure student success by tracking successful attainment of employment, acceptance into graduate school, and/or pass rates on professional exams. Departments such as accounting, speech pathology and audiology, psychology, physics and astronomy, actuarial science, radiology/nuclear medicine technology, and pathology/clinical laboratory sciences believe these indirect measures provide a reasonable indicator that their curricula have successfully prepared students to move on in the profession.

Some departments and programs survey graduating students and/or alumni to measure and track successful employment and advanced training within the field. Examples include Russian, accounting, physics and astronomy, geoscience, statistics, political science, psychology, and mathematics.

Faculty and/or departmental committees regularly review and assess outcomes for students in integrative physiology, radiation/radiation sciences, social work, civil and environmental engineering, and mechanical and industrial engineering.

Professional Exams

For a number of majors, employment in the field requires some professional certification or licensure. Table II-15 lists these programs and the certification/licensing exams associated with them.

To the extent that UI departments are able to track student performance data—particularly at a level more granular than a total score on the exam—these data constitute an important method of assessing learning outcomes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Program</th>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>Pass Rate Information Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Exam</td>
<td>The CPA exam has four parts: financial accounting and reporting, auditing, regulation, and business and economic conditions. In 2006 the national pass rate for the four parts of the exam ranged from 42.4% to 44.6%, while the UI pass rate (for BBA students) ranged from 60.0% to 63.8%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actuarial Science</td>
<td>Professional exams by Society of Actuaries and Casualty Actuarial Society</td>
<td>The Society of Actuaries exam has four parts, taken by varying numbers of students, not all of whom are students in the UI actuarial science program. Pass rates on the parts of the exam for which the most recent data are available, May 2007, range from 47.6% to 62.5%. For all parts, UI students passed at a higher rate (about 46.6% higher) than the national average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Laboratory Sciences</td>
<td>Medical Technologist (MT) exam by American Society of Clinical Pathology and/or Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS) exam by National Credentialing Agency for Clinical Laboratory Personnel</td>
<td>UI students have had a 100% pass rate on both exams since 2003.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) Fundamentals of Engineering Exam</td>
<td>The Fundamentals of Engineering exam consists of 120 questions in a four-hour morning session and 60 questions in a four-hour afternoon session. For the afternoon session, exam takers choose one of seven modules: chemical, civil, electrical, environmental, industrial, mechanical, or other/general engineering. The exam is administered twice a year. In April 2007, UI pass rates ranged from 67% to 100% and national pass rates from 69% to 88%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Sports Studies: Health Promotion</td>
<td>Certified Health Education Specialist Exam and/or the American College of Sports Medicine Health and Fitness Instructor certification exam</td>
<td>A total of 76 UI students have taken the CHES exam since 1996. In five of the nine years, all of them passed the exam. The lowest pass rate in any year was 83.3%, and the average since 1996 is 93.7%. The national average is 78.5%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Sciences/ Management Information Systems</td>
<td>Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA) / Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) and Cisco certification</td>
<td>The Departments of Management Sciences and Management Information Systems do not have information on UI pass rates for the MCSA or MCSE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Medicine Technology</td>
<td>Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board; American Registry of Radiologic Technology (ARRT) nuclear medicine-specific certification exam</td>
<td>UI students have had a 100% first-time pass rate on both exams since 1986.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)</td>
<td>UI pass rates have exceeded state and national pass rates in 4 of the last 5 years. From 2003 to 2006 the UI pass rate ranged from 89.0% to 92.2%, while the national pass rate ranged from 85.3% to 87.9%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation Sciences</td>
<td>American Registry of Radiologic Technology (ARRT) advanced certification board exam</td>
<td>Taking the CT, CVI, and MRI professional exams is optional for students in these programs. The program is aware of five students who took the exam (one in CT and four in MRI) in 2007; all passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Program</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Pass Rate Information Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation Sciences/Diagnostic Medical Sonography</td>
<td>American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonography</td>
<td>The program teaches multiple specialty areas including abdominal sonography, OB/GYN sonography, and vascular technology and cardiac sonography. Students have the opportunity to complete specialty certifications in all of these separate areas. The average pass rate over the past five years is 93%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation Sciences/QM/PACS</td>
<td>American Registry of Radiologic Technology (ARRT) advanced certification board exam</td>
<td>Four out of five students who have taken the ARRT boards in the three years of the program’s existence have passed (80%). The national first-time candidate pass rate for advanced certification is 76.9%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation Sciences/Radiation Therapy</td>
<td>American Registry of Radiologic Technology (ARRT) advanced certification board exam</td>
<td>Pass rate was 100% in 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2006; 83% in 2005.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation Sciences/Radiologic Technology</td>
<td>American Registry of Radiologic Technology (ARRT) primary certification board exam</td>
<td>The RT Program has a 100% passing rate over the past 10 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many departments provide a broad education that prepares students for entry into any of a wide variety of graduate and professional degree programs. These departments do not generally collect data about student performance on the various exams they take to get into those programs. For example, students in political science, biochemistry, integrative physiology, philosophy, and psychology frequently take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), Optometry Admission Test (OAT), or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Students in some programs (such as physics and astronomy and Spanish and Portuguese) take the Subject GRE. These test results are useful to the departments in assessing the extent to which they are preparing students for graduate and professional schools, but because only a select subset of students attempt the exam, the results are not useful for more general purposes.

Foreign language departments such as French, Spanish and Portuguese, and Asian languages and literature require students to pass proficiency exams (e.g., Paris Chamber of Commerce or American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language exams).

In order to graduate from a teacher education program and be recommended for licensure to teach in the state of Iowa, elementary education students must meet or exceed the state-established criterion score on one of two Praxis II exams that assess content knowledge.

Currently, there is no central repository for data regarding the rates at which UI students pass these various exams (as compared to state or national pass rates). As departments begin to use these data in their formal outcomes assessment efforts, however, the data will become more widely available.

**4c: Useful curricula**

**Post-Graduation Activities**

Another potential indirect measure of how effectively students have achieved desired learning outcomes is the extent to which graduates attain employment or are accepted to pursue graduate study. The Pomerantz Career Center (described in the Environments and Resources for Learning section of this self-study) surveys recent graduates each year to find out if they are employed or pursuing further education. Table II-16 summarizes the survey results, by college, for the graduating class of 2005-06.
Table II-16:
Post-Graduation Status, 2005-06

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>% of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>2,649</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing (BSN Only)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>4,031</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed or in Further Education</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>% of Respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>1,127</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing (BSN Only)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>2,154</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response rates vary considerably by college; the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) had the lowest, at only 49%, whereas all Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates responded.

Of those who responded, most reported that they were employed or pursuing further education—90% overall, with a range from 86% in CLAS to 100% for College of Nursing graduates.

The Pomerantz Career Center also reports detailed statistics at 6-month follow-up with Tippie College of Business graduates. Table II-17 gives placement outcomes for 320 undergraduate business students out of 499 who graduated in May 2006. Table II-18 shows the high, low, mean, and median income for those graduates who are employed (in $5,000 increments).

Table II-17:
Post-Graduation Status, Tippie College of Business, May 2006 Graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduating Respondents/Class Size</th>
<th>320/499 (64%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placed</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently Employed</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in Further Schooling</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still Seeking</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$52,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>$52,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Curriculum Review Process

As described in the institutional section of this self-study, University policy calls for every department to be reviewed at least once every seven years. In these reviews, the relevant college and the Office of the Provost consider, among many other things, evidence concerning the effectiveness of the curriculum.

In addition, every college has in place policies according to which tenure track faculty develop and control curricular content, at the departmental and collegiate levels.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) provides an example of how the process applies at two levels:

**Departmental curriculum development**: Typically, a committee composed of tenured and tenure track faculty from a given department will develop the curriculum for that department’s major program(s). The committee periodically reviews the major requirements to ensure they remain current for the field and to ensure that students have access to the courses they need to complete their degree programs. Often, the committee handles faculty course assignments as well. CLAS has made the creation of new courses a fairly streamlined process, allowing faculty to develop new curricula with a minimum of impediments.

**College-wide curriculum development**: CLAS exercises a greater degree of control over General Education Program (GEP) courses, as described in the “Common Academic Experiences” section of this self-study. The Educational Policy Committee (EPC) sets overall content requirements, and the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) reviews all GEP courses on a rotating basis every five years. Both the EPC and GECC comprise tenured and tenure track faculty from a variety of disciplines.

The Tippie College of Business uses a similar system that requires different procedures depending on whether a change is department or college-wide. Departmental curricular changes are moved from the department to the Undergraduate Program Office, where the associate dean for the undergraduate program and the advising staff review the changes and provide suggestions. College-wide changes generally follow a process that involves review by both a faculty committee on undergraduate programs, and the Elected Faculty Council. Only after approval of both faculty bodies are College-wide curricular changes implemented.

The College of Nursing also uses a comparable system. A standing committee, the
Academic Council, is charged with addressing all curricular issues, and proposals go through a process of review by the College’s Faculty Organization, which comprises the College’s faculty as a whole. In addition to institutional considerations, the College of Nursing must adhere to curricular standards set by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). Curriculum changes must be reported to AACN and the State Board of Nursing.

The College of Engineering also maintains a standing curriculum committee responsible for reviewing and evaluating all existing and any proposed curricula within the College; reviewing and evaluating all existing and any proposed courses taught within the College or required in any of its curricula; and making appropriate recommendations to the dean and the faculty. The dean or the dean’s representative serves as an ex officio, nonvoting member. The Engineering Faculty Council also appoints a nonvoting student member every year for a one-year term, in consultation with the dean’s office and the president of the Associated Students of Engineering.

In the College of Education, the K-12 teacher education programs are the only undergraduate programs. All teacher education candidates take a set of core courses; secondary education (grades 7-12) candidates also fulfill the requirements for a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences major in the content area in which they are preparing to teach, and elementary education majors must complete at least 24 semester hours in an area of specialization. As described above, each of the core courses in a given program area is aligned with one or more of the eleven UI teacher education standards, which are set by the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners—and which are in turn aligned with the INTASC teaching standards and the state of Iowa teaching standards.

The College of Education’s programs are also in the process of ensuring that their curricula align with the standards of their respective content area professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the International Reading Association, or the National Council of Teachers of English. Curricula for the elementary education areas of specialization must meet Iowa Board of Educational Examiners criteria for endorsements to teach in those areas.

And, every five years, the teacher licensure program faculty and administrators complete an internal review, to ensure that the teacher education programs meet the conditions of the Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 79, Standards for Practitioner and Administrator Preparation Programs. Following the internal review, a team led by the Iowa Department of Education and including representatives from peer institutions across the state conducts an external review. For The University of Iowa to continue recommending candidates for Iowa licensure, the College’s programs must receive satisfactory ratings in all areas.

Some departments and colleges use advisory boards composed of professionals in the field to assist in providing feedback about curriculum design and implementation. Twice a year, the Tippie College of Business gathers its Board of Visitors—made up of respected business leaders from around the country—and gathers such feedback. Most departments in the College of Engineering have a standing Professional Advisory Board that convenes once or twice every academic year, as do the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Department of Physics and Astronomy. These boards regularly make recommendations for curriculum review and reform.
Creation of a New Major, Minor, or Certificate Program

The creation of a new major, minor, or certificate program involves a deliberative process in all colleges. Again, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences provides an illustrative example.

Proposals for new programs must demonstrate conformity to the general design of the College’s existing programs (with special provisions for interdisciplinary programs); specify the required and elective courses and the frequency with which the department expects to offer them; assess the impact of the new program on University resources, including an estimate of all costs associated with implementing the program; and address any issues of possible duplication across the Regents institutions. For new interdisciplinary programs, each participating unit must specify the courses it will offer and on what schedule.

A proposal for a new undergraduate major, minor, or certificate program must first be approved by the appropriate collegiate bodies. Then, for all colleges, the proposal must be approved by the Office of the Provost. Major programs must also be approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa. In reviewing proposals for new programs, the Board of Regents considers the quality of the proposed offering; the need or demand for it in Iowa; potential duplication across the Regent universities; costs, reallocations, and long-term resource needs for the program; and alignment with the University’s and the Board’s mission and strategic plans. The process generally takes six months or longer. It provides for a thoughtful review and allows faculty to develop innovative programs without compromising strong academic standards.

New undergraduate degree programs recently approved by the Board of Regents include an interdisciplinary program in informatics (approved in June 2007), to be administered by the Department of Computer Science, in which students will study computing along with a “cognate area” such as art, biological sciences, economics, music, or one of many others; the Bachelor of Applied Studies, for place- or work-bound students, described elsewhere in this report; and the new interdisciplinary major in performing arts entrepreneurship, approved in March 2003, an innovative program that lets students pursue professional studies in the arts while simultaneously developing the skills to create market-based opportunities in the arts.

Planning for the Future

Almost all respondents to the DEO survey conducted for this self-study indicated that their departments have basic mechanisms in place for planning for the future of their undergraduate programs. Departments regularly review and, when appropriate, revise their undergraduate curricula in response to changes in students’ needs and in the relevant fields of study and practice. Most departments are also planning for the implementation of formal outcomes assessment plans, as detailed above.

Some departments are considering plans to expand and/or diversify their undergraduate majors. The Department of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering, for example, is considering increased participation in the General Education Program. The Department of Physics and Astronomy is exploring creating a learning community in conjunction with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Departments of Computer Science, Cinema and Comparative Literature, and Mathematics are considering other mechanisms to more actively recruit students to their majors. The Department of Dance, on the other hand, is seeking to implement more selective admissions, as the Department of Health and Sports Studies did this fall. The
Department of Communication Studies is likewise exploring ways to reduce the number of majors in order to match the number of students to the available resources and enhance the overall quality of the undergraduate experience for their students.

Several departments are considering revisions to their curricula, in order to provide more structure for their majors. The Department of English plans to institute a formal “gateway course” for the major, while the Departments of Economics and Mathematics are creating new tracks for their majors. The Russian program is exploring distance courses that would be coordinated with the University of Northern Iowa and Iowa State University. The Department of Radiology hopes to expand its online courses, and eventually create an online degree program. The Department of Physics and Astronomy is exploring increased collaboration with the College of Education to help train high school instructors. The Departments of Anthropology, French and Italian, and Social Work also plan to increase their emphasis on educational and career opportunities for students in their fields.

In the past few years the Center for Teaching has supported the development of service learning courses—that is, courses that integrate academic study with engagement in the community. Several programs, including International Programs and the Departments of Health and Sport Studies and Spanish and Portuguese, are actively working to incorporate more service learning into their curricula. The Department of Marketing plans to increase the number of field studies courses, which have students work on business problems in cooperation with partnering companies.

Conclusions—Processes for Assessing and Improving Undergraduate Majors

While most departments have some form of outcomes assessment in place—some tied to accreditation standards or professional exams, some less clearly defined—the University’s current effort to define formal outcomes assessment plans in each of the undergraduate major programs is a very important step toward gathering better data about how well we perform our mission and how well we serve our students. These data will, in turn, assist us in improving our programs and students’ learning.

The curriculum review processes in place in every college ensure that faculty can introduce innovations and update courses and programs as needed while keeping programs consistent with the missions of the department, college, and University. Most respondents to the DEO survey indicated that their departments also are planning for future developments in their majors.

Processes for Improving Instruction within the Majors and Across the University

The University has a variety of processes in place to ensure the quality of instruction in undergraduate courses, from teaching evaluations, to formal recognition of excellent teaching, to professional development opportunities for instructors.

Qualifications of Instructors

As described in the institutional section of this self-study, various indicators such as research productivity, faculty salaries, and membership in national academies help to illustrate the overall quality of the faculty at The University of Iowa. According to fall 2007 data from the Office of the Provost, 96.7% of UI tenured and tenure track faculty have a terminal degree.

The University’s most recent biennial report to the Board of Regents on faculty activities
(August 2007) indicates that in fall 2006 tenured and tenure track faculty taught 51% of undergraduate credit hours in total, including General Education Program, elective, and major program hours. The rest are taught by visiting and adjunct professors and lecturers (27%) and graduate student instructors (22%). Respondents to the DEO survey conducted for this self-study indicated that a median of 80% of classes in their major programs are taught by full time tenured and tenure track faculty members. According to data provided by the Office of the Provost, the median number of majors per faculty member in a department is 11.2; the 25th percentile is 3.2, and the 75th percentile is 21.3 (n=60).

Professional Development of Instructors

UI has implemented a number of University-wide initiatives to improve teaching. These include:

The Council on Teaching advises the University administration on teaching issues, including curriculum development and funding, policies and procedures, and experimental and non-traditional educational programs. It administers a number of teaching awards.

Instructional Improvement Awards, up to $5,000 each, awarded by the Council on Teaching, “support instructional initiatives that will make exceptional and specific contributions to learning.” The Council makes about eight or nine of these awards each year.

Faculty may apply periodically for Career Development Awards, which provide a semester of paid leave (or half time for a full year) during which faculty pursue research or creative projects. Each award is expected to result in at least one “product,” which might take the form of a published work, an exhibit, a performance, a grant application, or new or revised course materials. This competitive program is designed to encourage innovation in teaching as well as other scholarly work.

In 1996, the Council on Teaching established the Center for Teaching, with the mission to “promote and support efforts to enhance instruction at The University of Iowa.” The center has established four overlapping goals:

Support and promote the development of teaching skills

Strengthen the culture of teaching

Serve as a symbol of the University’s commitment to teaching

Influence policy discussions in ways that support the development of an excellent teaching and learning environment

Teaching evaluations and review are part of the review process (annual for probationary faculty, every five years for tenured faculty) for all faculty members.

Some departments offer training programs, formal mentoring programs, or both for teaching assistants and/or faculty. The nature of these programs varies greatly, from single sessions at the beginning of the academic year to regular meetings in year-long programs. Some of the best programs set forth specific learning objectives around teaching and learning in higher education and include observation of and feedback about classroom teaching by the TAs and new faculty members. As mentioned in
the institutional section of this self-study, a Mentoring Task Force completed its work in November 2007, and the Office of the Provost is following up on the task force’s recommendations, including the development of a centralized web site to provide information and support for mentors and mentees.

In 2006-07 the College of Education began offering a seminar in college teaching to address the needs of TAs who seek intensive training in the pedagogy of higher education. Taught by the director of the College’s Office of Graduate Teaching Excellence—a clinical associate professor of educational psychology and measurement—the course attracts students from across campus. In fall 2007, 18 students from 10 departments in 4 colleges enrolled in the course.

Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

Probationary Faculty Review Process

Probationary faculty undergo annual reviews, which have two interrelated purposes—one developmental, the other evaluative. The reviews provide faculty with substantial feedback regarding their progress toward meeting departmental and collegiate expectations for reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion, with the goal of increasing the faculty member’s chances of future success. The evaluative function of the reviews helps administrators make decisions about issues such as reappointment and extension of the tenure clock. Annual reviews touch on teaching, research, and service.

The Office of the Provost provides guidelines that identify best practices for conducting probationary reviews. The guidelines call for a comprehensive process that addresses all aspects of the faculty member’s performance (teaching, research, and service) from a range of viewpoints. When considering teaching, the review should “Include both student and peer evaluations, as well as a review or critique of course materials. Include information provided by senior faculty who actually have visited each of the faculty member’s classes or observed the faculty member in clinical teaching. Discuss the ‘mix’ of courses taught. Address graduate student research supervision if applicable.”

Promotion and Tenure Process

According to the University’s Procedures for Tenure and Promotion Decision Making, the dossier of a candidate for promotion and/or tenure must include a summary of accomplishments and future plans concerning teaching, a list of courses taught and students supervised, copies of course materials, and student teaching evaluations.

Every college’s written procedures governing promotion decision making must specify a method of peer evaluation of teaching, including peer observation of teaching if practicable. The report on peer evaluation of teaching must include (a) comparative analysis of the quality of the candidate’s teaching in the context of the candidate’s department or unit; (b) a summary analysis of the student teaching evaluation data contained in the candidate’s dossier, including departmental average comparison data where possible; (c) a description, where appropriate, of the balance between the candidate’s undergraduate and graduate teaching; (d) a description and assessment of the candidate’s academic advising responsibilities; and (e) a consideration of any special circumstances concerning the faculty member’s teaching performance.

Assessing the Classroom Environment

The Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) system uses scannable answer sheets
to collect student opinions about courses and instructors, and provides a standard set of summary results. Instructors create customized forms by choosing from a bank of approximately 200 evaluative statements appropriate to their courses. The ACE system also allows instructor-generated items that require either a scaled response or open-ended comments. ACE results include the number and percentage of students agreeing or disagreeing with each evaluative statement, an item mean, median, and variability measures.

Every semester, each undergraduate class collects information from students about the effectiveness of the instruction in the class. Many instructors choose to use the ACE system, but in some departments, the faculty have chosen another approach, such as narrative responses to specific prompts. In whatever form student input comes, it plays a part in decisions including annual salary determinations, tenure and promotion decisions, and post-tenure reviews.

**Developing Initiatives**

The Council on Teaching is drawing up two surveys—one for faculty, and one for departmental executive officers—to gather more information about current teaching evaluation practices and to collect copies of instruments currently in use. The council is also reviewing the literature to learn more about best practices elsewhere. The goal is to make materials available to departments that want to implement more effective teaching evaluation. The council has discussed the possibility of working with the Center for Teaching to develop and offer a workshop on evaluating teaching and training peer evaluators.

**Recognition of Effective Teaching**

The University offers several campus-wide awards that recognize faculty and staff for their achievements in teaching. Faculty, staff, and/or students nominate instructors for these awards.

**Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards**

The Council on Teaching awards Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards each year, in the amount of $1,000 each (25 per year prior to 2007-08, now increased to 30 per year). To ensure fair comparison, the council accepts nominations in two categories—TAs who have “complete” responsibility for a course, and those who have “partial” responsibility. The criteria differ for the two categories, but focus on how the nominee’s teaching enhances student learning.

**President & Provost Award for Teaching Excellence**

The President and Provost Award for Teaching Excellence is awarded to up to three tenure track or clinical track faculty members who have demonstrated a sustained record of teaching excellence and commitment to student learning. Each person so recognized receives a $3,000 honorarium. Beginning in 2007-08, the council will make an award to a non-tenure track faculty member as well.

**President’s Award for Technology Innovation**

The President’s Award for Technology Innovation, administered by the Academic Technologies Advisory Council, recognizes the year’s most creative uses of technology for the benefit of our learning community. The recipient receives $3,000. In selecting
the winning innovation, the council considers the breadth of its impact on the learning community, with highest value placed on projects that enhance interactions between students and instructors, among students and their peers, or across the institution, or that create ties between course-based learning and workplace applications.

**Collegiate Teaching Award**

**Collegiate Teaching Awards** go each year to faculty who demonstrate unusually significant and meritorious achievement in teaching. Considerations include how the nominee's teaching and informal contacts enhance student learning, an analysis of teaching materials and class activities, scholarly works or creative achievements, and student evaluations of the nominee’s teaching ability. Award winners receive $2,000.

**Conclusions—Processes for Improving Instruction within the Majors and Across the University**

The University has affirmed its commitment to quality teaching by ensuring that teaching is addressed in faculty reviews and in promotion and tenure processes, implementing a variety of initiatives to help instructors improve, and offering prestigious awards to recognize excellence in teaching. Initiatives such as new mentoring resources from the Office of the Provost and the Council on Teaching’s study of best practices in teaching evaluation promise to provide additional support for instructors and evaluators.

**Student Perceptions of Major Programs**

The student satisfaction survey, described in the “Research Processes” section of this self-study, included several questions regarding student perceptions of specified aspects of their major programs. All questions were rated on a 5 category Likert scale where 1=“not satisfied” and 5= very satisfied.” Points 2 through 4 were not defined. Because not all respondents selected a response for every survey question, response percentages do not total 100% in all cases.

**Availability of Major Programs**

The first question asked students about their satisfaction with the availability of major programs at The University of Iowa. Table II-19 gives the response distribution by college and also summarizes responses given by students who reported their majors as “open,” students who reported having just one major, and students who reported having two or more majors.
Overall, more than 80% of students in every college selected four or five on the satisfaction scale with regard to the availability of majors. The same is true of students with single and multiple majors. Only 61% of Open Majors responded to the question with a four or five, however, which might reflect some students’ frustration related to selective or limited access programs (as described above). In other words, certain responses might reflect students’ disappointment that desired major programs are not “available” to them because they have not been admitted to those programs.

**Availability of Courses**

The survey asked if students were satisfied with the availability of courses within the major. Table II-20 gives the response distribution by college and also summarizes responses given by students who reported having just one major and students who reported having two or more majors.
Students in the Tippie College of Business and the College of Engineering expressed considerably more satisfaction with their ability to get into courses for their major than those in the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Education, and Nursing. Overall, more than 60% of students with single majors and with multiple majors selected four or five on the satisfaction scale.

**Interaction with Faculty**

The survey also asked how satisfied students were with the level of interaction with faculty within their major. Table II-21 gives the response distribution by college and also summarizes responses given by students who reported having just one major and students who reported having two or more majors.

Table II-20: Student Satisfaction with Availability of Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table II-21: Student Satisfaction with Interaction with Faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in the Tippie College of Business and the College of Engineering expressed considerably more satisfaction with their ability to get into courses for their major than those in the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Education, and Nursing. Overall, more than 60% of students with single majors and with multiple majors selected four or five on the satisfaction scale.
How satisfied are you with the level of interaction you have with faculty in your major? (1=not satisfied, 5=very satisfied)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Breakouts</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Major</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Majors</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, more students reported being satisfied with the level of interaction with faculty (54% of single majors and 61% of double majors selected four or five on the satisfaction scale) than reported low or no satisfaction (18% of single majors and 14% of double majors selected one or two). The Colleges of Education and Nursing stand out, in that significantly more students reported satisfaction with the level of interaction with faculty in those colleges (72% in Education and 78% in Nursing selected four or five on the satisfaction scale) than in any of the other three colleges (52% to 59%).

**Conclusions—Student Perceptions of Major Programs**

The survey results suggest that overall, as one might expect at a comprehensive research university, University of Iowa students are pleased with the wide range of major programs available to them. Once they declare a major, they are generally satisfied with the availability of courses and with the level of faculty interaction within the program.

**Summary and Conclusions—Education within the Major**

**Signs of Success**

The great diversity of disciplines, pedagogies, and professional aims across the University’s colleges and departments is a tremendous asset and strength of a comprehensive university. The system of majors as it exists here delegates specialized educational decisions to those most qualified to make them—the faculty, who create and maintain specialized curricula and provide leadership for their academic programs.

Given the wide variety of opportunities for specialized study, it is not surprising that, overall, students express satisfaction with the availability of major programs. Students also express general satisfaction with advising and with the level of faculty interaction within the major, both important factors in supporting effective learning.

Effective formal processes are in place for ensuring regular curriculum review. Faculty govern curriculum decisions, as they should, and programs have the flexibility to change in response to the environment without jeopardizing the mission of the academic units that house them. The formal outcomes assessment plans under development in each of the undergraduate majors will add to departments’ ability to monitor and improve their effectiveness. The plans will serve an accountability function, but more important, if well designed, they will help faculty fine-tune their curricula and improve student learning.
Moving Forward

The effort to implement formal outcomes assessment plans in the undergraduate major programs must be part of a larger effort to foster a culture of evidence-driven assessment in all parts of the University. In addition to studying the outcomes of individual programs, for example, we need to collect more data that will allow us to consider, from a University-wide perspective, how policies and practices within major programs (such as admission requirements, curricular design and review, teacher training and recognition, etc.) correlate with enrollment patterns, progress to degree, and post-graduation outcomes. Although many of these variables are tied to the contingencies and requirements of different disciplines, departments, and colleges, faculty and administrators at every level should have information necessary to understand some of the quantifiable implications of curricular and admissions decisions. Such a review would allow the University to make a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of various components of concentrated study, and measure the performance of specialized education overall against the goals set out in the University’s strategic plan.
Involvement inside and outside the classroom fosters leadership, multicultural understanding, civic responsibility, professional expertise, and academic achievement.

Undergraduate Education
IV. Learning Alongside the Curriculum

Introduction

The first goal in *The Iowa Promise* is “To create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers.” To meet that objective, and to carry out our mission “to educate students for success and personal fulfillment,” we cannot and do not limit our attention to the formal teaching and learning that takes place within the curriculum. We must also aspire to the highest quality in—and widespread use of—programs and activities that further learning alongside the curriculum.

An extensive body of research exists that demonstrates that student involvement both inside and outside the classroom benefits students in many ways, and that institutions can shape the undergraduate experience in ways that will encourage such involvement (Astin, 1985; Strange & Banning, 2001). Our own RISE study finds that “as with students elsewhere, engagement matters and it matters early.” In addition to encouraging academic engagement, the University must provide—and support or collaborate with others who provide—opportunities for involvement in co-curricular activities, which can contribute to the development of leadership skills, multicultural understanding, civic responsibility, professional expertise, and any number of other valuable aptitudes and attitudes.

Programs and activities such as these, by contributing in various ways to student learning alongside the curriculum, also contribute to many of the undergraduate education-related strategies in *The Iowa Promise*—including the following examples:

1c: Mission pervades organization
1e: Institutional integrity

**Strategy:** Ensure that all students graduate with strong core skills, a broad liberal arts education, and concentrated study in one or more majors by:
... Providing them with opportunities to develop leadership and teamwork skills...

... Continuing efforts to internationalize the educational experience

**Strategy: Help undergraduates prepare for life within and beyond college by:**

... Communicating to them the value of community involvement and participation in democratic governance

Creating with them a safe environment in which to live, learn, and work, including opportunities to participate in health-promoting activities

... Providing curricular and cocurricular opportunities that will enable them to understand and succeed in a multicultural and global community

Programs and activities that help students develop skills and extend their reach academically and personally have many benefits, from increasing retention to increasing options post-graduation. Perhaps more important, when successful, these activities help students recognize their capacity for accomplishment, and equip students with tools they will use far into the future.

**Scope**

The self-study steering committee asked the subcommittee on Getting Involved to look at the opportunities for educationally purposeful co-curricular engagement that are available to UI students; to determine, if possible, the extent to which students take advantage of those opportunities; and to identify barriers to and assess the benefits of engagement, from the point of view of both students and faculty/staff.

**Research Process**

As described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study, the subcommittee on Getting Involved relied primarily on qualitative research methods that included a series of structured and semi-structured interviews with faculty and staff (the departmental interviews) and with students (the student focus groups).

Information about co-curricular opportunities associated with departments and major programs, as well as some information about advising, was gathered from the DEO survey and from supplemental interviews conducted by the subcommittee on Education within the Major.

The analysis of student engagement at The University of Iowa also relies heavily on the findings of the RISE study.

**Getting Involved Subcommittee Members:**

David Grady, Associate Vice President and Director, University Life Centers (co-chair)

Scott McNabb, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Policy and Leadership Studies, College of Education (co-chair)

Bill Nelson, Associate Director, University Life Centers and Director, Office of Student Life (co-chair)

Kelley Ashby, Associate Director, Office of Student Life, 6/06 through 12/06, and Associate Director, Pomerantz Career Center, 1/07 to present

Angela Bong, Graduate Student

Wayne Fett, Senior Associate Director, Recreational Services

Jennifer Hemmingsen, Internship and Assessments Coordinator, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Todd Ingram, Clinical Assistant Professor, College of Nursing

Robert Kirby, Associate Director, University of Iowa Honors Program

Kenny Layton, Undergraduate Student

Kim Marra, Professor, Department of Theatre Arts, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Mary Mathew Wilson, Coordinator, Civic Engagement Program

Dave Merry, Graduate Student

Amy Rohlfing, Undergraduate Student

Von Stange, Director, University Housing

Michelle Stricker, Adjunct Lecturer, Pomerantz Career Center

Pam Trimpe, Program Associate, Old Capitol Museum
Summary of Findings

UI students have access to an impressive array of opportunities for educationally purposeful co-curricular activity. The University is building on its commitment to undergraduate involvement in research with a variety of new programs, and on its commitment to experiential and service learning through programs such as Service Learning Institutes for faculty.

Students who participate in these activities—according to their own comments, the observations of faculty and staff, and the extensive body of research on the subject of student engagement—enjoy many educational, vocational, and personal benefits. Despite the volume of options and the positive outcomes, however, evidence from the RISE study suggests that only a small percentage of students engages in these activities regularly.

Factors that might contribute to low involvement include poor coordination of co-curricular activities across units, ineffective advertising, and lack of meaningful evaluation. Also, students report that involvement decisions are guided by peer influence, which suggests that the University can do more to help students make good choices.

Description and Evaluation of Programs and Activities that Contribute to Learning Alongside the Curriculum

Educationally Purposeful Co-Curricular Involvement Opportunities

Overview

The sheer volume of opportunities for educationally purposeful co-curricular engagement at UI makes creating a comprehensive list of them very difficult. To arrive at a representative sample of the kinds of activities available—and a sense of the frequency with which departments offer them—the subcommittee on Getting Involved started by creating a list of types of activities, organized into general categories. The subcommittee turned this into a checklist, and asked the departments they interviewed to note which kinds of opportunities they make available to students.

Table II-22 lists the types of activities the subcommittee identified, by category. Appendix II-H details which departments reported offering each type of co-curricular involvement opportunity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II-22: Types of Student Involvement Opportunities Offered by University of Iowa Offices/Departments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic/Course Related/Skill Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting co-curricular activities with academic course work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For-credit courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest lecturer/speaker/panelist opportunities for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic/Course Related/Skill Building</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership training, education, and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-credit topic-based workshops facilitated by non-students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to represent UI off campus at regional/national meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement in presentations, research, and scholarly activity with faculty/staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement in publication or media development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate research and/or teaching assistantships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career/Employment/Networking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/professional networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting or facilitating networking opportunities with alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships or practica (for-credit and non)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships (paid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity training/education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to interact with people from different cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Events/Exhibitions/Performances</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event/program/workshop planning and production by students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student exhibitions and performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and Well-Being</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellness activities/initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual exploration and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service/Volunteerism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory board membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus-based service/volunteerism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based service/volunteerism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For example, Table II-22 illustrates that representatives from 14 offices and departments reported offering opportunities for students to interact with people from different cultures. They were:

- Center for Diversity & Enrichment
- Center for Teaching
- College of Nursing
- Fraternity & Sorority Life Programs
- International Programs
- International Students & Scholars
- Museum Studies
- Office of Student Life
- Office for Study Abroad
- Political Science
- Rape Victim Advocacy Program
- Student Disability Services
- Theatre Arts
- Women in Science and Engineering

Learning alongside the curriculum can take many forms. Field work, laboratory experiments, and simulations can enrich classroom-based courses. Practica can round out professional educations. Internships can add practical skills to academic principles. Studies abroad, cultural events, and artistic or political performances can refine and extend the preparations that students have made in their coursework. Service learning arrangements can benefit students and social organizations alike. These experiences become even more valuable when they are accompanied by critical reflection on the experience.

For purposes of this self-study, the subcommittee on Getting Involved chose to address the following categories of co-curricular activity:
Student organizations and activities sponsored by the Office of Student Life
Co-curricular activities associated with colleges, departments, and major programs
Undergraduate research
Study abroad
Volunteerism, civic engagement, and service learning
Intellectual, creative, and cultural contributions
Social justice and advocacy
Governance
Leadership
Peer education and mentoring
Student employment
Recreation

Recognition and Funding of Student Organizations

According to the Policies and Regulations Affecting Students, a student organization may be officially recognized by the Partnership for Student Governments at Iowa (PSGI), a collegiate dean, Recreational Services, or the Office of Student Life (OSL).

In FY 2008 the mandatory UI student activity fee is $29 and the official authorized budget for allocation to student organizations is $876,554. These funds are administered by PSGI’s Student Assembly Budgeting and Allocating Committee (SABAC), which consists of nine undergraduate representatives (six voting, three alternate) and five graduate or professional students (three voting, two alternate). All voting members of SABAC are PSGI senators. SABAC is advised by the director of the Office of Student Life. The committee is responsible for recommending both annual and supplemental funding.

Student Organizations and the Office of Student Life

The Office of Student Life (OSL) describes its mission as: “to provide educational, leadership, and social opportunities for the greater University community, with a primary focus on students. Our staff works with, through, and for students and student organizations, and in conjunction with other University and community partners, to enhance the holistic development of students and their academic and co-curricular experiences.”

The student organizations OSL supports range from the University of Iowa Student Government (UISG) and SCOPE (the Student Commission for Programming and Entertainment) to the Greek community, to social, service, and academic organizations such as the Indian Student Alliance, Habitat for Humanity, Alpha Phi Omega-Omicron Service Fraternity, the UI Association of Nursing Students, and the Mock Trial Club. A complete list of these organizations is available on the OSL web site.

For the 2007-08 academic year, 381 student organizations reported their membership numbers to the Office of Student Life for a total of 43,668 student memberships (no information is available regarding how many students are involved in more than one organization). A table of the groups and their membership numbers can be found in Appendix II-I. OSL has assigned most (344) of these organizations to a category in order to look at the distribution of organizations by type, as illustrated in Figure II-4.
OSL also sponsors or advises major annual events, diversity initiatives, leadership opportunities, and arts and entertainment programs.

**Dance Marathon**

The University of Iowa Dance Marathon is a student organization that provides year-round support to youth cancer victims and their families. “The Event” is a 24-hour Dance Marathon where students assemble to celebrate the child survivors and remember the children who have passed away throughout the year. Students plan and participate in other events throughout the year, the primary goal of which is to raise money for children with cancer and to educate the community about them.

Among the activities OSL sponsors are Dance Marathon, RiverFest and RiverRun (an annual, student-organized concert festival and run/walk race to benefit a local non-profit), Homecoming, the 10,000 Hours Show, and Welcome Week. OSL also offers services, such as Student Credit and Money Management Services, Student Legal Services, and the University Box Office.

OSL is involved in many diversity initiatives. It supports the annual Celebrating Cultural Diversity Festival and Martin Luther King, Jr. Human Rights Week, for example, and also maintains the Multi-Cultural Calendar, which provides a comprehensive listing of multi-cultural events on campus and in the area. The four campus cultural and resource centers—the Afro-American Cultural Center, Latino Native-American Cultural Center, Asian Pacific American Cultural Center, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Center—are units of the OSL, offering programs and services that include:

![Figure II-4: Number of Student Organizations by Category](as classified by the Office of Student Life)
Cultural celebrations and programs
Liaison with community organizations and services
Workshops, forums, and discussion groups
Study and meeting spaces
Computers
Library and other resource materials
Employment listings
Film series, TV lounge, and games
Party and social areas
Fully-equipped kitchen
Wheelchair accessible facilities

The Office of Student Life reports that 79 of the student clubs and organizations it recognizes, including both undergraduate and graduate student organizations, are academically oriented (see Appendix II-J for the complete list). Twenty-one of the OSL-recognized organizations (26%) are local affiliates for national associations, and seven (8%) are academic fraternal organizations. Undergraduate academic organizations emphasize co-curricular involvement, participation in interdisciplinary activities, and gaining exposure to and support for educational and professional experiences.

**The 10,000 Hours Show**

10K is a year-round effort to engage young people in volunteer service, culminating in a free concert for which the only admission is 10 or more volunteer hours to local nonprofits. The “show” of the 10,000 Hours Show is 10K volunteer staff reaching out to their peers to get them involved in their community through volunteering. The mission of the 10,000 Hours Shows nationally is to mobilize young people to meet immediate community needs and recognize those who do, helping develop the next generation of active community leaders.

**Co-curricular Activities Associated with Colleges, Departments, and Major Programs**

The DEO survey conducted for this self-study asked about co-curricular opportunities associated with departments’ major programs. Of DEOs surveyed, 37% (20 out of 54) indicated that their departments offer co-curricular activities, including workshops, job-shadowing, orientations for new majors, and working with student groups. Thirty-one percent (17 out of 54) of departments offer a lounge for undergraduates, and 89% (48 out of 54) have a student group associated with their major.

**A Representative Collegiate Example: The Tippie College of Business**

The Tippie College of Business offers one good example of how academic programs involve students in professional groups that match their interests and in governance groups that allow them to participate in decisions about College policies.

Student organizations are an integral part of the Tippie College of Business. The organizations of the College serve not only as a catalyst for networking with faculty, staff, and alumni, but also as a tool for students to excel both academically and as leaders. Nineteen organizations are associated with the Tippie College, some directed towards specific majors and others open to any business student. Some facilitate career advancement, some focus on community service, and others enhance the College environment.
The **Hawkinson Institute of Business Finance**, a selective organization within the College, focuses on career placement in the finance and accounting fields. Each year, 25 to 35 top undergraduate students are invited to join the organization on the basis of academic performance, leadership potential, and interpersonal skills. The institute works with these students throughout their academic careers to prepare them for challenging careers upon graduation. The Hawkinson Institute provides résumé assistance, mock interviewing, and career coaching. The institute has maintained a 100% placement rate since it was established.

The encouragement of community service is a common goal among Tippie organizations. In 2006-07, business students participated in “The House that Tippie Built,” the largest community service project in the history of the College. Beta Alpha Psi sponsored the project, working in collaboration with numerous other College organizations to raise $50,000 to build a house for a family in need. Students held fund-raising events and physically built the Habitat for Humanity house.

The **Tippie College of Business Senate**, an organization focused on environmental enhancement within the College, is a newly formed body of undergraduate business students serving as a student advisory board. The Tippie Senate’s primary objective is to facilitate a forum for the exchange of ideas and to provide recommendations to the College’s Undergraduate Program Office, as well as to faculty and staff. The Senate is currently working to implement the Tippie College of Business Senior Class Gift Program, the first of its kind for the College. The program will encourage seniors to donate a small amount to the fund upon graduation and continue to contribute to the College as alumni. The program will begin a tradition, benefit future students, and demonstrate the impact of a Tippie education.

The **Tippie College of Business** and the Colleges of **Education**, **Engineering**, and **Nursing** all maintain web pages listing student organizations associated with those colleges.

### Representative Examples from the DEO Survey

#### Academic/Professional Development

The Department of Computer Science supports the campus chapters of two national computer science professional organizations—the Association for Computing Machinery, and **Women in Computer Science**. Faculty advise and support these groups. The wide-ranging activities of these groups include academic and technical presentations by guest speakers, career planning, conferences, visiting corporations, and social activities. Gifts from a corporate sponsor have provided each of the groups funding to cover several years of operating expenses.

Honors students in the Department of Accounting participate in **Beta Alpha Psi**, a student organization that holds weekly meetings with professional accounting organizations (in both the public and private accounting arenas), sponsors “Meet the Firms Night” in the fall and an awards banquet in the spring, and organizes field trips.

The School of Art and Art History has several student organizations: Undergraduate
Students in Design (USID), the Ceramics Society, the Art History Club, and the student chapter of the National Art Education Association (NAEA). USID meets regularly to exchange information about graphic design, and they hold a large show at the end of the academic year for senior BA and BFA students. The Ceramics Society raises money to visit ceramic studios in other cities and states, and sometimes to attend conferences. The Art History Club, made up of undergraduates, works with the graduate students of the Art History Society to organize symposia, field trips, and speakers. The student chapter of NAEA works to design professional development experiences for students.

Peer Mentoring

International Programs (IP) has established a student group called PRISM—Preparation and Resources for International Studies Majors, Minors and Maybes. The group sponsors monthly guest speakers on international careers, has a student mentoring program, develops service learning projects, and plans collaborative projects with other international student groups. IP also sponsors the International Crossroads Community, one of UI’s residential learning communities. And IP is establishing a Student Ambassadors program, which will send International Studies students out to talk with groups in their home communities about their experience at The University of Iowa, studying abroad, and internationalization topics in general. This program will help IP establish connections across the state, and will help students develop professional contacts.

Service and Outreach

The Department of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering fosters several student organizations, including the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Omega Chi Epsilon, the Chemical Engineering Honors Society, and the Multi-Ethnic Society of Engineers. These organizations organize and implement several outreach events, such as the Spooky Spring 5K to raise money for the Iowa City Homeless Shelter.

Creative Endeavor

The Department of Theatre Arts offers about 25 productions a year, all of them co-curricular, and all of them open not only to theatre majors but to anyone in the University community. The department also sponsors No Shame Theatre, a student organization that performs once a week in the Theatre Building. The department also was instrumental in founding the performing arts learning community for first-year CLAS students.

Social Interaction

The Department of Biochemistry sponsors a Biochemistry Undergraduate Majors (BUMS) club that organizes various activities and events during the year to bring the undergraduate majors together. In addition, undergraduates working in research laboratories present the results of their research at a biochemistry conference on campus each spring semester.

The College of Nursing provides student lounge areas in several places throughout the Nursing Building. These lounges provide spaces for students to meet informally, and often serve as the sites for organized social and professional activities. The College arranges a series of Monday night interactions geared to undergraduate students, called Monday Night Medleys. The College’s undergraduate student
professional organization is the University of Iowa Association of Nursing Students (UIANS). The University of Iowa Minority Student Nurse Association (UIMSNA) works to recruit, support, and mentor minority student nurses from racial and ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds that are historically underrepresented within the nursing community, including but not limited to men and persons of color. The Gamma Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the nursing honor society, sponsors several events throughout the year that encourage interactions among undergraduate and graduate students and faculty.

Undergraduate Research

To reap the full rewards of attending a major research university, undergraduates need ample opportunities to collaborate with faculty in conducting research.

Results of the RISE survey demonstrated the very positive impact of involvement in undergraduate research with faculty. The item “Worked on a research project with a faculty member” (on projects other than class assignments) was associated, for example, with the following self-reported outcomes for both first-year students and seniors: cumulative grade point average, growth in general/ liberal arts education, growth in career/professional preparation, personal/interpersonal growth, and overall/composite growth. In fact, working on a research project with a faculty member was associated with more positive outcomes than any other activity included in the survey. About 9% of first-year students and 24% of seniors reported being involved in such projects.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities in Departments and Major Programs

Of the respondents to the DEO survey conducted for this self-study, 85% (46 out of 54) indicated that their departments make research opportunities available to undergraduates. Some departments have in place their own formal programs and/or criteria for undergraduate participation in research, while others use the programs available through the University of Iowa Honors Program and the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates.

The Department of Physics and Astronomy, for example, enjoys substantial external funding, some of which it uses for undergraduate research opportunities. Most undergraduates in the department participate in a research experience before graduation. Economics students who meet the criteria for the University of Iowa Honors Program can participate in a departmental honors program, conducting their own research with faculty supervision; non-honors students can also work with faculty on research projects, through independent study. In the Department of Marketing, undergraduate students may take “Directed Readings” with a faculty member, and may complete honors projects or work as research assistants. Mathematics offers a number of undergraduate research assistantships.

Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates

The Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU) was created in fall 2006 as a collaboration among the University of Iowa Honors Program, the Graduate College, and the Office of the Vice President for Research. The Center matches undergraduates with faculty mentors, and helps finance student research with ICRU Scholar Assistant, ICRU Summer Research Fellows, and Iowa Research Experiences for Undergraduates (IREU) grants.
The ICRU Scholar Assistant and ICRU Summer Research Fellows programs replace the former Undergraduate Scholar Assistant (USA) program, which was administered by the Pomerantz Career Center. The ICRU began with more than $350,000 available in its annual operating budget for supporting Iowa undergraduate student research.

The ICRU administers the Office of the Vice President for Research Excellence in Undergraduate Research Awards program—competitive awards that honor students for original projects in the arts and humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, and mathematics and engineering.

Spring 2007 also saw the second round of Research in the Capitol, an annual series of poster presentations and arts performances in the Iowa Statehouse Rotunda in Des Moines. The program, which involves 8 to 10 students from each of the three Regent universities, showcases and celebrates how and what undergraduates have learned by doing research in their fields.

Role of the Graduate College

The Graduate College plays an active role in fostering undergraduate research experience opportunities.

In 2005-06, the College established the Office of Graduate Ethnic Inclusion (OGEI). In collaboration with several other offices and grant programs, OGEI coordinates and administers a number of diversity programs aimed at improving the recruitment, retention, and degree completion rate for underrepresented students.

OGEI hosts the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP), a summer program that pairs promising young researchers with faculty members expert in a research area of interest to them. The Graduate College has a 20-year partnership with the other Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) institutions to offer this program. Students receive a $3,200 stipend, plus travel expenses, for their eight-week summer stay at UI. Almost 500 students have benefited from their SROP experience. Of the 203 who participated from summer 1997 through summer 2006, 151 have completed their baccalaureate degree (some are still “in progress”), four have completed Ph.D. programs, 40 are currently enrolled in Ph.D. programs, and 21 have completed other postbaccalaureate degrees. In 2000, the CIC SROP received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring.

The interdisciplinary research programs administered by the Graduate College (genetics, immunology, molecular and cellular biology, and neuroscience) collaboratively run a summer research program for 20 undergraduate students interested in bioscience research. The Iowa Biosciences Advantage program (described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study) runs a summer series for undergraduate students in the biological and life sciences, and the Departments of Biochemistry and Microbiology have an active summer program as well. Combined, these programs involve more than 100 undergraduate students in summer research programs across campus each year.

In fall 2007, the Graduate College was awarded a four-year Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program grant totaling $880,000 to support disadvantaged undergraduates with strong academic credentials. UI McNair scholars will participate in a year-long program including research training with close mentorship. The goal of the program is to recruit increased numbers of undergraduates from underrepresented populations and from first-generation and low-income student
populations into graduate programs, with a focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields.

The overarching goal of these Graduate College programs is to mentor students in a manner that will make them more successful as undergraduates and to better prepare them for the transition to graduate education.

**Iowa Civic Analysis Network**

The primary goals of the Iowa Civic Analysis Network (I-CAN) are to provide the Iowa Legislature with timely, high-quality information on important policy issues facing the state, and to provide students with marketable training in policy research. I-CAN started in 2006 with sponsorship from the Department of Political Science and the University of Iowa Honors Program. About a dozen students complete a spring honors seminar on policy research methods.

**Study Abroad**

Through the Office for Study Abroad in International Programs, a UI student in any major can choose from an array of study abroad opportunities in 30 countries on 6 continents. Students may also choose to participate in programs offered by other U.S. or foreign universities.

The number of undergraduates studying abroad has risen steadily over the last several years, from 564 in 2000-01 to 801 in 2006-07. The University has set a target of 1,000 undergraduate students studying abroad each year by 2010.

Figure II-5 illustrates the breakdown of undergraduates who participated in study abroad programs in 2006-07 by major field of study. A table of the number of students participating in 2006-07 by host country is included in Appendix II-K, which also contains the number of students participating in 2006-07 by ethnicity and by gender.

![Percentage of Undergraduates in Study Abroad Program During 2005-06 by Major Field of Study](Image)

Most students participate in study abroad programs during the summer (40% in 2006-07) or during one semester of the academic year (41% in 2006-07). About 13% studied abroad for periods of three weeks or less (the majority of them during the winter session), and 6% studied abroad for an entire academic year.
Volunteerism, Civic Engagement, and Service Learning

In 2005 the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Student Services collaborated to launch the Civic Engagement Program (CEP), an office dedicated to facilitating volunteerism and service learning. The CEP helps faculty members integrate service learning into the curriculum and also connects community organizations with UI faculty, staff, and student volunteers. Its mission is to “strengthen students’ curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities by linking the University’s teaching, research, and service mission with community needs and strengths.”

The CEP points students to a searchable database of volunteer opportunities at community-based organizations—the Corridor Volunteers web site. The program also provides consulting services, supports one-time service projects, offers volunteer management workshops, and facilitates the University’s membership in Campus Compact, described in the institutional section of this self-study.

Each fall and spring semester since fall 2005, the CEP has facilitated the UI Volunteer Fair. On average, 70 or more community organizations have participated, and more than 1,000 students have visited the fair.

UI students played an important role in the University’s contribution to relief efforts following the Gulf and Atlantic hurricanes in 2005. About 250 students contributed an estimated 3,000 hours to community service relief projects.

The University has initiated a drive to increase opportunities for students to earn academic credit for experiential learning. As one part of this effort, in May 2005 and May 2006 the UI Center for Teaching hosted week-long Service Learning Institutes to train and support faculty interested in developing service learning courses. Fifteen faculty members participated each year, and in each year those faculty developed more than 20 new service learning courses, for a total of 49 new courses. Over the two years nearly 1,300 students completed the courses and, in cooperation with community organization partners, performed more than 28,000 hours of community service in the state and a community in Mexico. Appendix II-L summarizes faculty, student, and community partner participation in the courses and describes several of the initiatives that have emerged from the Institutes.

The Center for Teaching has collected some assessment data from students who took the courses developed by the 2005 institute cohort (which began offering courses in 2005-06). According to the data, which are summarized in Appendix II-L, 66% of student respondents said they were more likely to volunteer in a community organization following their experience in a service learning course, and 95% said they had benefited from their service learning activities. Center for Teaching staff are planning additional assessment efforts, including a survey of faculty to determine their understanding of and interest in the role of undergraduate course coordinators in service learning courses, a survey of institute faculty to learn about their experience designing and teaching service learning courses, and a student survey to be used in service learning courses each semester.

Included in the University’s strategic planning indicators of progress is a series that tracks enrollments in service learning courses and numbers of student volunteers. In association with the 10,000 Hours Show alone, in 2006-07 2,200 students volunteered with community organizations, surpassing the target of 2,000.
Intellectual, Creative, and Cultural Contributions

University of Iowa faculty, staff, and students enrich the larger community with a wide variety of intellectual, creative, and cultural contributions.

Students from all disciplines are welcome and encouraged to audition for roles in musical and theatrical performances. Such participation gives students the opportunity to work with faculty, interact with peers who have common interests, and be part of the University’s intellectual, creative, and cultural contributions to the larger community.

In the Department of Theatre Arts, for example, opportunities for participation outside of regular instruction include:

Partnership in the Arts—Each year the department brings a team of professional artists to campus for six to eight weeks, to collaborate with students on creating a new work.

The Iowa New Play Festival—Every spring the department presents a week-long festival of new work written by MFA and undergraduate playwrights. Students have an opportunity to interact with a visiting panel of writers, actors, dramaturges, directors, and producers.

Iowa Summer Repertory Theatre—Students involved in the “Summer Rep,” which presents three major productions by a single playwright each summer, may earn points toward an Actors Equity Association membership.

The Guest Artist Program—Each year the department brings professional artists and scholars to campus—for anywhere from a few days to a full semester—to work on productions and teach students.

In the School of Music, students may audition to participate in a variety of performing ensembles.

Iowa’s new Honors Woodwind Quintet contributed to the Santa Catarina Music Festival on January 14-27, 2007, in Jaraguá do Sul, Brazil, where five honors students performed and taught Brazilian band students who lack instrument specialists for advanced instruction. It has been doing the same for Iowa schools that lack programs for advanced education in music.

The University Lecture Committee (ULC) is a UI charter committee that includes faculty and staff members but consists primarily of students. The ULC runs the University of Iowa Lecture Series, an “intellectually diverse program that brings the broader University of Iowa communities face-to-face with the world’s notable thinkers throughout each academic year.” Speakers within the last year include President Jimmy Carter, Valerie Plame-Wilson, Nadine Strossen, and Noam Chomsky. The series also sponsored a lecture by Jeff Chang on the history of hip-hop in America; a talk by filmmaker Christopher Harris about the ways in which his films deal with history, memory, race, and identity; and a lecture by Native American singer/songwriter and activist Star Nayea, among many others. A list of upcoming and previous lectures is available on the ULC web site.

Social Justice and Advocacy

An important category of co-curricular involvement is the opportunity to participate in programs that promote social change.
The Women’s Resource and Action Center (WRAC) at The University of Iowa—a unit of the Division of Student Services—is an example of an organization that provides such opportunities, by encouraging collaboration between scholars and activists. WRAC sponsors educational programs, such as conferences, lectures, and workshops; provides individual counseling services and referrals; and maintains the Sojourner Truth Library, with materials on women’s health, gender studies, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender studies, and much more. WRAC welcomes student volunteers to serve as group facilitators, advisory board members, or members of Iowa Women Initiating Social Change (IWIS), a feminist activist volunteer group.

The University of Iowa Center for Human Rights (UICHR) was founded in 1999 as a direct outgrowth of Global Focus: Human Rights ’98, a year-long University of Iowa commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. Initiated by a multidisciplinary group of faculty, its mission is to assist in the promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad by providing distinguished multidisciplinary leadership in human rights research, education, and public service to The University of Iowa, its surrounding community, the state of Iowa, and beyond. Students can volunteer with the center or apply for internships.

Several student organizations emphasize social justice and advocacy. Examples include the Iowa Human Trafficking Awareness Project, the National Alliance on Mental Illness at The University of Iowa, the Student Action Coalition, Teach for America, the Project for a New American Citizen, and Unite for Sight.

Governance

The opportunity to participate in student government is another valuable co-curricular learning opportunity for students.

The mission of the University of Iowa Student Government (UISG)—the undergraduate body of the Partnership for Student Governments at Iowa (PSGI)—is: “... to empower students ... [and] to ensure a student-oriented environment through education and advocacy.” UISG allocates funding to recognized student organizations, sponsors programs and events, and collaborates with University leadership.

Elected and appointed positions in UISG and service on UISG committees give students valuable experience in public and governmental relations, finance, management and policy, and legislative issues.

Leadership

In addition to leadership development opportunities within the UISG, students can choose to take advantage of a variety of opportunities for leadership development opportunities available through the Office of Student Life.

The comprehensive Student Leadership Development Program (SLDP) provides institutes, conferences, recognition programs, roundtables, and credit-bearing courses for students. The Student Leadership Institute (SLI), a two-day, off-campus retreat for advanced student leaders, involves 30 students selected based on their interest and potential for fostering a collaborative approach to leadership at UI.

“My Iowa,” the Minority and International Student Summit, is a free weekend retreat for students who want to gain awareness and understanding of diversity issues at UI.
A Fraternity and Sorority Management Workshop brings fraternity and sorority leaders together to discuss common challenges, and the Omega Institute is a leadership retreat for fraternity and sorority chapter members.

The **Career Leadership Academy** through the Pomerantz Career Center (described in the Environments and Resources for Learning section of this self-study) is a four semester academic credit-bearing program which focuses on developing both leadership and employment skills in undergraduate students from all majors. The academy comprises weekly seminars, activities, and events designed to give students the skills employers are seeking from college graduates: communication skills, interpersonal skills, presentation skills, and the ability to work well with others. Participants in the Career Leadership Academy receive one semester hour of academic credit for each semester they complete, and academy graduates receive a notation on their transcript when they complete all four semesters. In addition, academy participants have access to exclusive programs such as career exploration opportunities, networking events, and leadership development experiences. Students entering the Career Leadership Academy must: have at least four remaining semesters in order to complete the program; have completed 15 credit hours by the beginning of Phase I; and maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

**Peer Education and Mentoring**

Peer education at UI exists in three realms—academic support, peer advising programs, and co-curricular experiences. The majority of UI mentoring programs are focused on building a connection between students with common academic goals and interests and assisting undergraduates in the pursuit of out-of-classroom experiences. Students serving as peer educators assist University offices and programs with outreach, advising, and social activities, and often serve as the first point of contact with new and current students. Following are some representative examples.

*Department of Psychology Peer Advisors*

Each semester a group of junior and senior psychology majors are selected to serve as **Psychology Peer Advisors**. Psychology Peer Advisors volunteer their time to help the academic coordinator with undergraduate advising. Peer advisors receive academic credit for their participation in the peer advisor seminar. Their activities include meeting with prospective psychology majors during campus visit days such as Scholars Day, Hawkeye Visit Days, and orientation for freshmen and transfer students; and meeting with current psychology majors during walk-in advising hours to answer questions regarding specific courses and instructors, degree requirements, career planning, and planning for graduate school.

*Tippie College of Business Undergraduate Peer Advisors*

The Tippie College of Business selects undergraduate students (sophomores and above) to serve as **peer tutors**. Students involved in this peer opportunity receive three credit hours and assist their peers in the Judith R. Frank Business Communications Center. The business college promotes this program as an optimal environment for cultivating leadership and sharing one’s expertise with peers. Students can also qualify for a $1,000 (per year) Dore Scholarship.

*School of Engineering Center for Technology Communications Peer Tutors*

The School of Engineering includes peer tutors in its **Center for Technical**
Communications (CTC). The CTC’s mission is to help future engineers become “articulate technical communicators” to meet employers’ demands in the field. Eight peer advisors, identified by the Engineering faculty as strong writers, work with their peers to improve their writing skills. The program is expanding to include an Online Writing Lab, staffed by peers. Recent peer advisors express satisfaction in helping to change the Engineering culture and note that being a peer advisor has helped them stand out in the interview process.

Women in Science and Engineering Mentors

Approximately 200 women participate in the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) mentor program each year. Upper-level undergraduates are paired with first-year students in similar majors to help them make a smooth transition to University life on- and off-campus, assist in choosing classes, provide study support, and serve as positive female role models. Mentor activities occur in both formal (workshops on healthy living, medical school admission seminar, study abroad and internship opportunities) and informal (finding an apartment, social gatherings, lunch with faculty) settings. Seventy-one percent of first-year WISE women who entered the program in 1999 completed their degree in 2003, exceeding the national average of 30-46% four-year completion rates in these fields. Sixty-three percent of the students serving as mentors in 2007-08 were previous “mentees” and over one-third are returning mentors.

Health Education Peers

The Department of Health and Sport Studies offers a two-credit course for undergraduates interested in promoting health and wellness in the residence halls and conducting educational outreach programs to undergraduate students. Students in this course gain knowledge about a variety of health services on campus and make referrals to their peers as needed.

Iowa Edge Mentors

As described earlier, the Iowa Edge is a retention program to help first-year students of color and first-generation college students adjust to life at a large university. The Iowa Edge is aimed at building community among African American, Asian American, Native American, Latino, and first-generation college students. Each year, ten peer leaders are selected to assist with the program’s extended orientation. These are successful students with a minimum 2.5 GPA and strong communication skills who are knowledgeable in the areas of advising, financial aid, residence life, and various support services pertinent to first-year transition issues.

Pomerantz Career Center Peer Program

Students participating in the Pomerantz Career Center Peer Program work with their peers in the career exploration process. They help their peers develop résumés and cover letters, hone their public speaking skills through participation in workshops and career fairs, and host employers during mock interviews and employer sessions. Students who pursue peer advisor internships also build relationships with the professional staff and career advisors, which helps to strengthen their own career exploration skills and preparation for the interview process and the transition to the job market upon graduation.
Academic Advising Center Student Tutors

The Academic Advising Center coordinates undergraduate academic tutoring services. Student tutors are selected on the basis of their GPA (minimum 3.0), experience in their major, and class standing. There are both paid and free academic tutoring services available to undergraduates, as well as free assistance with study skills and coursework. Peer academic tutors share their expertise with other students and gain teaching skills.

Office for Study Abroad Peer Advisors

Study Abroad Peer Advisors provide outreach services, information workshops, and one-on-one advising to students interested in or preparing to study abroad. Peer advisors mentor undergraduate students with similar interests and draw on their own study abroad experiences. Study abroad peer advisors play a major role in presenting information to their peers at pre-departure orientation and reentry workshops, designed to equip students with the necessary tools to make the most of their study abroad experience. Advisors are required to complete a special project as part of appointment; examples include creating marketing and outreach publications and developing new workshop topics on timely and relevant study abroad issues.

Belin-Blank Center/University Programs Peer Advising Program

The University Programs (UP) peer advising program was created to serve first-year University Program (Iowa Talent Project, NAASE) students in their transition to The University of Iowa. The program provides a connection between first-year UP students and upper-class UP students. The peer advisors’ goal is to provide accurate and pertinent information to first-year students, while also referring students to campus resources and Belin-Blank Center staff when appropriate.

Student Employment

Student employment can be an important mode of experiential learning. Iowa students who finance their educations in part by working for campus libraries, laboratories, departments, residence halls, etc., learn to take better advantage of campus resources. Benefits increase when students’ work practices can be linked to academic forums for sophisticated reflection on their job experiences.

The Student Employment Office provides information on four types of work for UI undergraduate students: work-study (part-time employment for students who are enrolled at least half-time and demonstrate financial need), part-time employment on campus, part-time employment off campus, and cooperative education internships. Employers pay 100% of the wage for students who are employed part-time. They generally pay 50% of the wage for work-study students, and the federal or state work-study program pays the rest.

According to the UI student part-time employment web site, in the past year (including summer) 12,030 students working on campus earned more than $24.4 million, and more than 1,500 jobs were advertised on Jobnet, the web-based University employment database.

In fall 2006 the Office of Student Financial Aid compiled information about 4,594 actively employed part-time student workers and 1,072 actively employed work-study students for the Part-Time Wage Survey and the Work-Study Wage Survey. The overall average hourly rate of pay for student employees in fall 2006 was $8.30, and for work-
study students $7.79. Appendix II-M provides additional details about the type of work these students were engaged in at the time of the surveys.

A September 2007 point-in-time count of undergraduate, degree-seeking students found 3,961 students employed part-time and 627 employed under work-study programs. Figure II-6 illustrates the distribution of those 4,588 student employees by year in college. Appendix II-M illustrates the distribution of these student employees by gender, ethnicity, residency, and college.

**Figure II-6:**
Fall 2007 Count of Undergraduate, Degree-Seeking Students Employed Part-Time and in Work-Study Programs by Year in College

Major campus employers of students include the Iowa Memorial Union (over 900), Recreational Services (over 450), and University Housing, which hires more than 120 each year to fill resident assistant positions. Students also fill positions as desk clerks, computer lab monitors, fitness center monitors, and food service workers.

**Recreation**

Recreational sports programs, facilities, and services can contribute to creating a healthy environment for student learning and development. At The University of Iowa, Recreational Services (Rec Services) employs a variety of initiatives to try to involve new students in recreational activities as soon as they come to campus.

During the first evening of summer orientation programs, Rec Services invites students to the Field House for refreshments, to play sports such as volleyball or table tennis, to use the climbing gym, or just to relax. The event provides a welcome break from the hectic pace of orientation. In conjunction with the Office of Student Life and University Housing, staff members also offer a presentation entitled “What There Is To Do On Campus.”

Once classes begin, students may choose to attend the Kickoff Classic, a welcome week event held during the middle of the day in Hubbard Park. Staff invite the University community to pick up information about Recreational Services, participate in various activities, and receive free t-shirts. Attendance is well over 400 students each year. Rec Services also offers free orientations in its fitness centers, and sponsors Fitness Week during the first week of school, with all aerobic and cycling classes offered free
of charge. Each of these events is intended to introduce new students to Rec Services programs and to create opportunities for them to get involved.

Over the few years prior to this self-study, Rec Services has begun marketing a wider range of programs to appeal to more students. The division now offers more intramural competitive group activities (which has led to a notable increase in participation by women), an increased focus on self-directed fitness, and more lifetime leisure activities for one semester hour of credit, such as kayaking and rafting.

Rec Services makes a point of providing recreational opportunities that appeal to international students—such as badminton, table tennis, martial arts, and soccer—and sponsors a tennis sport club for international students. Every year, Rec Services co-sponsors the Celebrating Cultural Diversity Festival along with several other departments.

Rec Services programs for UI students, faculty, staff, and members of the community are listed in Table II-23.

Table II-23:
Division of Recreational Services Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aquatics</th>
<th>The Field House pool is used for various aquatics programs including lifeguard certification and a United States Masters Swimming Program for students, faculty, staff, and community members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fitness &amp; Wellness</td>
<td>Three campus fitness centers which include tennis courts, racquetball courts, squash courts, basketball/volleyball courts, badminton courts, a climbing wall, multipurpose activity rooms, a 50-yard swimming pool, a jogging track, cardiovascular equipment, weight equipment, and group exercise programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intramurals</td>
<td>Men’s, women’s, and co-rec programs in 30 different sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Programs</td>
<td>Non-credit course offerings including rowing, master swimming, tennis, and martial arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macbride Nature Recreation Area</td>
<td>A 485-acre recreation area that provides opportunities for camping, hiking, picnicking, cross-country skiing, canoeing, sailing, archery, and visits to the Raptor Center (a raptor education and rehabilitation center, and a joint venture with Kirkwood Community College)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Clubs</td>
<td>Sport clubs are formed so participants in each sport club can learn new skills, improve existing skills, potentially engage in competition, and enjoy recreational and social fellowship. Iowa currently recognizes 33 sport clubs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Six week tennis clinics or individual lessons for people of all ages and skill levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch the Earth</td>
<td>A variety of backpacking, canoeing, bicycling, kayaking, and cross-country skiing trips designed to give students a chance to participate and explore their interest in outdoor recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Camps</td>
<td>Two outdoor programs: Wildlife Camps (at Macbride and at Lakeside Labs), for area students who have completed 1st through 11th grade; and the School of the Wild, an NCA accredited Special Purpose School located at Macbride, offering a five-day program for local elementary schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the basis of two studies (1998 and 2004) that indicated students’ willingness to pay increased fees for more recreation space and service, in 2006 the University decided to construct the $69 million Campus Recreation and Wellness Center (CWRC), slated to open in spring 2010. This new recreation facility on the east side of the Iowa River will serve in part as a recruitment vehicle. Because student fees for use of the center will be billed with tuition, students will not need to pay an extra admission charge, which should encourage use. Recreational Services hopes to create a “student union”-like atmosphere at the CWRC by including lounge and café space and computer stations and by staying open late, particularly on weekends. The CWRC should become a central gathering place on campus. The University is exploring ways to take advantage of the new facility’s proximity to the Main Library and the link it will create between learning and recreational spaces.

**Faculty, Staff, and Student Perceptions of UI Involvement Opportunities**

In the departmental interviews and student focus groups (described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study), many of the questions posed by the subcommittee on Getting Involved asked faculty, staff, and students to 1) describe the outcomes they expected and hoped for from student engagement in co-curricular activities, and 2) describe any perceived barriers to achieving those outcomes.

**Reasons to Get Involved**

The students in the focus groups mentioned several reasons why they choose to get involved in co-curricular activities, including:

To “make Iowa smaller.” The size and complexity of the University of Iowa can result in some students feeling lost or overwhelmed. The students in the focus groups appreciated the opportunity to scale the University down to a more manageable environment by networking and developing relationships with others.

To relieve boredom. Many of the students in the focus groups, describing themselves as having been very busy in high school, expressed a concern about avoiding boredom once they got to Iowa. “I was involved in high school and enjoyed it,” said one student. “Classes weren’t enough by the first day.” Students interviewed for the RISE study indicated that they thought they would have to spend more time studying when they got to college, and in fact they have more free time than expected.

To create change. Several students described a desire to help create change on campus. Students of color who participated in the National Pan-Hellenic Council focus group felt a particularly strong urge to get involved for this reason, commenting that “there are not a lot of activities for students of color” and that they “didn’t see active opportunities for diversity” on campus.

To increase success in future job searches and scholarship applications. Some students expressed concern about building their résumés, and felt campus involvement could help them do so. One student commented, “Doing well in school isn’t good enough anymore. You won’t get scholarships or jobs without activities or some kind of internship—something outside of schoolwork.” Another student commented, “I’ve been told that I need to fill up my résumé and I need to get involved. I need to meet new people and get my name out there.” Students understand that employers look for more than a good grade point average in their job applicants.
To learn practical skills. Some students in the focus groups felt they learned a number of practical skills from their involvement in co-curricular activities, mentioning most often skills such as managing conflict, communication, time management, understanding their personal limits, and navigating between different roles in different settings.

Faculty and staff in the focus groups commented on some of the same benefits, such as skill-building. One staff member commented that student employment not only provides financial benefits but also “brings[s] reality to the classroom perspective and allows students to develop a network and professional work habits they will need in the future.” Some faculty and staff also noted that involvement in co-curricular activity can change a student’s personal perspective. Staff from International Programs noted that study abroad experiences can profoundly change an undergraduate’s view of the world and his or her place in it. A political science professor gave the example that internships, research opportunities, and off-campus study in Washington, D.C., “encourage a mindset of engagement rather than cynicism about politics.” Such opportunities also apply the academic experience to students’ lives in a practical way.

The students of color in the focus groups added to the list of “practical skills” gained through co-curricular activity some that centered on the theme of social survival in an unfriendly environment—such as learning to be patient with others, maintaining self-control (learning when to walk away), managing adversity (dealing with ignorance, lack of understanding from others, and stereotypes), and making better decisions (mostly related to self-control). The “chilly” environment described by these students may be related to the RISE study finding that more than 40% of respondents said they had “rarely” or “never” been encouraged to make contact with students different from themselves, and just under 40% had “rarely” or “never” had a serious conversation with students different from themselves.

Barriers to Realizing Desired Outcomes of Student Engagement

Underinvolvement

The RISE study found that “engagement in educationally-purposeful activities and experiences is not widely distributed across the student body, nor evenly distributed across students’ time at UI.” The report indicated that 88% of first-year students and 83% of seniors spend 0 to 5 hours per week on co-curricular activities (i.e., “student organizations or government, campus publications, art or music, etc.”) and almost all—94% of first-year students and 91% of seniors—spend 0 to 5 hours per week in community service or volunteer activities not related to class.

In spite of the tremendous number of opportunities available to students—and the remarkable numbers who participate in some of them (i.e., Dance Marathon and the 10,000 Hours Show)—most UI students do not seem to be taking advantage of those opportunities, at least not on a regular and sustained basis.

It could be argued that the RISE study might underreport student involvement because the “0 to 5 hours per week” response choice does not discriminate between students who do nothing and those who are involved in an activity for four or five hours each week. The interviews conducted by the Getting Involved subcommittee, however, seemed to substantiate the report’s conclusions. Faculty and staff interviewees reported that they observe a small group of students heavily involved in co-curricular activities. Senior students involved in the RISE study also reported seeing many of the same
people at meetings of various campus organizations, which seems to reinforce the suggestion that relatively few students account for the overall level of involvement at UI.

Getting Information to Students

Faculty and staff interviewees expressed concern that key information about co-curricular activities does not reach as many students as they would like, and they would like to find more creative ways to publicize available opportunities.

The student focus groups reinforced this concern. When asked how they learned about involvement opportunities at the University, a few students mentioned receiving information during Welcome Week, at the Student Organization Fair, from the Office of Student Life web site, or during Orientation—but these came up far less frequently than word-of-mouth and peer influence. Most focus group students indicated that they got involved originally because another student told them about an opportunity or encouraged them to participate. Observing someone else’s involvement was a powerful influence for many of these students. One student commented, “There is exposure to so many opportunities, students don’t know what to choose. You need a contact to point you in the right direction.”

The students interviewed for this self-study acknowledged that the number of mass e-mails they receive can become overwhelming, and students tend to delete them without reading them.

The lack of access (or attention) to information about activities and involvement opportunities may contribute to the kind of student comment collected during the RISE study: “There is nothing to do here but drink.”

Articulation and Assessment of Desired Outcomes

When asked to articulate the desired learning outcomes for programs and services, many departmental interviewees cited outcomes such as “making the student experience as positive as possible,” “providing social opportunities,” or “providing social support.” While these are worthwhile goals, none of them speak to how the student will change and grow as a result of participating in those initiatives and programs, or what the student will actually learn. Some offices and departments can articulate clearly how they believe students benefit from their programs and services, but do not engage in regular assessment or collect evidence about their outcomes. Without clearly articulated desired learning outcomes and methods to assess them, units cannot know with certainty how effective and beneficial their programs and services are.

Lack of Coordination Among Units

Many units across campus provide engagement opportunities for students, but they do not seem to coordinate and share their experiences well. A staff member from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication commented:

There needs to be more college- and University-level coordination, collaboration, and training to facilitate such opportunities. Right now, programs are working in silos. Maybe a dozen departments and programs use peer mentoring, for example, but there is no efficient way for them to share ideas and help each other out. There’s no one place . . . for advisors or students who want to get involved with such programs to go and find out what’s available.

Such comments by the interviewees, along with concerns about how well we inform
students about available opportunities, seem to corroborate the RISE study finding that although UI offers many opportunities for student engagement, it is generally up to the student to find those opportunities and create his or her own positive experience. According to the report, first-year students and seniors alike describe as “challenging” the process of finding the opportunities and resources one needs to create a successful and engaging college experience (p.39).

Uneven Diversity Efforts

Several units represented in the departmental interviews described dedicated efforts to recruit, support, and engage minority students. The Center for Diversity & Enrichment, as described in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study, is dedicated to reaching out to and supporting underrepresented students. A representative of International Programs noted that study abroad experiences help to create “global citizens—people who are able to appreciate cultural differences . . . and are better able to communicate with others.” University Counseling Service works with underserved students to help them succeed in and out of the classroom. Within various academic departments, the Daily Iowan (in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication) actively recruits minority students from Chicago; Health and Sport Studies incorporates diversity training in its mission; and the Darwin Turner Action Theater—the Department of Theatre’s social outreach group—“creates works focused on diversity issues of social justice” which they take on tour “to schools and communities all over the state.”

These diversity efforts seem uneven across the University’s many units, however, or at least diversity is unevenly emphasized. More important, despite the number of offices and departments that report focusing on issues of diversity in recruitment, programming, and services, the students of color who participated in the Getting Involved focus groups expressed dissatisfaction; some even indicated that they felt misled because the institution was promoted to them as a diverse place, and they did not find that diversity when they arrived here. Many of these students told us that they became involved for just that reason—because they did not find the kind of support and social interaction they hoped for already in place when they arrived, and they felt a need to instigate change and create their own opportunities.

Issues for Further Study

Some additional issues that came up in the Getting Involved interviews deserve further investigation, to determine if they are widespread concerns among students.

Several students indicated that UI lacks a sense of community and shared purpose outside of athletics. While there are many ways in which groups of students become connected to the University and to each other—ways in which they find or create community within the larger community—there are few rallying points that bring a large proportion of the student population together around a common focus. Some felt that other students and student organizations do not support the organizations in which they participate, or the initiatives they sponsor. This issue concerned students of color in particular, because of the lack of ethnic and racial diversity on campus and in the Iowa City community. Some students of color expressed frustration with the lack of low-cost venues for late night social events that do not serve alcohol. They referenced a time when the Afro-American Cultural Center, or “Afro House,” served as a hub of activity that frequently hosted late night events; it no longer serves as a social venue in that way.
Some groups commented on the lack of resources available to student organizations, especially smaller groups. The members of one of the smaller groups represented felt they had been overlooked when it came to funding, while the members of larger groups recognized a disparity but did not know how to remedy the problem.

**Conclusions—Faculty, Staff, and Student Perceptions of UI Involvement Opportunities**

The students, faculty, and staff interviewed for this self-study recognize many benefits to student engagement in co-curricular activities—in line with the extensive body of research on the subject, and with the findings of the RISE study. They also identify, however, a number of barriers to realizing those benefits.

A small percentage of students reports regular involvement in co-curricular activities, and failure to effectively communicate available options may be partly to blame. Uneven distribution of resources and a lack of coordination across units might also hinder efficient and effective delivery of programs and services. Moreover, it is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of UI co-curricular programs when few have clearly articulated their desired outcomes or implemented assessment strategies.

Of greatest concern are the student comments that they feel a lack of community at the University—especially students of color.

**Summary and Conclusions—Learning Alongside the Curriculum**

**Signs of Success**

The sheer number of opportunities for productive co-curricular engagement at UI makes creating a comprehensive list of them difficult. We have “something for everyone,” from volunteerism and service learning, to student organizations, to student employment, and beyond.

Some of these activities achieve very high levels of participation. In 2007, for example, Dance Marathon attracted more than 300 volunteers and more than 1,000 dancers (and raised almost $881,000). Since the founding of the 10,000 Hours Show in 2002, students have volunteered more than 82,739 hours to community service through that program. Each year, about 800 UI students study abroad in more than 50 countries. University Housing hires more than 120 students to serve as resident assistants each year, in addition to hiring students as desk clerks, computer lab monitors, fitness center monitors, and food service workers.

Many of the activities UI offers—as general categories—have been proven to contribute to student learning. Most of the departments represented in the departmental interviews, for example, offer student employment or internship opportunities. We know that students who engage in part-time work or internships while in college gain job-related skills and competence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Research has also found that participation in community service—more specifically, service learning—has positive effects on students’ sociopolitical attitudes and beliefs (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Similar findings exist regarding the positive effects of involvement for many other kinds of activities offered at UI.

The faculty, staff, and student interviews conducted for this self-study supported that evidence. Student focus group participants cited many examples of the skills and relationships they gained, and other ways in which they found their experiences personally enriching. Senior student participants in the RISE study asserted that, in
large part, their involvement in co-curricular activities kept them at UI. Faculty and staff interviewees indicated that the engaged students they interact with enjoy psychological, practical, vocational, and financial benefits from their co-curricular involvement.

Moving Forward

Despite the available options, evidence from the RISE study suggests that the percentage of students that engages in educationally purposeful co-curricular activities is disappointingly low. Furthermore, students who do not become engaged in activities associated with student success early in their UI careers might pursue “the engagement activity of least resistance”—the bar scene—instead.

Various factors might contribute to low involvement. Co-curricular opportunities are not well coordinated across units, often not advertised effectively to students, and not always evaluated for purposes of improvement. Students report learning about opportunities mostly from their peers, and choosing to get involved—or not—largely based on peer influence. All of this suggests that we can do a better job of helping students make good choices by connecting them with positive peer role models, communicating their options more effectively, and including co-curricular programs in our planning as we work to promote a culture of evidence-based assessment.

In interviews, some students reported feeling a lack of community at UI. This was an issue of particular concern for students of color, and a concern that is echoed in the results of the 2005 undergraduate diversity climate survey, which indicate that racial/ethnic minority respondents feel less of a sense of inclusion at the University than their majority peers. In addition to continuing efforts to create a more diverse and welcoming climate on campus, we must consider ways to communicate a clear and consistent message—as suggested in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study—about what it means to be a successful student member of this community, and to foster a sense of identity and pride.
Educational infrastructure—from physical facilities to support services—helps students maximize their strengths and meet their potential.

Undergraduate Education
V. Environments and Resources for Learning

Introduction

The University provides many of the physical and virtual environments in which students learn, and also offers its spectrum of students—including those who come to us well prepared, and those who do not—many support structures to help them overcome challenges and maximize their particular talents. There are countless ways in which the learning environment the University creates and the resources it makes available within that environment can impact student success.

Fundamentally, the University’s physical and virtual learning environments must be functional and welcoming. Research has suggested that universities can affect student success by “alter[ing] the physical environment on campus to create spaces and settings where teaching and learning can flourish” (Kuh et al., 2005a, p. 93).

A successful learning environment must also offer resources that support learning at all stages of students’ undergraduate careers and at all levels of preparedness for college work.

Effective academic advising, for example, teaches students valuable skills they need in order to achieve success in college and in life. As mentioned in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study, academic advising plays an extremely important role in helping new students build a foundation for success. The importance of advising’s role does not diminish as students go through the process of selecting a major program and making other academic decisions. As students progress toward graduation, career advising becomes increasingly important as well.

The University Libraries, an essential academic resource, also serve as a central learning environment. Librarians teach students information management skills that
can impact their success across the range of their academic endeavors.

Some focused programs help students improve their proficiency in areas such as speaking, writing, and math. Other programs target not skills but populations, and provide customized support to help those populations meet challenges and maximize their strengths. These populations include, for example, well-prepared, high-achieving students looking to push themselves with new opportunities; first-generation college students; disabled students; or the few students recruited because of exceptional achievement in athletics or fine arts who might need extra support in order to meet expected levels of achievement in other areas.

The effort to create effective environments and resources for learning supports our aspiration “to attract the most talented faculty, staff, and students . . . [and] to provide an environment where they can discover and fulfill their potential.” Our strategies for improving undergraduate education, according to *The Iowa Promise*, include:

**Strategy: Recruit and retain a student population that can succeed at a comprehensive research university, and nurture their success, by:**

. . . Guiding all students through their majors, and providing excellent academic advising

**Strategy: Promote excellent teaching, effective learning environments, and learning opportunities that leverage the University's strengths by:**

. . . Developing more . . . honors courses, and other small class venues where students can interact with tenured faculty

Strengthening the honors program and other opportunities for high-achieving students

**Strategy: Ensure that all students graduate with strong core skills, a broad liberal arts education, and concentrated study in one or more majors by:**

Promoting their facility for critical thinking, writing, and other communication skills, creative endeavor, and the use of information technology

. . . Augmenting support for the research collections, libraries, museums, and information technologies, broadly defined, that are critical to teaching and learning

**Strategy: Help undergraduates prepare for life within and beyond college by:**

Instilling in them a respect for the life of the mind and a habit of lifelong learning

. . . Creating with them a safe environment in which to live, learn, and work, including opportunities to participate in health-promoting activities

Providing career advising that will enable them to pursue their employment goals
An assessment of environments and resources for learning at The University of Iowa is a key component of our special emphasis self-study.

Scope

As described in the introduction to this special emphasis self-study, the self-study steering committee originally conceived of two separate themes having to do with the units, spaces, and structures in place at the University to support student learning: “Cultivating Student Potential” and “Learning Environments.” The steering committee appointed separate subcommittees to consider each theme. The confluence between the two, however, eventually led the committee to feel that the self-study would be better served by a focus on the broader theme of “environments and resources for learning.”

The steering committee asked the subcommittee on Cultivating Student Potential to study programs, policies, and practices that contribute to every student reaching his or her potential—including programs designed to support students who face particular challenges, programs designed to help talented and well-prepared students maximize their abilities, and programs designed to help any and all students extend their education beyond the classroom.

The steering committee asked the subcommittee on Learning Environments to study the places the University and the community provide for students to learn—including both physical and virtual spaces, and spaces used for formal and informal teaching and learning.

Research Process

The subcommittee on Cultivating Student Potential gathered much of its data from the student satisfaction survey described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study and in the overview of survey results, below. The committee members also conducted interviews with personnel in the programs they considered, and culled information from outcomes assessment data provided by many of those programs.

The subcommittee on Learning Environments invited students to respond to a survey, e-mailed a brief questionnaire to faculty members, and held focus group discussions with faculty on the UI Classroom Committee. Additional data came from various University offices.

Summary of Findings

The University of Iowa offers its students many support structures and environments to help them develop useful skills, get assistance dealing with specific challenges, and make the most of opportunities for learning. The units and programs investigated for this portion of the self-study showed many signs of success, including student satisfaction.
The University’s physical and virtual teaching and learning environments seem to be functioning well, are used appropriately, and are perceived by both faculty and students as positive. Recent major efforts to improve learning environments include the renovation of the Iowa Memorial Union, the growth in learning communities, and the consolidation of course management systems into a single virtual learning environment—IICON. The University provides very good online teaching and learning environments and has a strong presence in distance education. As online teaching and learning environments become more prevalent, we will need assessment methods and other mechanisms to ensure consistent quality of online and “offline” environments.

Description and Evaluation of Learning Environments and Units and Programs that Support Student Learning

Overview

This section of our self-study deals with physical and virtual learning environments and key resources that support learning, including student advising; the University Libraries; programs that help students develop speaking, writing, and math skills; University Housing; and programs that help students stay healthy and learn how to maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle. This section also addresses programs that support learning for selected student populations, including underrepresented students, student athletes, and top scholars.

The student satisfaction survey did not ask students about all of these units and programs. It did ask about many of them, however, so we begin with an overview of the results of that survey.

Overview of Student Satisfaction Survey Results

The student satisfaction survey, as described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study, included a set of questions designed to assess student satisfaction with programs, people, and “parts of the University” other than classes and teachers and their contribution to academic and personal growth.

The survey targeted several specific units and programs and asked students to respond to questions about the helpfulness of those units and programs, if they had used them. The subcommittee on Cultivating Student Potential chose the targeted units and programs by identifying parts of the University that have a significant impact on the majority of undergraduate students, such as the University Libraries and academic advising; and then also identifying several more specialized programs in areas important to the University's mission, such as fostering diversity and helping students build communication skills.

Table II-24 gives the frequency with which students reported having used each of the 13 targeted programs. The table reflects, for example, that Opportunity at Iowa, Student Disability Services, Support Service Programs, and the Women’s Resource and Action Center are specialized programs serving relatively small numbers of students. (Note: The high percentage of students who report having participated in the University of Iowa Honors Program reflects that the survey responses were not proportionally representative of the undergraduate student body.)
Table II-24: Percent of Students who Report Using Targeted University Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Program</th>
<th>% of Students Who Report Using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Libraries</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Housing</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness Services</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa Honors Program</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Center</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Lab</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Technology Services</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity at Iowa</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Service Programs/NDIL*</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Resource and Action Center</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Disability Services</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Opportunity at Iowa and Support Service Programs/New Dimensions in Learning have merged into the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, as described later in this self-study.

The survey asked students to indicate—for each of the 13 targeted programs they had used—how much each program had helped them increase their skills, and how much each had contributed to their personal growth. Table II-25 ranks the programs by the percentage of respondents who perceived each unit or program as moderately to very helpful in increasing a variety of skills. Table II-26 does the same for the question of how much the programs contributed to students’ personal growth.

Table II-25: Targeted Programs Ranked by Perceived Helpfulness for Increasing Student Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Program</th>
<th>% of Users who Report Program Moderately to Very Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Libraries</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Service Programs/NDIL</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Technology Services</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Lab</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity at Iowa</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most programs were rated moderately to very effective at increasing skills by about 60% of respondents or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Program</th>
<th>% of Users who Report Program Moderately to Very Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellness Services</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Center</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Resource and Action Center</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Disability Services</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Housing</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa Honors Program</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Libraries</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa Honors Program</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Lab</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Technology Services</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the targeted programs was rated moderately to very helpful in contributing to personal growth by more than 60% of respondents; Opportunity at Iowa and University
Housing ranked highest, at 58% and 57%, respectively. Less than 40% of respondents felt that academic technology services, the Math Lab, Student Disability Services, the University Libraries, the University of Iowa Honors Program, or academic advising had moderately or significantly contributed to their personal growth.

The missions of the various units, certainly, account for some of the differences. Building skills is more central to the mission of academic technology services, for example, than is fostering personal growth; the opposite can be said for Opportunity at Iowa.

Before and after asking students about the targeted programs, the survey asked some open-ended questions, including:

In addition to your classes and teachers, what programs and people at The University of Iowa have helped you grow as a person?

What program or parts of The University of Iowa have interfered with your growth as a person?

Outside of your formal courses and teachers, what programs and people at The University of Iowa have helped you develop the skills you will need to live well and successfully after you graduate?

Please describe ways that specific programs or parts of The University of Iowa could have better helped you grow as a person.

No one “aspect of University life” was cited by a significant number of students in response to these questions. It may be of note that only 23% of respondents answered “none” when asked about ways that specific programs could have contributed more to their personal growth, whereas 51% answered that no aspect of University life had interfered with personal growth. The most frequently cited aspect of University life that could have contributed more to personal growth was academic advising, at 23%. Comments related to advising referred to advising within the department as well as advising by the Academic Advising Center.

Student Advising

Overview

The Iowa Promise recognizes that student advising for academic and career success is an important component of student support, especially at a large and complex institution such as The University of Iowa. Academic advising teaches students skills required for academic success, beginning with how to plan a program of study and make good academic decisions. At The University of Iowa, academic advising generally takes place in two contexts: in the Academic Advising Center (AAC) and in the colleges and departments. As students progress toward graduation, career advising becomes increasingly important. Some student populations—such as Advantage Iowa scholarship recipients, IowaLink students, students with disabilities, and student-athletes—also receive what might be called “support system advising” as described in various sections of this self-study.

For most undergraduate students, an advisor (whether from the Academic Advising Center or from the department or college) must authorize the student’s registration each semester. Nearly all of these students meet with their advisor to receive that
authorization, though some departments allow registration without a meeting. Some colleges and departments have determined that, given their programs, students can be allowed to opt out of advising.

The student satisfaction survey suggests that satisfaction with academic advising at the University is mixed. Approximately equal percentages of respondents mentioned academic advising when asked what aspects of University life had contributed to or interfered with personal growth (8% and 9%, respectively), and 23% indicated that academic advising could have contributed more than it did to their personal growth.

**Academic Advising Center**

The **Academic Advising Center (AAC)**—first described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study—provides academic advising to almost all first-year students, many entering transfer students, many continuing students pursuing admission to selective majors or professional programs, and special status non-degree students. Most students are transferred to colleges and departments for advising according to timetables agreed upon by the center and academic departments, but some students, such as pre-med, pre-law, and international studies majors, as well as pre-approved track majors in interdepartmental studies, remain with advisors in the AAC until graduation—some as first and some as second majors. In 2007, the center’s fall semester caseload was 9,552 (counting first and second majors) and each advisor carried a caseload of about 340 students during the fall semester. The University has set a goal of reducing that caseload to 300 students.

Unlike advising centers at many large universities, the AAC assigns every student a specific advisor, with the goal of developing a sustained personal relationship that will contribute to persistence. First-year students meet with their assigned advisors during the summer orientation program. Advisors expect to meet with first-year students at least five times during the academic year, beginning with a group “new student meeting” to set expectations, and continuing with at least one planning and one registration meeting in each semester.

AAC advisors assist students in identifying academic goals and teach them how to develop appropriate plans of study. For students with declared majors, AAC advisors provide initial advising in the major as well as advising related to the General Education Program. They help students select courses related to their programs of study and develop plans to graduation. For students who seek entry into selective admission programs, advisors also assist students in monitoring their progress toward admission requirements and provide guidance in “parallel planning”—that is, identifying alternative programs of study they can follow if they do not gain admission to their first major choices.

Advisors assist open majors (students who have not yet decided on a major) in exploring majors according to each student’s academic strengths, interests, and career goals. Advisors and students have a number of resources to aid in the major selection process, including the AAC website, the Pomerantz Career Center, and the annual Exploring Majors Fair. The AAC has proposed that the University investigate options for creating an interactive online course on selecting a major. Such a course would help not only open majors but also students who have been denied admission to selective programs and need to re-think their academic goals.

AAC provides advising to 69 majors, designations, or programs. All advisors are trained as generalists to help students explore majors, but each advisor also has broad
areas of specialization for advising within majors. For example, advisors who work with pre-med students might also advise biology, microbiology, and chemistry majors as well as related health sciences pre-professional students. The center maintains strong working relationships with academic departments by assigning an advisor-liaison to each department.

Some AAC-advised students work with other offices or programs as well, such as the University of Iowa Honors Program, the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, Student Disability Services, and Athletic Student Services. AAC advisors collaborate with counselors and coordinators in these offices to ensure that the specific needs of these students are met.

AAC advisors undergo an intensive year-long training program as well as extensive ongoing staff development. The center uses multiple approaches to increase cultural competency of advisors including UI staff development programming, HR programs, and its own nationally recognized advisor development program.

Each spring the Academic Advising Center asks students to evaluate their AAC advisors and their experiences at the center as a whole. More than 1,600 students respond each year. Median responses to the statement “My advisor did his or her job well” are consistently above 3.6 on a four-point Likert scale.

Demonstrating a growing focus on advising as a form of teaching, the AAC has begun implementing outcomes assessment for advising services. Staff are refining their mission statement and identifying learning outcomes. The next steps will include mapping the outcomes onto different parts of the advising process, determining the resources and staff development necessary to help students achieve the outcomes, and assessing learning and the delivery of services.

As noted in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study, the AAC has become increasingly involved in programs to improve persistence and timely graduation, and also in efforts to increase collaboration across units. Advisors have a key role, for example, in the “College Transition” course and the 2 Plus 2 Guaranteed Graduation Plan. AAC advisors were involved in the development of two new interdisciplinary majors, international studies and interdepartmental studies, and work with students in those majors all the way to graduation. AAC advisors are partners with the Center for Diversity & Enrichment in helping to improve retention of students from underrepresented minority groups.

Collegiate and Departmental Academic Advising

After a student declares a major—unless the major is one for which the Academic Advising Center handles advising all the way to graduation, as noted above—he or she is transferred to the college or department for advising, according to a timetable agreed upon by that unit and by the Academic Advising Center. For most non-selective majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, this happens after the student has earned 24 semester hours of credit. Advising in the department or college may be provided by faculty, professional advisors, graduate students, and/or peer advisors.

The decentralized nature of academic advising within the major is a strength for UI in some ways, in that students receive advising from those with expertise in the area. Some colleges and departments have established more effective advising practices than others, however. In responses to open-ended questions in the student satisfaction survey, collegiate and departmental advising received high praise from some and severe
criticism from others.

Models of Advising within the Major

Of 54 respondents to the survey of departmental executive officers conducted for this self-study, 30% (16 out of 54) indicated that their departments have a centralized advising location for students in their major—either a single advisor who meets with all students in the major, or a centralized advising “center” that all students can use. Eighty-nine percent (48 out of 54) use faculty advisors, alone or in conjunction with professional staff advisors; 24% (13 out of 54) use professional staff. Six percent (three out of 54) use graduate students to advise, and 6% (three out of 54) use other advisors, such as peers. Twenty percent (11 out of 54) have a formal system in place to assist faculty in advising methods, mainly as part of formal mentoring and new faculty orientation programs.

Factors that determine how departments offer undergraduate advising services include department size, undergraduate enrollment, and faculty assignments. Small departments often rely on faculty—either a single faculty member designated as student advisor, or multiple faculty members who share undergraduate advising responsibilities. Many departments with larger undergraduate enrollment use professional staff as student advisors, or use a combination of professional staff and faculty advisors.

In the Department of Linguistics, which has 42 undergraduate majors in fall 2007, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students meet with their advisors before registration each semester to map out which courses will be taken so that at the end of four years students will have met all requirements.

The Department of Biochemistry has 114 undergraduate majors in fall 2007. One faculty member, a full professor, serves as director of the undergraduate biochemistry major program. This professor meets with each undergraduate student each semester, to advise the student on coursework, opportunities for work in research labs, degree requirements, career opportunities, and other issues that may arise.

The Department of Psychology, one of the largest undergraduate majors—1,130 students in fall 2007—uses a three-tiered system of undergraduate advising. A professional staff member serves as academic coordinator, the academic advisor for all majors. In addition, students are assigned a faculty advisor who is available to provide advice concerning careers and preparation for graduate school. A group of junior and senior psychology majors, called the Psychology Peer Advisors, offer advice about course selection and volunteer and research opportunities.

Tippie College of Business

The Tippie College of Business Undergraduate Program Office advises students who have been admitted to the College and students who have met particular benchmarks toward admission to the College. The office advises undergraduates with regard to academic programs, and also occasionally refers students to faculty, who serve as mentors and address career and discipline-specific issues. The Department of Economics, the exception to this model, assigns faculty advisors to all of its B.S. and B.A. liberal arts majors. Students earning a B.B.A. in economics are advised by the Undergraduate Program Office.

In addition to its individual work with students, the Undergraduate Program Office encourages connections to and within the College with a weekly e-mail "Undergraduate
Update” that keeps students apprised of events, opportunities, and deadlines.

Partly in response to a recent slip in the undergraduate program’s Business Week rankings, the Undergraduate Program Office is in the process of enhancing its advising services by adding staff and advising hours. The office has implemented new admission policies to encourage earlier entry into the College and student engagement in collegiate programs. The College expects that offering earlier admission to students who are most likely to succeed in the College’s programs will help them connect sooner with the College and its faculty.

The University’s FY 2009 tuition and fee proposal, approved by the Board of Regents in December 2007, includes a $1,500 tuition supplement for upper division students entering the Tippie College in fall 2008, in part to allow the College to hire four additional advisors. This would bring the advising caseload down to about 350 students per advisor, from the current 900 students per advisor.

College of Engineering

Engineering students who have declared a major are assigned faculty advisors. Those who have not yet declared a major are advised by staff in the Student Development Center (SDC). The SDC welcomes declared students, as well. The College requires that students see their advisors before registering each semester.

All first-year engineering students take a seminar that deals with collegiate and campus resources, ethics, major options, and professional opportunities. Some College of Engineering departments also offer sophomore seminars to expand their majors’ knowledge of professional opportunities, elective options, and prospective employers.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Departmental advising practices within the very large College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) differ widely, as described above. Generally, CLAS departments use one of four approaches to advising:

- Faculty advise students from entry into the program until graduation (e.g., physics and astronomy, speech & hearing science).
- Students are advised by faculty and/or graduate students in the department after a period of advising by the Academic Advising Center (AAC) (e.g., anthropology, English, sociology).
- Students have both a faculty mentor and a professional staff advisor (e.g., international studies).
- Students have professional staff advisors and/or peer advisors in the major department after a period of advising by the AAC (e.g., art and art history, biological sciences, communication studies, elementary education, psychology).

Each department identifies an honors advisor.

Regardless which model is used in a student’s major department, a student may request a different advisor for any reason.

College of Nursing

The College of Nursing assigns all admitted students to an academic advisor who assists
with their program of study, and a faculty advisor to help them make decisions about their educational and professional goals. Students also consult with the College of Nursing Office of Student Services about plans of study and degree requirements.

Honors Advising

Students in the University of Iowa Honors Program receive advising regarding their academic programs from the Academic Advising Center or in their major department, like all other students. They may choose to pursue supplemental individual advising, however, from the Honors Program's professional staff. Beginning in summer 2007, the Honors Program also provides Honors Summer Advisors to help orient entering honors students, and in fall 2007 the program added a staff of honors peer advisors. For several years, the Honors Program has operated a popular peer mentoring program for prospective and entering Presidential Scholars.

Student Perceptions of Advising

The student satisfaction survey asked students “How satisfied are you with the advising process in selecting a major,” and “How satisfied are you with the advising within your major.” It should be noted that a student may have more than one advisor, either because he or she has multiple majors or because the major program involves multiple advisors (whether from the Academic Advising Center, the department or college, or both).

All questions were rated on a five category Likert scale where one=“not satisfied” and five=“very satisfied.” Points two through four were not defined. Because not all respondents selected a response for every survey question, response percentages do not total 100% in all cases.

Student Perceptions of Advising in Process of Selecting a Major

The student satisfaction survey asked if students were satisfied with the advising process in selecting a major. Table II-27 gives the response distribution by college and also summarizes responses given by students who reported their majors as “open,” students who reported having just one major, and students who reported having two or more majors.
Only 42% of students with a single major and 36% of students with multiple majors indicated a high level of satisfaction (four or five on the satisfaction scale) with the advising process in selecting a major, while 30% and 36% respectively responded with a one or two. The results were consistent (about 30% choosing one or two and 40% choosing four or five) for the Colleges of Business, Engineering, and Liberal Arts and Sciences. The College of Nursing had the highest percentage of respondents selecting four or five (54%), but the percentage selecting one or two was consistent with the other colleges. The College of Education had the lowest percentage of respondents who selected four or five (28%) and the highest percentage selecting one or two (41%). Only 33% of open majors responded to this question with a four or five.

Student Perceptions of Advising within the Major

The survey also asked if students were satisfied with advising within their major. Table II-28 gives the response distribution by college and also summarizes responses given by students who reported having just one major and students who reported having two or more majors.
Overall, students appear more satisfied with advising within the major than with the process of advising in selecting a major. Fifty-four percent of students with one major and 45% of students with more than one major selected four or five on the satisfaction scale (compared to 42% and 36% for advising in selecting a major)—although the percentage of students with multiple majors who chose one or two on the satisfaction scale was the same for both advising questions (36%). Students report significantly more satisfaction with advising in the College of Nursing than in any of the other colleges.

Factors Affecting Student Satisfaction with Advising

Several factors unrelated to quality of advising might contribute to the differences in student satisfaction. Choosing a major is a developmental process that often involves unavoidable periods of uncertainty. Also, as noted in the “Education within the Major” section of this self-study, about 45% of first-year CLAS students enter the University with a declared interest in a selective undergraduate or pre-professional program. Some of these students will experience disappointment when they do not gain entry into their chosen program, and may even be forced to choose between a UI degree and their first choice major. Even the best advising cannot compensate for that disappointment. The new pre-approved tracks in interdepartmental studies have the potential to diminish this disappointment by offering students alternative pathways that build on coursework they have already completed while pursuing admission to a selective program.

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The UI Four-Year Graduation Plan, first offered to first-year students in 1995, has proven attractive to prospective students. The plan is a contract between a first-year student and the University according to which the University promises that graduation in four years will not be delayed because of course unavailability, and the student promises to meet established benchmarks or “checkpoints” for progress toward a

Table II-28:
Student Satisfaction with Advising within the Major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Breakouts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Major</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Majors</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
degree, as outlined in the General Catalog and on the CLAS web site. (A few majors cannot typically be completed in four years or have selective admission and therefore are not part of this program.)

First-year students may sign a Four-Year Graduation Plan Agreement at orientation, or at any time during their first two semesters at the University. Participation in the plan has grown steadily from 45% in 1995 to more than 80% in 2006.

This program has resulted in better planning not only for students but for departments, leading to improved course availability for all students and better advising for academic planning. The program also led to the new enrollment management practices described in the “Common Academic Experiences” section of this self-study. Students who sign the agreement have a higher four-year graduation rate than students who do not; for the 2002 cohort, 44% of those who signed up for the plan graduated in four years, compared to 30% of those who did not.

Data about participation and graduation rates for the Four-Year Graduation Plan can be found in the Profile of Students.

Pomerantz Career Center

The Pomerantz Career Center serves more than 20,000 students in the Tippie College of Business, the College of Engineering, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). Its mission is “to prepare University of Iowa undergraduate students and alumni to maximize their potential through innovative career strategy advising, superior internship opportunities, and early direct contact with representatives of corporate America, national and local government, and businesses both large and small.”

The Pomerantz Career Center surveys graduates from the Tippie College of Business and CLAS regarding post-graduation activities. The most recent survey data available at the time of this writing reflect the responses of 64% of the May 2006 graduates from the Tippie College of Business and 49% of the combined fall 2005, spring 2006, and summer 2006 CLAS graduates. Beginning in January 2007, the Career Center will conduct a survey of organizations that have hired UI graduates, asking their general impressions of the graduates’ preparedness for their jobs and what, if any, additional skills and training they need.

Since its creation in 2005, the Pomerantz Career Center has focused on increasing the numbers of employers coming to campus, on-campus interviews for students, and site visits to employers. In 2003, approximately 69 employers came to campus and there were 1,000 student interviews and no site visits. In 2006, more than 350 employers came to campus. There will be more than 6,000 student interviews in 2007, and center staff now make more than 275 visits to employers each year.

The next wave of growth has focused on career advising and a number of new initiatives for students.

Approximately 5,000 students per year receive career advising through the Pomerantz Career Center. The center plans not only to increase that number, but to make more and better use of technology, to increase consistency among career advisors, and to implement a new “career strategy” model in place of the old “interest/skills/values” model. Hallmarks of the new model are “branding” (students learn to establish, communicate, and protect their unique “brands”) and the development of e-portfolios.
Several new initiatives are helping students develop employment skills and internship experiences, and/or are encouraging employment in Iowa:

1. The **Career Leadership Academy** is a four-semester, credit-bearing program comprising seminars, activities, and events designed to give students an edge as leaders in the career field of their choice.

2. The Consider Iowa program helps emerging Iowa businesses attract strong internship candidates, and informs graduates of the many career opportunities that exist within the state.

3. The **Des Moines Center** offers students the opportunity to live in Des Moines for a semester or summer while serving as interns in a range of industries.

4. The **Chicago Center** is an effort to forge strong relationships between UI students and alumni, as well as employers and organizations in northeastern Illinois.

5. The **Senior Conference** is a daylong annual event for graduating UI seniors that includes sessions on understanding benefits, negotiating job offers, communicating on the job, learning to budget, adjusting to the workplace, etc.

6. The **Experience Iowa Internship Program** brings UI students and emerging Iowa businesses together by subsidizing approximately half the cost of a paid internship, with the balance provided by the employer. Last year, Experience Iowa funded $78,000 for employers to hire UI students.

7. The **Hire-a-Hawk Employer Conference** brings employers from around and outside of Iowa to campus to talk about recruiting and hiring trends.

The Career Center also offers for-credit courses in career development and job searching. The center is developing a research component to its activities. The director envisions the center collecting information on student outcomes, surveying employers, and becoming a clearinghouse for research on employment trends and economic development. The center hopes eventually to offer funding for employment- or career development-related graduate research.

**Conclusions—Student Advising**

Advising in the colleges and departments receives a mixed response from students, which reflects the difficulty of maintaining a consistent level of quality for a service that is so decentralized—as well as the difficulty of interpreting one-time surveys of student satisfaction. Students express a high level of satisfaction with their advisors at the Academic Advising Center, but some concern about the level of assistance the University gives them in choosing a major. Although this concern might arise from unavoidable issues such as the uncomfortable uncertainty associated with choosing a major or the disappointment some students feel when denied admission to a selective program, it merits further examination. Creative options such as the interactive online course in major selection proposed by the Academic Advising Center could offer needed assistance as students and advisors work through processes associated with choosing and entering majors.

The Pomerantz Career Center has grown very quickly, and is on track to continue
developing as an extraordinary resource for Iowa students as they seek to cultivate their professional potential.

University Libraries

Overview

A university’s library system is central to student development—especially the development of information literacy. A total of 92% of respondents to the student satisfaction survey conducted for this self-study said they had used the University Libraries, and 76% of those reported that the Libraries had proven moderately to very helpful in their development of skills—the highest percentage for any of the targeted programs. During the 2005-06 academic year, undergraduate students accounted for 29% of all materials checked out of the Libraries.

The University of Iowa Libraries comprise the largest library system in Iowa, and the 21st largest among the nation’s public research libraries. The Main Library, the Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, and the nine branch libraries together contain approximately four million volumes, with about two-thirds of this collection located in the Main Library. The nine branch libraries—Art, Biological Sciences, Business, Engineering, Geoscience, Mathematical Sciences, Music, Physics, and Psychology—are located in proximity to the relevant colleges and departments. The Hardin Library for the Health Sciences supports the five health science colleges.

The Libraries’ most recent annual report, for 2006-07, indicates that in that year the Libraries held 610 instructional sessions with more than 16,000 participants. They counted more than 90,000 reference transactions, almost two million catalog searches, and recorded a “gatecount” (entries into the building) of 1.9 million. Students have averaged nearly two million visits to the Libraries each year over the past five years.

Four hundred computers are available for public use throughout the libraries, and the Main Library Instructional Technology Center (ITC) is both the largest and busiest ITC on campus. A new library initiative, begun in fall 2006, has led to increased delivery of course reserve materials via ICON, UI’s new course management system.

Since FY 2002, the Libraries have lost about $1.5 million in funds for salaries, which translates into approximately 25 entry-level librarian positions. According to a recent self-study (August 2006, revised August 2007), the Libraries’ budget for personnel and is now smaller than any of the libraries at our peer institutions. This reduction has made it challenging to maintain services and also move in new directions, such as library staff playing a more prominent role as partners in the instructional process.

The Libraries system occupies about the same amount of space it did in 1975. Since then, however, collections have more than doubled, the staff has grown larger, and student enrollment has increased. The University Libraries together have study seating capacity for only 10% of the University’s 30,000 students, far below the recommended seating standards for academic libraries. Book stacks are severely overcrowded compared to national standards, and the Libraries have had to eliminate user seating to accommodate them.

A library high-density book storage facility, now in the planning stages, may relieve some archiving space problems within five to eight years. The project will provide long-term, environmentally-controlled storage space for less frequently used books and for archives and other materials. The planned facility will consist of approximately 22,000

3b: Effective teaching
3c: Effective learning environments
3d: Support for learning and teaching
2a: Preparation for future
gross square feet, on a site away from central campus.

In addition to the programs described below, some ongoing Libraries programs worth noting include:

Since 1995, librarians have been part of the University of Iowa’s Upward Bound program, which was described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study.

A satellite Writing Center opened in spring 2005 in the Main Library as the result of a proposal from library personnel. Initially located on the first floor of the Main Library, the center is now located on the 2nd floor, in proximity to the Main Library ITC. This was the third location for a satellite Writing Center, now one of five. The role of the Writing Centers is considered below.

In spring 2006 the University Libraries began a program of outreach to those affiliated with the University’s cultural and resource centers, which were described in the “Learning Alongside the Curriculum” section of this self-study. The Libraries have designated a librarian for each cultural center to participate in activities, provide specialized library services, and encourage students to apply to work in the Libraries.

An ongoing information-gathering effort involves focus group-style discussions with students. In spring 2006, 206 students enrolled in 12 discussion sections of “Western Civilization I” participated, and discussed, among other topics of interest, why some of them do not use the Libraries. A summary of their comments can be found in Appendix II-N. Additional focus group sessions with undergraduate students are scheduled as part of an ongoing effort to gather input on library services and suggestions for additional ways the Libraries can meet student needs.

Physical Learning Environments in the Libraries

In 2006, motivated by a general need for renovation and the transformation in library services due to developments in technology, the University Libraries conducted a major space study. As stated in the space study, until the last 30 years the mission of the Libraries was “. . . to collect, store, preserve, and make accessible much of the world’s publications.” In the last three decades, however, there has been a dramatic philosophical change in the mission of research libraries. As stated in the Libraries’ strategic space planning report, “the goal of on-site collection and storage . . . has been replaced with one of providing access to materials, whatever their format or location, when needed.” The expectations for librarians have shifted also, and the emphasis on education and service has increased. Added to the functions of maintaining collections and providing one-on-one service within the library are functions such as helping students gain skills in accessing information, and supporting people who access the libraries’ materials electronically. All of these developments have implications for library space needs and usage.

Main Library

The goal for the Main Library, as stated in the space study, is to create a “revitalized place of scholarship and an intellectual center for the University.” The study envisioned a major change in function for the first and second floors of the Main Library, and creation of new spaces where the University would be able to offer both virtual and place-bound services in support of learning, teaching, scholarship, electronic publishing, and research.
The study led to a vision for library space that considered multiple kinds of spaces—“living room” space, conference rooms, conversation vs. quiet spaces, social vs. study spaces—that will be needed to support students, faculty, student advising, tutoring, and perhaps other services not yet envisioned. Library space must be attractive, clean, comfortable, well lighted, and flexible in configuration. Twenty-four hour access to at least some of the Main Library must be considered in future plans. Hours of operation for the Food for Thought Café in the Main Library should be expanded.

These concepts have led to calls for improved, integrated support, with people, technologies, and spaces available to provide, for example:

- Support for technology—including existing software and hardware, but also support for creating new products from existing ones (e.g., using the Media Services collection to transform traditional media into new media)

- Support for using information resources, including information literacy skills development and help with citation management software, plagiarism and copyright information, and tools for managing quantitative and qualitative data

- Support for writing, speaking, and presentations. There is a Writing Center satellite in the Main Library, but space is needed to support the development of presentations as well—perhaps a Speaking Center satellite.

A major feature of this space would be support for collaborative work. Increased interdisciplinary endeavors lead to the need for spaces that support more interaction among students and between students and faculty. More group study rooms and project development spaces, appropriately equipped, are desirable. This will require ongoing collaboration between the University Libraries and its many partners on campus who support teaching, learning, and research.

Though still in very early stages of planning, this project envisions the Main Library as a student learning space with expanded hours of access, collections of student-focused services—both “high-tech” and “high-touch”—and a variety of types of spaces designed to meet the changing learning styles of today’s students.

In fall 2007 a team of undergraduate students responded to preliminary ideas about a reconfigured Main Library and made additional suggestions about what the Main Library would look like if they were to contribute to the design. The president of the UISG provided two brief reports outlining the students’ ideas, and reported his perception of a “great deal of excitement out there for this proposal.”

The opening of the UI Campus Recreation and Wellness Center just south of the Main Library should also be considered as part of this concept, since the proximity of the buildings will link learning and recreational spaces on campus.

Virtual Learning Environments in the Libraries: Distance Librarian

Since 1998, the Main Library has had a “distance librarian,” a position funded by the Division for Continuing Education and initiated in part to support the students and faculty who teach or take distance education courses. The distance librarian’s role has expanded significantly since it was first created, again due to developments in technology, as well as growth in the number of distance education courses offered and the number of students who participate in them.

The commitment to maintain this position demonstrates the commitment of the
University Libraries and the Division of Continuing Education to extend University of Iowa academic resources to people in need of credit-bearing course work, certification and licensure courses, in-service training, or professional development, and to ensure that those students receive the same level of support in using library resources and services as other students.

The distance librarian’s role is, in part, to help create a “virtual presence” and a sense of community for distance learners. Two key factors in supporting distance learners are access and user education. A well developed, clearly organized web site that makes resources easy to find is crucial to both, and also to creating a positive learning environment. In recent years, access to University resources has been streamlined, and is now the same for on- and off-campus students.

To ensure that students are able to communicate using methods they are comfortable with, the distance education library web site includes both e-mail and toll-free telephone access to the distance librarian. The Libraries are in the process of revamping the distance education library web site to make it easier to navigate and to include features such as the new “library tips blog,” which provides another way for distance education students to ask questions, report problems, share tips about doing research or using the library, and search through other students’ postings.

Distance librarians can also assist distance learners by working with faculty to be certain students have access to electronic reserves and that information for classes is organized and available in a timely way. The distance librarian is currently planning a new project to work with faculty on integrating library resources in their ICON (see below) course sites.

Student Usage of the Libraries for Study

When asked if they spend most or all of their study time in one of the University Libraries, 18.2% of respondents to the survey on learning spaces conducted for this self-study responded positively. An additional 52.0% said they spend some or about half of their study time in the Libraries. Undergraduate students use the Main Library most often (57.1%), with the Hardin Library for the Health Sciences and the Business branch library accounting for the next largest percentages, 8.2% and 12.1% respectively. When asked if there is adequate space for group study at the Main Library, 65.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed; asked the same question about individual study space, 75.8% agreed or strongly agreed. Finally, 63.7% of students agreed or strongly agreed that there is adequate transportation between the libraries and where they live.

Although some of the student comments about the Libraries compiled in Appendix II-N are contradictory (“too quiet,” “too crowded/loud”), this supplementary information about student perceptions of the Libraries does suggest some ways the University could improve the learning environment in the Main Library. The students describe what they would like to see in terms of furniture and space—more “comfy” chairs, smaller tables, more group study spaces—and highlight things that inconvenience them, such as the fact that the south entrance closes early.

LibQUAL+ Survey

During fall 2006, the University Libraries surveyed campus users regarding their satisfaction with library services and collections using a nationally-recognized instrument, LibQUAL+™, developed in 2001 through 2003 by the Association of
Research Libraries (ARL) and based on the SERVQUAL model. The survey asks questions in three categories: affect of service, information control, and library as place.

In total, 127 undergraduate students completed the survey and commented about the Libraries. The comments focused on library spaces, technology, and people and services. Space was of particular concern to this group—one student commented, for example, “Services, collections, and staff are wonderful, but the main building itself is not very inviting.” Another referenced the Art branch library “as a shining example of location, lighting, comfort, and color scheme combining to create an environment that facilitates learning.” “Having the library open for 24 hours” was a common concern, as was the limited availability of space for group study and projects.

“College Transition” Program Support

Since fall 2001, more than 5,000 first-year UI students have enrolled in the one-credit “College Transition” course, described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study. All “College Transition” students experience a hands-on class session in the Main Library that introduces them to the Libraries’ services and resources. In fall 2006, more than 40 library staff members participated in these “College Transition” class sessions, reaching more than 850 students. Library personnel have made presentations at regional and national conferences about assessing learning outcomes, based on what they have learned from the evaluation component of this program—an ongoing pre-test/post-test study.

“College Transition” students take a pre-test that consists of 15 questions designed to determine the extent to which students have written research papers during high school, what kind of library orientation they received in high school, and their level of familiarity with library resources and services. Students take another test immediately after their first library session, and again a few weeks later to determine if the library session was successful.

The Libraries also administer a brief post-test survey, to which 880 students responded in fall 2007. Of those respondents, 91% agreed or strongly agreed that the library component of the “College Transition” course had given them “a better understanding of library resources.” About 90% indicated that they knew the criteria to evaluate web sites, and about 77% felt they understood how to use Academic Search Elite to look for magazines and journal articles. Comments that may help identify areas in need of improvement include:

Information provided in a void is less relevant then when it is presented at a point of need. Since “College Transition” has no research assignment, students appear to retain less information than if they had a related assignment.

There is some redundancy if students are taking both rhetoric and “College Transition.”

The library component of the “College Transition” course has reinforced for library staff the idea that the Libraries and development of information skills can contribute in a key way to student satisfaction and retention.

“Library Research in Context” Course

In fall 2005, with support from the associate provost for undergraduate education,
the University Libraries developed a “Library Research in Context” (LRC) course. The Libraries first offered the course, under the aegis of the University College, in spring 2006. This one-semester-hour course is intended for upper-level students who are also taking a class in their major that requires a research project.

LRC is an activity-based course that helps students develop an understanding of how library resources can support individual courses of study. The course introduces students to the basic research process and to research conventions in specific fields, and teaches how to integrate information skills and concepts to accomplish course goals. Subject-specialist librarians present the course material through lectures, in-class activities and assignments, and class discussion. Librarians taught five sections of LRC during spring and fall 2006 and seven in spring and fall 2007.

LRC instructors collect survey data at the beginning and end of each course to identify strengths and weaknesses in the students’ ability to use library resources, and also to collect students’ general impressions about the course. Students have expressed a high level of satisfaction with the course, as well as some concern that it might involve more work than is appropriate for only one semester hour of credit. Students report feeling less “library anxiety” and more confidence in navigating what previously seemed like an “information quagmire,” as well as greater confidence in their researching skills. Students report feeling more able to evaluate information found online and to develop their own ideas based on that information.

Faculty members have expressed a great deal of enthusiasm about the course, but a disappointingly small number have been willing to collaborate with the Libraries to develop course sections, resulting in fewer sections than anticipated.

Rhetoric Matching Program

The Rhetoric Matching Program matches rhetoric teaching assistants with librarians who serve as their contact points and/or consultants, supporting rhetoric instructors by providing:

- Orientations to the libraries and library services for instructors and their students
- Suggestions for instructors developing library assignments
- Information on teaching students how to evaluate information
- Suggestions regarding information resources and tools that can help students
- Instruction and support on using various information resources (e.g., the library catalog, EbscoHost Academic Search Elite, etc.), so that instructors can pass that knowledge on to their students
- Recommendations of resources that might complement instruction and might be included on course web sites
- Teaching library sessions for students in the Main Library Information Arcade classroom

Rhetoric teaching assistants participate in the program only if they choose to, so not all students enrolled in rhetoric (a requirement of the General Education Program, as described earlier in this self-study) receive the program’s assistance. From those who do participate the Libraries have received considerable positive feedback.
Conclusions—University Libraries

University of Iowa students have a remarkable resource in the University Libraries, whose four million volumes place it 21st in size among the nation’s public research libraries. According to the student satisfaction survey conducted for this self-study, students seem to appreciate that resource. Librarians’ participation in “College Transition,” “Library Research in Context,” and rhetoric courses through the Rhetoric Matching Program also seems to have significant benefits for undergraduates. Library leaders are concerned, however, that staffing levels at the Libraries may not be adequate to meet their goals for assisting in student learning. A review of the Libraries, nearing completion in fall 2007, might address this issue.

The Libraries are feeling space constraints as the collections, staff, and student enrollment have grown since 1975, while the Libraries’ physical space has not. The library archiving facility now under development will relieve some archiving space pressures, but seating standards remain below recommended levels.

Developing Student Speaking, Writing, and Math Skills

Overview

Labs, programs, and centers on campus focus on helping students build skills necessary for student success. Among these units are the campus writing centers: the UI Writing Center, the Writing Fellows Program, the History Writing Center, the Department of Accounting Writing Program, the College of Medicine Writing Center, the College of Engineering Center for Technical Communication, the Judith R. Frank Business Communications Center, and the Spanish Writing Center. The Speaking Center helps students improve public speaking skills, and the Math Lab uses a similar format to help students develop math skills.

All of these can make a significant contribution to cultivating student potential, because these skills are so important to student success in college and beyond.

Writing Center

The University of Iowa Writing Center, established in 1934, offers free one-on-one instruction in rhetorical and communication skills to all interested students on campus. Instructors include faculty members in the Department of Rhetoric, and graduate students from such departments as English, communication studies, and rhetoric. Students can choose to enroll in the Writing Center for an entire semester, make individual appointments, or request help via e-mail.

Over the years, Writing Center services have grown with the addition of satellite centers in the Blank Honors Center, North Hall, the Rehder Lounge in the Quadrangle residence hall, the Main Library, and the Iowa City Public Library. In spring 2007, the center added workshops in fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.

The Writing Center provides assistance to address a wide range of student needs and interests. In fact, many students who attend the Writing Center are excellent writers, some of whom have published work in prestigious journals and texts. Tutors are not oriented toward “fixing” individual papers but toward assisting writers in improving their strategies of researching, organizing, drafting, editing, and revising. Often, tutors develop mentoring relationships with Writing Center students.
The Writing Center attracts a culturally diverse population, including a high percentage of international participants. Every semester, students from ten to fifteen different language backgrounds and countries enroll. The Writing Center produces a journal of student writing, *VOICES from the University of Iowa Writing Center*, and sponsors a reading at the end of the semester. *VOICES* provides a venue for students across disciplines and from many cultures to share their work.

At the end of each semester, tutors solicit written feedback from each student enrolled in the program. The overwhelming majority of these evaluations are positive, and students from all backgrounds report that the Writing Center has helped improve their writing skills and made them more confident writers. Suggestions for improvement are considered by the Writing Center staff as they seek to expand their services to be even more comprehensive. The satellite centers, increased appointment hours, Sunday night hours at the Main Library, a wider variety of workshop topics, and community workshops are examples of student suggestions that have led to Writing Center improvements. The demand for Writing Center services is likely to lead to future expansion of staff, hours, and services.

**Spanish Writing Center**

The *Spanish Writing Center* (SWC) was established to provide writing assistance to undergraduate students in 100-level Spanish courses, and it is gaining in popularity quickly. Its mission is to help students focus on issues of content, organization, and structure when they write in Spanish.

Students sign up for 30-minute appointments, which involve one-on-one help with specific writing assignments. Tutors have students explain the assignment and discuss their writing goals. They hope to help students discover areas in the paper that need improvement and points that need expansion, elaboration, or clarification. As does the Writing Center, the Spanish Writing Center seeks to help students become better writers, not to fix or edit individual pieces of writing.

**Tippie College of Business Judith R. Frank Business Communications Center**

The *Judith R. Frank Business Communications Center* in the Tippie College of Business works with undergraduate students in that college to address the particular challenges of business communications. More than 600 undergraduates visit the center every semester.

The center, staffed by master’s-level and peer tutors, works primarily in conjunction with writing intensive courses in the College. Collaborating closely with the course instructors, staff in the center develop handouts and give class presentations tailored to the writing assignments in the course. They also work with individual students. Any business major, enrolled in one of the writing intensive courses or not, may visit the center.

Center staff also encourage groups to use their services, and will work with student teams to address collaborative writing issues such as collating research, writing sections with the big picture in mind, and using targeted checklists to measure results.

The director of the center oversees a core course for business majors, “Foundations of Business,” which focuses on writing and speaking skills in the context of business ethics and leadership. Students complete several writing and presentation assignments, participate in peer-review activities, and analyze ethical issues in business. The center
offers several specialized classes as well, with enrollment limited to 15 students.

**Speaking Center**

The **Speaking Center**’s mission is to help all members of the UI community who are interested in improving their speaking and teaching skills. Staff tailor tutoring sessions to meet an individual’s needs, such as help with a speech for a rhetoric or English course, a panel presentation, a dissertation defense, a conference presentation, an interview, a reading, or any other oral presentation. The center also serves as a resource center for instructors who incorporate speaking into their syllabi. The Speaking Center teamed with the Writing Center in spring 2007 to offer an English as a Second Language (ESL) conversation group; each Friday, enrolled students met with Writing and Speaking Center staff to discuss a conversation “topic of the week.”

This year, the Speaking Center expanded its services and hours of operation to accommodate more students. It reserves more than 30 weekly time slots for ESL conversation instruction, in addition to the 65 weekly appointment hours available to students working on projects. In spring 2006, the center held 168 30-minute appointments with students; in spring 2007, the center held 594 30-minute appointments.

In 2006 the Speaking Center procured a student computing fee grant for more than $30,000, which has enhanced TA training and purchased new technology, such as digital cameras to allow taping of student speeches so that tutors can review performance with students. The grant has also enabled the Speaking Center to develop, collect, and catalogue multimedia instructional materials. The purchase of new workstations—although crowded in the current space—has allowed the center to manage the expansion of its library of digital assets, and offer a working environment for students to use in developing, revising, and refining multimedia presentations. The new technology has, furthermore, allowed the Speaking Center to conduct more effective outreach instruction—workshops on matters such as effective conference presentations and interviewing techniques, which have been popular with many units across campus. In the near future, the center expects to add new programs including workshops on web resources, research, streaming media, and multimedia presentations for business, engineering, science, and honors courses.

The Speaking Center’s expansion, broader focus, and greater technological capabilities have attracted a larger, more diverse clientele. Space restrictions, however, hinder further expansion. The center is housed in a single room, which makes it difficult for more than one tutor to work with more than one student at one time. Staff have been able to accommodate the increased volume of appointments in part by holding some meetings in private offices rather than in the center’s space.

In focus group discussions with faculty about learning environments, some faculty wondered whether the space currently allotted to both the Writing Center and the Speaking Center could be increased, to allow for more usage of those resources.

**Math Lab**

A service unit under the auspices of the Department of Mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the **Math Lab** provides a comfortable atmosphere where students can congregate to study math and receive one-on-one tutoring. The lab records about 8,000 student visits per year.
When asked about sources of support for being an effective student, many first-year students in RISE interviews cited the Math Lab. These students noted the accessibility and usefulness of the lab.

Located in several large, comfortable rooms with good lighting, the Math Lab provides an inviting atmosphere and a bank of computers that run tutorial software and standard math applications such as Maple and Mathematica. The lab added new tutorial software in spring 2007. A lab supervisor directs students to the help they need, and tutors provide one-on-one assistance. Students can come regularly or drop in for one-time assistance; those who experience the most improvement use the lab once a week.

The Math Lab was founded in 1979 in response to the concern that large math classes left students without regular one-on-one consultation with an instructor. In addition, many students enter the University without the algebra and pre-calculus skills necessary for success in University-level courses. The Math Lab is a much needed resource, therefore, but labor intensive; almost all of about 20 incoming graduate students in the Department of Mathematics work in the lab half time for their first year. These TAs receive training in tutoring, and their extensive experience in the lab helps make them more effective in leading discussion sections the following year.

The Math Lab also offers short courses on special topics in areas that are known to cause difficulty for large numbers of students, such as logarithms or using the chain rule in calculus. Student comments mention the helpfulness and understanding of Math Lab tutors.

The Math Lab enjoys an excellent reputation among advisors and students for helping students who are struggling with math. The student satisfaction survey reinforced that reputation. Of the 42% of respondents to the student satisfaction survey who reported having used the Lab, 66% rated the experience “moderately helpful” to “very helpful” in increasing skills.

Conclusions—Developing Student Speaking, Writing, and Math Skills

The University's writing centers, Speaking Center, and Math Lab are gaining in popularity, used by students from a wide variety of backgrounds, and receive positive evaluations. First-year students interviewed for the RISE study mentioned the Math Lab in particular as having contributed to their success. The University might investigate ways to expand the capacity of these units.

University Housing

Overview

The residence halls are one of the most important learning environments the University provides. They play a particularly important role in helping new students transition to University life.

Role of Residence Halls In Helping Students Transition to the University

Research has shown that “Residential living during college is consistently one of the most important determinants of a college student's level of involvement or integration into the various cultural, social, and extracurricular systems of the institution” (Pascarella, Terenzini, & Blimling, 1994, pp.25-26). With more than 90% of all first-year UI students living in one of ten residence halls, University Housing clearly plays a
critical role in the experience of new undergraduates.

The 2006-07 Residence Halls Guidebook provides an excellent overview of the role residence hall life can play in the transition to college:

The residence halls at The University of Iowa are more than just a place to live. In addition to safe and comfortable surroundings, living in an adult environment with limited supervision provides students with a glimpse of what living in society is all about: interacting with people from various backgrounds, taking responsibility for personal behavior, learning how a political governing system works, and learning how to have fun—and get along—with friends and neighbors. From classes, to interesting programs, to spontaneous fun, the residence halls at The University of Iowa provide for a living/learning experience on campus.

Prospective students are first exposed to residence hall living during campus tours offered by the Office of Admissions. Selecting housing and choosing whether to live in one of UI’s 12 learning communities are among a new student’s first decisions. Resident assistants (RAs) are trained to develop relationships with first-year students during their first weeks on campus—a critical time for students to engage and integrate into the campus community. University Housing, therefore, plays a crucial role in the daily lives of new students.

In interviews, several University Housing staff members noted that returning students serve as mentors for first-year students by modeling appropriate social and academic behavior. Often they function as tutors as well, especially within learning communities. University Housing sets a priority on housing first-year students, so space for returning students is severely constrained. The lack of space for returning students translates into a disadvantage for new students, who miss out on the mentoring that returning students can provide.

The Residence Halls as a Learning Environment

The residence halls are not just a place for students to eat and sleep but also a place to study, learn, and establish a sense of community.

University Housing provides space that is just for students—where they are with their peers, have the freedom to decorate their own spaces, can create informal study groups, and feel comfortable and safe. Resident assistants run floor meetings and have other formal duties, but also provide an accepting environment. Some floors regularly sponsor informal activities.

These conditions are amenable to informal learning and also set the stage for formal learning. Wireless internet access is available in the dorms, and five out of ten residence halls also offer ITCs that are accessible 24 hours a day—which is important for students who do not feel comfortable leaving the residence halls at night, or who do not have their own computers.

The Residence Life mission statement reads:

Residence Life staff is committed to the holistic development of students. The services we offer are intentionally designed to foster the academic, social, cultural, and personal growth of our residents. We are dedicated to the preparation of leaders and involved citizens in a safe and inclusive residential community. Paramount to this endeavor is the promotion of understanding and responsibility in a positive living.
The results of the student survey of learning spaces conducted for this self-study indicate a generally positive attitude toward the residence halls as a learning environment. When asked whether the residence halls are conducive to study, 68.9% agreed or strongly agreed. Asked whether the residence hall rooms are furnished for serious study, 67.0% agreed. And 63.6% indicated that they do study in the public lounges in the residence halls. Overall, 52.6% of respondents indicated that they spend most or all of their study time in the residence halls, and an additional 24.4% indicated that they spend about half of their study time there.

University Housing is committed to its role in supporting student development. In 2006 University Housing developed and implemented a Community Development Blueprint intended to shift the focus from traditional programming to purposeful community development within the residence halls. In an effort to foster student learning, growth, and interaction, RAs plan programming around five outcomes:

1. Knowledge of individual and community needs
2. Focus on academics and expanding knowledge
3. Personal wellness and health choices
4. Attending to the well-being of others through social action
5. Commitment to career preparation

For instance, one of the ways University Housing discourages students from drinking alcohol is to provide alternative activities. Late on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, RAs are encouraged to provide “Late-Night Initiatives” such as a video game competitions or trips to a local mall. In addition, University Housing plans at least one program for each of the three campus neighborhoods (East, West, and North) every weekend.

University Housing recently developed a policy of notifying parents when students are found to be using alcohol or drugs, and began imposing fines for drinking alcohol in the residence halls ($200 for a first offense, $500 for a second). Alcohol-related violations have dropped 30% since the fines were introduced.

Beginning in fall 2004, University Housing has distributed a Resident Satisfaction Survey (published by Educational Benchmarking, Inc.) utilizing a seven point Likert scale, with items focused on several factors related to satisfaction with the residence halls. Fall 2004 results were compared to three sets of institutions: every college that distributed the survey (n=254), all institutions in Iowa’s Carnegie class (n=66), and six selected by University Housing. The factors “satisfaction with floor or hall facilities” and “satisfaction with residence hall facilities” ranked Iowa at the top of UI’s Carnegie class and second out of all institutions surveyed. Dining services also ranked highly. Satisfaction with RAs, fellow residents, and roommates compared less favorably, however. University Housing took these results into account in its strategic planning process. Results of the fall 2006 survey are posted on the University’s web site.

The most visibly promising feature of residence hall life is the success of learning communities, as described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study. When asked whether they were aware of learning communities, at least half of all respondents to the learning spaces survey—and half within each major or college included—answered “yes.” Asked whether they felt learning communities made studying easier, 38.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and 56.0% were neutral (perhaps reflecting students who are not members of learning communities). These students
were also asked whether learning communities add a positive social dimension to studying, to which 48.8% said yes, and 46.4% were neutral.

The Learning Communities Task Force, described in the conclusion to this self-study, will offer recommendations concerning the next stage of development of both residential and non-residential learning communities.

The Office of Residence Life

Within University Housing, the Office of Residence Life (ORL) attends to the growth and well-being of student residents through a combination of programs, direct staff interaction, and policy administration. Table II-29 lists the programs ORL administers.

Table II-29: Office of Residence Life Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Associated Residence Halls (ARH) and Hall Governments</th>
<th>ARH is the overall governing body for the 10 residence halls on campus, to which each of the nine individual hall governments report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earthwords</td>
<td>Student-run publication featuring student prose, poetry, and original artwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Social Programming</td>
<td>A variety of programs for individual floors, halls, or the entire residence life community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Games</td>
<td>A monthly, late night recreational alternative held at the Field House, administered in conjunction with Recreational Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Week</td>
<td>Residence Life is a co-sponsor of the University’s Welcome Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned in the “Learning Alongside the Curriculum” section of this self-study, University Housing also provides a number of opportunities for student employment.

Office of Residence Life Manager of Academic Initiatives

In 2007 University Housing created a new position, manager of academic initiatives, charged with increasing consistency among the learning communities, further implementing best practices from on and off campus, and managing University Housing’s focused shift toward developing the academic side of residence hall life. Staff will create more learning-oriented programming for the halls, such as the programs currently in place during Welcome Week. New programs may build on the success of the PACE (Promoting Academic Commitment Excellence) program in Burge Hall, which “catches” students studying and rewards them for it.

With this strengthened emphasis on academic programming in the residence halls, University Housing has already been able to implement several successful initiatives. University Housing partnered with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to promote the Peanut Butter and Jelly Mid-term Study Break, an out-of-class social student-faculty event. Two events were held in October, from 9:30 p.m. to midnight—one in Hillcrest Dining Lobby and one Currier. Faculty members from large lecture courses made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for students, who had...
an opportunity to ask questions before mid-term exams, interact socially, and get to know the faculty members.

The Office of Residence Life, in conjunction with the Office of the Provost and the Department of Psychology, organized three Elementary Psychology Question and Answer sessions with Scott Robinson, teacher of the large “Elementary Psychology” course, for residents of Slater Residence Hall. The first of these out-of-class student-faculty interactions focused on upcoming mid-term exams for the course and questions about involvement in the field of psychology. Food and drinks were provided. More than 65 students attended (out of 98 invited), and most stayed for the entire two hours in the Slater Residence Hall Lounge. Asked to comment, students indicated that they felt the session was helpful for test preparation and they enjoyed learning about Robinson, both professionally and personally. The second session was held in late October, and the third immediately before finals. A graduate student from the UI Graduate Programs in Student Affairs will follow up with an assessment of the program.

The Office of Residence Life each year collects information from faculty and staff who want to volunteer to present information, interact with students, or teach a skill in the residence hall setting. Residence hall staff members contact ORL to request certain speakers, skills, or topic areas for programming. ORL matches these requests with its database of potential speakers and presenters, and facilitates arrangements for faculty visits to the residence halls. This process has led to program offerings dealing with the Iowa City Under 21 initiative, careers in the health sciences, stress management techniques, how to pass a science course, résumé writing, and even an opera performance. All of these programs involved a faculty member. ORL is committed to further developing this program in the future.

Conclusions—University Housing

Students express a positive perception of the residence halls as a learning environment. Learning communities have met with particularly positive response, are in great demand, and contribute to retention. An increased emphasis on academic initiatives in the Office of Residence Life has led to some innovative programs, and as that effort grows it might help to increase student academic engagement.

Supporting Healthy Choices, Personal Development, and Safety

Overview

One strategy related to undergraduate education in The Iowa Promise is to “creat[e] with [undergraduates] a safe environment in which to live, learn, and work, including opportunities to participate in health-promoting activities.” The plan also calls for “... persistent attention to the health and welfare of faculty, staff, and students.” Some of the units that help to carry out these responsibilities are Student Health Service, the University Counseling Service, the Office of Student Services Campus and Community Relations, and the Women’s Resource and Action Center.

Student Health Service

Student Health Service (SHS) is the primary health care resource for all University of Iowa students (undergraduate and graduate) and provides primary care, psychiatry, gynecology services, sports medicine, a full-service pharmacy, and travel/allergy
clinics, as well as health promotion services through Health Iowa. SHS’s mission is “to provide competent and quality health care for all students, while recognizing their own individuality as it pertains to treating their particular problems; to promote preventive medicine and healthy lifestyles; to develop educational and outreach programs; and to make student visits an informational and educational experience.”

SHS and Health Iowa, its health promotion and education branch, provide several programs related to recruitment, retention, and the first-year experience. Health Iowa provides training for orientation advisors as well as ongoing training for resident assistants, hall managers, coaches, and faculty and staff in various areas. A majority of the residents in Iowa’s residence halls are first-year students, and a strong infrastructure of health-related support is vital to their transition process. During orientation, Health Iowa staff make presentations to parents and provide MMR and Meningitis shots. SHS monitors immunization requirements for all students on campus.

According to the most recent National College Health Assessment data (fall 2006), 73% of students report using the internet to obtain health information. SHS and Health Iowa offer very good web-based learning resources for students. HealthBlog is an online question and answer service that lets students ask questions of Health Iowa and SHS staff anonymously. More than 900 questions and answers are archived on the site. Health Iowa also offers a link to “e-CHUG” (eCheck-Up to Go), a survey tool developed by San Diego State University that lets students confidentially assess their use of alcohol. The most highly used areas of the site are 1) the anonymous question and answer service that allows students to submit questions and receive credible answers and 2) the general health information arranged by topic (e.g., nutrition, substance use, etc.). The site is accredited by the Health on the Net Foundation.

Many mental health issues surface during early college years, so a strong mental health care system is also a vital component of transition services. SHS works closely with University Counseling Service (see below) to provide mental health diagnosis, counseling, and treatment. Health Iowa also provides substance abuse evaluations and early intervention, as well as dietetic counseling related to eating disorders. The SHS director serves as health expert and consultant for several units on campus—including the Academic Advising Center, University Housing, the Office of the Vice President for Student Services, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences—to identify students who may need academic or other accommodations in order to continue at the University.

SHS works to ensure that its services are supportive and inclusive of individual and cultural differences. Staff members receive diversity training annually. The office has systems in place to make health information available to those whose first language is not English. And staff members help foreign students become familiar with the U.S. health care system.

Health Iowa participated in the joint implementation of AlcoholEdu (described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study), and collaborated with the Department of Health and Sport Studies to offer three sections of “Alcohol and Your College Experience” and three sections of “Tobacco and Your College Experience” courses beginning in fall 2006. All class sections were full, and initial results show that students participating in a three-month follow-up survey decreased their average number of drinks, increased protective behaviors such as being a designated driver, were more likely to avoid drinking games, and more often used a buddy system. In an effort to address alcohol issues at an earlier age, Health Iowa is considering the option of holding spaces in these courses—or setting aside sections—specifically for first- and second-year students.
In 2006-07, SHS received 39,975 patient visits and 18,155 calls to the Nurse Call Line, which provides telephone consultation. Health Iowa conducted 28,792 workshops and consultations across campus. The SHS web site receives up to one million views per year.

In November 2005 and April 2006, SHS administered patient satisfaction surveys, asking patients to grade performance on a number of indicators using an A (great) to F (poor) scale. Patients gave SHS a grade of A in the categories of confidentiality, safety, and whether they would use the services again; they gave the staff category an A-. The payment category received the lowest grade, a C. Ease of getting care, waiting, and facilities received grades in the B range. In October 2006 and March 2007 SHS administered the surveys again. In this second result set patients gave SHS slightly higher ratings in all categories except facilities. All categories remained within the same grade range as in the prior year, except for the payment category, which moved up to a B-, and the facilities category, which moved down to a B-.

SHS also collects and reviews customer input through surveys, interactions, e-mail, comment cards, the M1 Shadow Survey (feedback from first year medical students after shadowing a physician for a period of time), the Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC), and the UI Enrolled Student Survey. As a result of patient input, SHS has developed a brochure about insurance, added information and forms on the SHS web site, and hired an additional appointment scheduler.

University Counseling Service

The primary mental health service for University of Iowa students, the University Counseling Service (UCS) is staffed by 11 doctoral level licensed psychologists with over 150 years of combined experience in college student mental health and higher education, as well as three full-time psychology interns and six to ten graduate psychology students completing required practicum courses in counseling. UCS also employs one full-time project assistant and three support staff. In addition to short-term individual, couple, and group counseling, UCS provides consulting and educational programs on a variety of topics, such as study skills, career choice, communication, diversity, and relationships.

Although UCS works with University Housing and the network of RAs to try to ensure that students receive the care they need, staff members expressed some concern about their office’s limited contact with entering students, who sometimes struggle with the transition to college. Typically, UCS connects with parents of students who are already receiving care when they enter the University, or those who have a disability and need assistance. UCS reaches out to first-year students by participating in orientation (UCS staffs a table with information about counseling services, and participates in the “Staying Safe, Staying Healthy” panel for parents), conducting outreach and educational programs in the residence halls (18 outreach programs were presented in the residence halls between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007), and being part of the “College Transition” “scavenger hunt” (an exercise to help new students become familiar with UI offices and programs). The percentage of UCS contacts who are first-year students remains small, however.

During 2006-07, the Clinical Services area of UCS saw 1,681 students for 2,421 initial consultation visits and took in 620 of them for ongoing counseling. About 68.9% of these were undergraduate student clients, and most (58.1%) were self-referred. Among these clients, 18.6% resided in the residence halls, and 14.3% were first-year students.
The percentage of students seeking counseling increases with each academic level, so that senior students comprise the greatest percentage of undergraduate clients (20.0%).

UCS collects client satisfaction data during a two-week survey period each spring. The spring 2007 survey resulted in positive evaluations in all areas (including location, timeliness of service, competence of counselor, overall quality of services, and others). On a scale of zero to four where zero=poor, one=fair, two=good, three=very good, and four=excellent, the lowest rating for any category was 3.48 for “convenient location.” The highest rating was 3.92, for “felt respected by counselor.”

UCS’s 226 programs in 2006-07 had 8,921 participants, and 69 consultations served an additional 358 participants. One hundred eighty-five program participants completed a program evaluation questionnaire, and more than 97% of these rated both the program and presenter “good” or “excellent.”

The Division of Student Services is completing a review of UCS in fall 2007.

Alcohol Education

Alcohol abuse is the number one public health concern among the college population. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) report *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges* (2002) offers some startling national statistics:

Every year, 1,700 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from unintentional injuries related to alcohol, and half a million are injured.

About 25 percent of college students report academic consequences of drinking, including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams and papers, and receiving lower grades overall.

Thirty-one percent of college students qualify for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse, and 6% for alcohol dependence, according to questionnaire-based self-reports.

Data from a variety of sources indicate that high-risk drinking among University of Iowa students is among the top tier of institutions of higher education in the nation. University of Iowa students report higher levels of “binge” drinking than students at other Big Ten institutions. For example, Iowa’s high-risk drinking rate is 69%, in contrast to 59% at Penn State University, 40% at Ohio State, and 61% at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. UI students also experience more alcohol-related negative consequences than the national average for college students, as outlined in Table II-30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>UI Rate</th>
<th>National Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forgot where you were or what you did</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed Class</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did something (you) regretted</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got behind in school work</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study* (Iowa data, 2005; National Comparative Data: 2001)
The University of Iowa also has a high rate of alcohol-related arrests—a function of both high rates of alcohol use and a high rate of enforcement in Iowa City’s compressed downtown area. Health Iowa has worked to educate students about the effects an arrest or citation can have on their futures; for example, the What’s Your Degree Worth? brochure has been distributed to “College Transition” instructors, Greek chapters, and various other groups. The brochure will be updated in spring 2008.

Changing the “drinking culture” is an evolutionary process, and The University of Iowa has been working for years to implement environmental changes that will reduce excessive drinking; for example, more than 20 years ago UI launched the “Graduate with Class” campaign to stop students from bringing champagne to commencement ceremonies, and more than 10 years ago the University launched the “Safe Saturdays” campaign to cut down on drinking and unsafe behavior in the stands at Kinnick Stadium. Both efforts were successful.

Office of Student Services Campus and Community Relations

A Call to Action highlights the importance of tackling college alcohol abuse through programs targeting 1) individuals, including at-risk or alcohol-dependent drinkers; 2) the student population as a whole; and 3) the college and the surrounding community.

In response to this and other reports on student drinking, The University of Iowa has developed a multi-tiered approach directed by the Office of Student Services Campus and Community Relations (OSSCCR), which serves as a liaison between The University of Iowa and the local community.

On campus, OSSCCR partners with a variety of University units to enhance health and safety. For example, OSSCCR helped Athletics establish a no-alcohol policy in Kinnick Stadium, designate one tailgating lot alcohol-free, and close a parking lot that had become a location for high-risk drinking during football games. Another example is OSSCCR’s work with University Housing to promote non-alcohol-related activities and education in the residence halls.

The University works closely with the City of Iowa City to send out a consistent message regarding excessive alcohol consumption and underage drinking. Nuisance property restrictions and party ordinances have been put in place. Businesses that serve liquor train servers to recognize underage and other high-risk drinkers. Iowa City has banned “all you can drink” specials, “ladies’ night” promotions, and sales of Jell-o shots. Fines for PAULA (possession of alcohol under the legal age) have increased, and a new ordinance bans patrons younger than 19 from bars after 10 p.m. Iowa City, however, remains unusual in allowing entry to bars by patrons who are not old enough to drink legally.

Since the increase in amounts for PAULA fines the number of violations reported through the Office of the Vice President for Student Services decreased from 1,071 to 621. Disorderly house violations have dropped from more than 100 in each year from 2000 to 2003 to 64 in 2006.

Stepping Up Project

A coalition of citizens from The University of Iowa and the Iowa City/Coralville area, the Stepping Up Project works to create recreational programs and government policies that reduce high risk drinking and its harmful effects. The program received a series of grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation beginning in 1996 and ending in spring 2006. The University has assumed responsibility for continued though reduced
funding; the Office of Student Services Campus and Community Relations program grew out of these grants.

The goals of the Stepping Up Project are:

- Communicate information regarding high risk drinking to students, faculty, staff, and community members
- Increase effective enforcement of community and university policies
- Decrease accessibility/availability of alcohol
- Increase social alternatives to high-risk drinking
- Change the larger environment within the state of Iowa as it pertains to high risk drinking
- Actively engage diverse student representatives in the development and assessment of policy initiatives

Stepping Up has provided evidence in support of the recent policy changes described above, including the increase in PAULA fines and party ordinances.

**Friday Classes and Alternative Programming**

Recent research suggests that students who take classes on Fridays are less likely to engage in binge drinking on Thursdays (Wood et al., 2007). On the basis of this evidence, the vice provost has developed plans to shift some Monday classes to Fridays, with particular emphasis on classes that enroll first-year students and have required attendance standards. The first shifts will take place in fall 2008.

In addition, the Center for Credit Programs has implemented spring break programming to give students an alternative to “partying.” Spring break 2008 classes include SCUBA diving, mountain biking, backpacking, ballroom dancing, and challenge course facilitation.

**Women’s Resource and Action Center**

As described above, the Women’s Resource and Action Center (WRAC) at The University of Iowa provides students with various opportunities to participate in programs that promote social change. WRAC also offers many resources to help individuals make healthy choices, overcome challenges in their lives, and make connections with others who have similar interests and challenges.

Each semester WRAC offers a series of support, discussion, and enrichment groups led by trained facilitators (primarily student and community volunteers). Participation is free. In fall 2007 WRAC groups included “The Savvy FreshWoman,” for female first-year undergraduates wanting to build support and skills to help them succeed in college; a lesbian reading group; “Mujer,” a group that brings together Latinas from diverse backgrounds to talk about their experiences living in Iowa; “Centered Self,” a group for students, staff, faculty, and community members of any gender to talk about incorporating self-care techniques into hectic schedules; and “I’m Graduating... Now What?!” a group for female undergraduates nearing graduation to discuss values, goals, and priorities for their lives after college.

Other resources available at WRAC include the Sojourner Truth Library, which
houses materials on topics such as women’s health, gender studies, and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender studies; a computer loan program; individual counseling; diversity dialogue circles; internship and volunteer training programs; and many educational programs, including conferences, lectures, and workshops. Recent WRAC-sponsored events include the two part “Race, Privilege and Cultural Competence” mini-conference, created in response to the race and class inequities highlighted by Hurricane Katrina; the 14th annual Iowa Women’s Music Festival; and “When Someone’s Not Safe at Home,” a workshop for professionals to learn how to help individuals who might be experiencing violence in a domestic relationship.

Over the last three academic years, WRAC has collected satisfaction data from service users. Over that period, the percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they found the event they attended enjoyable and/or helpful ranged from 83% (in 2005-06) to 95% (in 2006-07).

The Healthy Living Network

The Division of Student Services is developing a Healthy Living Network to encourage collaboration and assessment within the division regarding the holistic health of UI students. Still in the planning stages, the program’s goals include:

- Students will develop a deeper understanding of their personal health status and the role of environmental influences on health issues and practices.
- Students will make decisions aimed at living a purposeful, healthy and balanced life.
- Students will recognize and act on the value of a campus environment supportive of health and intolerant of abuse.

Measures that will be used to assess how successful the program is in achieving these outcomes include National College Health Assessment (HCHA) data, program evaluation data, and Educational Benchmarking, Inc., data. Outcomes will be measured for behavior change; change in self-knowledge; and self-reported change in knowledge, values, and actions.

Public Safety

Campus crime statistics show that UI students live and study in a relatively safe environment, but safety remains an ongoing concern.

The University of Iowa Department of Public Safety provides police and security services for the campus and cooperates with other local law enforcement agencies. The department has a full time crime prevention officer and offers a number of programs to educate students and other members of the campus community on strategies for self-defense and protection of property.

With the support of a U.S. Department of Justice grant, the University has created the Anti-Violence Campus Coalition. Working with a variety of internal units and community agencies, the coalition seeks to reduce violence against women, especially in the context of dating relationships.

Conclusions— Supporting Healthy Choices, Personal Development, and Safety

The University offers students many resources to help maintain health and well-being,
with a focus on helping students make wise choices about caring for themselves.

The RISE study and other data have demonstrated, however, that alcohol abuse is a serious problem at UI and that it affects both student health and student academic success negatively. Addressing this issue will require the increased attention not only of units that already focus daily on issues of student health, but of University administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

**Environments and Resources to Support Learning among Selected Student Populations**

**Underrepresented Students**

**Overview**

A diverse learning environment is fundamental to a university's ability to provide excellent education to all of its students. A commitment to diversity must pervade the institution at all levels; all colleges, departments, programs, and individuals are responsible for advancing this goal. In this self-study, however, we address a few programs focused on cultivating the potential of undergraduate students from groups historically-underrepresented in postsecondary education: the Center for Diversity & Enrichment, the Summer Research Opportunity Program, and Student Disability Services. Some additional programs that support the transition of underrepresented students were described in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study.

**Diversity Action Committee Recommendations Related to Student Recruitment and Success**

In 2005, Executive Vice President and Provost Michael Hogan appointed a Diversity Action Committee (DAC), charged with suggesting specific steps the University can take to achieve the diversity goals outlined in *The Iowa Promise*. The DAC’s March 2006 report discusses a wide range of issues concerning the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities, and includes this assessment of the University’s current efforts:

> Although The University of Iowa has a well respected academic and research reputation, a common concern for prospective undergraduate and graduate or professional minority students is how well the University can help them achieve their academic and career aspirations while also meeting social and cultural needs that give underrepresented minority students a positive holistic college experience. For the University’s efforts to be successful, there is a need for a more personal approach to the recruitment of minority students.

The report offers 21 recommendations in the areas of student success, faculty and staff success, climate, University coordination to achieve diversity, and accountability. The recommendations under “student success” include:

- Make minority student recruitment the responsibility of the entire campus.
- Involve alumni in our recruitment effort.
- Understand the needs of Iowa’s minority students and focus on the special needs and concerns of Iowa communities with large minority populations.
- Restructure and revitalize the University’s scholarship and financial aid program.
- Improve retention and graduation rates of underrepresented minority students.
Create a minority student advisory board.

Revitalize the cultural houses.

Also relevant to student recruitment are the DAC recommendations related to “climate,” which include:

- Provide faculty, staff and students with the tools to be effective members of the University community.
- Spark a climate of cultural awareness on the University campus.
- Forge stronger links with the community.
- Assess and monitor climate throughout the University.

The responsibility to track progress related to these recommendations rests with the special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity and associate provost for diversity. As noted in the institutional self-study, significant progress has been made on many of the recommendations related to student, faculty, and staff recruitment, retention, and success; improving the climate; and enhancing the administrative structure for diversity efforts. Notable efforts related to student success include revision of UI diversity scholarships, enhancement of minority student recruitment and support efforts, engaging the community on topics related to diversity, engaging minority alumni on issues related to student recruitment and success, and undertaking careful review of the effectiveness of current efforts.

Campus climate surveys are providing additional goals for improvement. In developing its recommendations, the DAC responded to the results of an undergraduate student diversity climate survey conducted by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity in 2005. The student survey, to which 1,095 undergraduate students responded, found that 80.1% of respondents felt as if “they belonged to the UI.” Respondents who were racial/ethnic minorities, born outside of the U.S., or older than 25, however, reported less access, equity, and inclusion at the University, and “perceived less institutional commitment to diversity” than their peers.

Center for Diversity & Enrichment

Another key recommendation in the Diversity Action Committee (DAC) report was to “foster the coordination of the University’s diversity efforts”:

In order to articulate, emphasize, and pursue the University’s goal of diversity on a systematic basis, we urge the central administration to institute a coordinating mechanism that will bring together the many University offices focused on specific aspects of achieving diversity.

In July 2006 the University created a new position: special assistant to the president for equal opportunity and diversity and associate provost for diversity. Two existing student diversity-focused units, Opportunity at Iowa and Support Service Programs, were moved under the purview of this new position. In March 2007 those two units merged into the new Center for Diversity & Enrichment (CDE).

In 2006-07 the senior associate provost for undergraduate education and the associate provost for diversity jointly appointed a task force to examine coordination of efforts to recruit underrepresented minority students, and to further implement the DAC’s
recommendations related to student success. Some recommendations from the report have been implemented and others are under consideration.

As described under “Entry and Transition,” the CDE provides leadership and coordination for outreach and service to underserved students, including students of color, first-generation college students, and students from low-income families. The center’s programs focus on outreach and “pipeline development” of pre-college students and providing academic support and enhancing the social and educational environment for students once they come to the University.

In addition to sponsoring numerous informal programs such as study circles, the CDE administers New Dimensions in Learning (NDIL), a TRiO supported program that offers tutors, academic counseling, and access to technology for students who qualify (see Appendix II-O for project performance outcomes for 2004-05 and 2005-06). The CDE provides mentoring, tutoring, and other academic support to recipients of the Advantage Iowa Award. And students who are first generation, low income, have a physical or learning disability, or are minority students affiliated with Support Service Programs (now part of CDE) may visit Academic Planning Services for counseling related to University policies, study skills, problem solving, financial planning, and program planning.

**Summer Research Opportunity Program**

Another important program for increasing undergraduate diversity—not just at The University of Iowa, but across the Midwest (among Committee on Institutional Cooperation [CIC] institutions)—is the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP), described in greater detail in the “Learning Alongside the Curriculum” section of this self-study. This summer program pairs promising young researchers with faculty members expert in a research area of interest to them. The program’s goal is to increase the number of underrepresented students who pursue academic careers.

**Student Disability Services**

The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) facilitates academic accommodations and services for students with disabilities so that these students have access to University programs and activities, and can participate in all aspects of University life fully. The office’s mission is to ensure equal access to education by providing reasonable accommodations for qualified students who demonstrate a condition that limits one or more major life activities significantly.

SDS functions under the umbrella of the Division of Student Services. A staff of seven full-time employees is supported by a graduate assistant and by student and non-student part-time employees (for services for deaf and hard of hearing students).

SDS participates in the recruitment and admissions process by sharing information about its services and about eligibility requirements to prospective students and their parents through office visits, phone calls, publications, and its web site. Each year, with funding support from the Office of Admissions, SDS sends a representative to the Choice Fair, a college information fair in Chicago for college-bound students with disabilities.

A student who enrolls at The University of Iowa may apply for SDS support. Instructors are expected to announce procedures for arranging academic accommodations at the beginning of each semester and include the information in the course syllabus. To
apply, a student must complete a confidential request for services and documentation review form and the student’s health care provider must submit information about the student’s disability. SDS personnel review the documentation and make a determination regarding eligibility for services.

If appropriate, the SDS office assigns the student to an SDS advisor, who meets with the student to discuss how his or her disability could interfere with course requirements. Together, the student and SDS advisor develop an accommodation plan, subject to approval by the instructor. Accommodations are tailored to individual needs and may include such elements as:

- Alternative examination services—extended time for examinations, readers, scribes, use of word processors, etc.
- Alternative media services—access to printed media materials by alternative methods such as Braille or scan-and-read software
- Services for the deaf or hard of hearing—American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, captioning services, note takers, etc.
- Campus accessibility/transportation—Bionic Bus (a specialized transport service for students, staff, and faculty with disabilities), building accessibility issues, etc.

The number of students registered with SDS increased 24% from 2005 to 2006. Of the 607 students registered with SDS during FY 2006, 50 were first-year students. The number of students registered with SDS was greater for each class level—up to 266 senior students—but the percentage of students requesting services declined from 78% of the first-year students to only 47% of the seniors. This may indicate that first-year students with disabilities need additional support as they become familiar with the University. To help address this need, SDS staff have proposed that students with disabilities be allowed to participate in the Iowa Edge program.

SDS outcomes measures address student use and promptness in providing services. The 2005-06 SDS annual report—which provides detailed metrics including demographic data, numbers of contacts, and types of accommodations provided—shows that the number of students registered with SDS increased significantly in 2005-06, as did the number of courses for which accommodations were requested, the number of scheduled appointments with SDS staff, and the number of SDS administered examinations. In spring 2006 the number of days between the assignment of a case and a response back to a student was less than three, half what it was in fall 2005.

In January 2006, the University’s ADA Compliance Review Task Force conducted a major study. The task force issued a report of its findings in May 2006. According to that report, 95% of respondents rated SDS services as either “good” or “excellent.”

**Student Athletes**

**Overview**

The University of Iowa sponsors eleven men’s and thirteen women’s intercollegiate sports programs under the direction of the director of athletics and six associate athletics directors. The athletics director reports directly to the president of the University.
The Presidential Committee on Athletics, a charter committee, advises the University president and athletics director regarding policies governing the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, consistent with the rules of the Big Ten Conference and NCAA; the state of Iowa; the Board of Regents, State of Iowa; and The University of Iowa. Subcommittees on academic achievement, student athlete welfare, and equity contribute to the oversight of UI athletics.

The Academic Achievement Advisory Subcommittee of the Presidential Committee on Athletics reports academic success measures for UI student athletes. In the most recent ten-year reporting period, student athlete six-year graduation rates have been consistently above the rate for the general UI student population (see Figure II-7). Six-year graduation rates of female student athletes are, on average, 10.9 percentage points higher than their general student peers, while six-year graduation rates of male student athletes average four percentage points higher than their general student peers.

Overall, these data place Iowa second among Big Ten Institutions for men, fourth for women, and first overall. Forty-nine percent of Iowa’s 579 student athletes in fall 2006 earned at least a 3.0 GPA and 17% made the Dean’s List. Student athletes participating in IowaLink, a program designed for conditionally admitted students (see the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study), achieve retention rates comparable to non-student athlete IowaLink participants. These academic performance indicators and retention and persistence rates suggest that student participation in intercollegiate athletics contributes to their overall retention and persistence to graduation.

The 2005-06 UI self-study for the NCAA recertification discusses graduation rates in detail (see section 2.1).

![Figure II-7: Comparison of Six-Year Graduation Rates for UI Student Athletes and for All UI Students](image)

The Department of Athletics

The University of Iowa Department of Athletics serves student athletes in many ways. The Department’s mission is to provide the administrative and coaching support, facilities, resources, and equipment necessary for student athletes to proceed successfully toward graduation from UI while participating in high level athletic competition.
Department of Athletics policies require that students attend all classes and lab/discussion sections unless previously excused, with five absences resulting in a suspension for 10% of athletic privileges, and each subsequent absence resulting in an additional 10% suspension. A student athlete may miss no more than eight class days due to team travel.

The department provides a variety of programs to support student athletes, including confidential personal counseling, career counseling, and leadership-building.

**Athletic Student Services**

Athletic Student Services oversees the recruitment of student athletes and monitors compliance with NCAA, Big Ten and University of Iowa guidelines. The office works closely with the Office of Admissions and with the IowaLink program.

Each year the University enrolls 170 to 200 new first-year student athletes. Participation in athletics can add considerable pressures to the college experience. Athletics Student Services pays special attention to first-year student athletes, to ensure they make a smooth transition to University life. New student athletes meet their academic counselors at summer orientation. Once classes begin, counselors meet weekly with new student athletes to review their academic and personal progress.

The office monitors students’ class attendance and solicits feedback from their instructors each semester. In the fall, new student athletes participate in an extensive orientation and certification program that covers a wide variety of UI, Athletics, Big Ten, and NCAA policies. In addition, they take a one credit hour seminar on the transition to University and intercollegiate cultures. This seminar resembles the “College Transition” course in that it covers study skills, time management, learning strategies, diversity, and campus resources.

Other academic and support services Athletic Student Services provides to the 600 to 650 student athletes who participate in one or more of UI’s 24 intercollegiate sports include:

- **Athletics Academic Coordinator**: Athletics academic coordinators assist students’ academic advisors by advising them about Big Ten, NCAA, and University policies that affect student athletes, including standards for course load and academic progress. Academic coordinators work with advisors to monitor student athletes’ progress, help them understand rules, and help them select majors.

- **Gerdin Athletic Learning Center**: The Gerdin Center is an educational facility where student athletes work with tutors and with their athletic academic coordinators. This is the site for student athlete orientation and certification meetings and where many personal development and life skills programs are offered.

- **Structured Study Program**: Administered in the Gerdin Athletics Learning Center, the Structured Study Program is a prescribed and monitored academic support framework for student athletes to develop or improve their study habits. The program requires weekly hours of quiet study time, individual or group tutoring, and small study groups. Athletics requires a minimum of four hours per week of structured study, though most coaches mandate more.

- **Tutoring**: Tutoring is available to all student athletes free of charge, regardless of scholarship status. Tutors are postgraduates and teachers who assist with specific course content and study strategies.
Retention: Retention and graduation are major goals of the Athletics Department and of Athletics Student Services. A retention coordinator works closely with student athletes who need specialized academic assistance. The retention coordinator assesses and diagnoses academic and learning needs, and organizes tailored services and programs that fit their needs, including counseling, tutoring, study groups, learning and organizational strategies, and mainstreaming into on-campus services.

Athletics Student Services is committed to improving the recruitment and retention of minority student athletes and maintaining a supportive climate for them. They have developed a five-year Minority Issues Plan and are now incorporating that into their strategic plan.

Life Skills Program

The Division I-A Athletics Directors Association recognized the Iowa Athletics Program in 2000-01 as a Program of Excellence for its CHAMPS (Challenging Athletes’ Minds for Personal Success)/Life Skills program. The Program of Excellence award goes to Division I-A athletics programs that have established and demonstrated that student athlete well-being is a cornerstone of their operating principles. The NCAA created the CHAMPS program in the early 90’s as a way to emphasize holistic development of student athletes. The program deals with five areas: academic excellence, athletic excellence, personal development, service, and career development.

The program includes:

- A one semester hour Transition Seminar that runs for eight weeks at the beginning of the fall semester. All new student athletes attend the seminar, which explores personal and academic issues arising from the transition to college and adjustment issues that are unique to student athletes.

- Educational programs including seminars, speakers, workshops, and short courses on personal growth and life skills, with a primary focus on alcohol and other drugs.

- The Minority Student Athlete Enrichment Program, which offers a culturally supportive and stimulating environment in which minority student athletes develop friendships and a support network in the University.

- A registered and licensed dietitian/nutritionist

Honors Students

Overview

The University of Iowa Honors Program provides talented-and-gifted education for undergraduate students.

Entering first-year students with an Admission Index of 148 or above are admitted to the Honors Program automatically. Continuing students must maintain a minimum GPA to retain membership. Three years ago, the minimum GPA increased from 3.20 to 3.33. Nonetheless, the Honors Program has grown, with more than 5,000 members. Of each entering class, generally 12 to 15% join the Honors Program. In fall 2007, a record 735 entering students—17% of the class—joined the program.

The Honors Program has experienced extensive development and support from the University in the last ten years. The staff has increased from 1.5 FTE in 2000 to 6.25
FTE in 2007. In 2004, the program moved from temporary facilities to its present quarters in the new Blank Honors Center, adjacent to the Pomerantz Center where the Admissions Visitor Center, Academic Advising Center, and Pomerantz Career Center are housed. The program’s director now reports to the Office of the Provost, instead of jointly to the provost and the dean of CLAS.

The Honors Program does not prescribe a curriculum, but provides a collection of optional programs. Students can take honors course sections, live in the Honors House, or participate in scholarship workshops. Because students learn from their peers as well as their professors, the Honors Program ensures that many honors opportunities remain available to interested non-honors students as well.

The University of Iowa Honors Program is in the process of creating an overall vision for its future development called Honors Plus. The Honors House and the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU) are two major components of Honors Plus that began operation in fall 2006, and early signs of success are encouraging. Also in development is the Aces Program for Analysis, Advocacy, and Action (described below), as well as Presidential Days, a recruitment program mentioned earlier under “Entry and Transition.” Several additional proposals are under consideration or in development.

In its first two years as a University-wide program, the Honors Program has added nine one-semester-hour honors seminars for entering students. It has experimented with honors college transition courses in several formats, and with honors seminars during interim sessions. It has improved the standards and procedures for designating any course for honors credit if professor and student make a contract for an extra honors project—an increasingly popular option. It has added more sections of “Honors Accelerated Rhetoric” to start students into UI general education. The program is making greater efforts to advertise such opportunities through Honors Summer Orientations and the Honors Listserv.

**Honors Writing Fellows Program**

A collaboration between the University of Iowa Honors Program and the University of Iowa Writing Center, the Honors Writing Fellows Program trains and pays about 30 honors students every semester to serve as undergraduate writing assistants. Each tutor tutors about a dozen fellow undergraduate students as they work through multiple drafts of major essays and increase effective attention to writing in a wide range of undergraduate courses.

About 300 of the students tutored by Honors Writing Fellows in 2004-05 submitted evaluations of the program. According to those evaluations, 98% of the program participants used feedback from their fellows to revise their essay drafts, and 70% of these students did so “frequently” or “always.” Moreover, 97% of the students rated the program valuable to them personally, and 74% reported it “helpful” or “very helpful.” Regarding written commentaries from writing fellows about their papers, 98% of respondents believed the commentaries had contributed to better papers.

Appendix II-P provides some samples of comments from student and faculty evaluations of the Honors Writing Fellows program. The comments reflect that students and faculty find the program valuable.

**Aces Program**

The University of Iowa Honors Program has launched a new program, the Aces
Program for Analysis, Advocacy, and Action, that equips students for participation in public affairs. The program teaches students to base public action on professional scholarship, and simultaneously prepares them to participate in major national and international scholarship competitions. Aces draws on Iowa’s strong programs in debate, writing, mock trial, rhetorical analysis of argument, and multimedia studies of political communication.

The program has four formal components: three honors seminars (public scholarship, public service, and public policy) and a research project working with a faculty mentor.

Honors House

In fall 2006 two honors learning communities—one for entering freshmen and one for transfers—were integrated into the Honors House in Daum Hall, which is connected by skywalk to the Blank Honors Center.

The number of entering honors students requesting accommodation in the Honors House has continued to increase, and students who live there develop enthusiastic ties to Honors House colleagues and programs. Nearly 90% of current and previous Honors House residents surveyed in November 2006 responded, virtually all with strongly positive responses. Nearly 60% of those who have lived in the Honors House would like to return for a second year there. Unfortunately, Daum does not offer the necessary capacity to comply.

The Honors Program is implementing several initiatives to try to accommodate students’ strong interest in living-learning arrangements. In fall 2007, for example, University Housing has agreed to open 20% of the rooms on the first through sixth floors to honors students who apply to return to the Honors House. The Honors Program and University Housing will work together to cluster groups of these “returners” mid-floor, to keep them close to the entering students. Not only will this respond to the requests of returning students, but new students will be able to gain from the experience of the older students.

Because the Honors House is so large (nearly all of the 306 residents in Daum are honors students), it may lose some of the advantages of a smaller scale learning community. Accordingly, the next step will be to add honors learning communities built around distinctive themes. The connection to the Honors Program will make these communities attractive to top students, but the themes will link them strongly to sponsoring units, keeping them small and focused enough for the intellectual and social dynamics of a learning community to succeed as effectively as possible.

After administering its fall 2006 survey, the Honors Program convened several focus groups of honors students who, after leaving Daum, had clustered themselves together in small groups of six to eight in other residence halls. The students see these clusters as ripe for becoming extensions of the Honors House, or small Honors learning communities unto themselves. The survey results support the idea of organized clusters; 85% of respondents said they chose to live in Daum because it allowed them to live with other honors students, and more than 60% said they would live in an honors learning community in another residence hall if the opportunity developed. The Honors Program and University Housing have arranged a protocol to facilitate a least a few more of these clusters in fall 2007.
Conclusions—Environments and Resources to Support Learning among Selected Student Populations

The University of Iowa offers a variety of programs to help cultivate the potential of students who contribute to diversity in the undergraduate student body, who bring particular skills and talents to the community, and/or who seek opportunities for greater intellectual challenges.

Those programs for which we have some satisfaction or outcomes data seem to be effective, or at least well received. New Dimensions in Learning, which provides direct personal and academic support for first generation, low income, and disabled students enrolled at UI, met or exceeded most of its targeted outcomes in 2004-05 and 2005-06. The award-winning Summer Research Opportunity Program has served almost 500 students. Ninety-five percent of respondents to a survey regarding Student Disability Services rated SDS as either “good” or “excellent,” and the program has plans to expand its student-centered services.

The effectiveness of the University’s services to promote the success of student athletes—including customized advising, tutoring, the Gerdin Athletic Learning Center, and the Life Skills program—can be indicated to some extent by graduation and retention rates. Six-year graduation rates for student athletes on athletic scholarship have been consistently above the rate for the general UI student population over the last ten years.

“Strengthening the honors program and other opportunities for high-achieving students” is a key strategy in The Iowa Promise. Highly motivated and well-prepared students set an example for their peers and enrich the intellectual life of the community. Increased enrollments in the University of Iowa Honors Program and the popularity of its programmatic offerings are indicators of success.

Physical Learning Environment

Space Allocation

Space is a resource that is in demand for the research, education, and outreach provided by this institution.

The assignment of space is overseen by a committee that includes representatives of the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and Facilities Management (Office of the Vice President for Finance and Operations). This space committee negotiates the transfer of available or marginally productive space to individuals or departments that are in a position to put that space to more effective use. The majority of day-to-day space needs are accommodated by reassigning existing space. However, as the University steps up its building renewal efforts, the committee is challenged to identify swing space for the temporary relocation of the occupants while space is renovated. The committee is supported by the Space Planning and Utilization unit within Facilities Management.

Space Planning and Utilization works directly with the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Research, departmental executive officers and deans, and others to make space decisions. Space Planning and Utilization is responsible for coordinating programming efforts in support of major capital projects. This work includes evaluation of space uses, benchmarking of space standards (both within the University and with peer institutions), and coordination of project-specific programming.
The University has launched the initial steps in the creation of a new web-accessible Space Information Management System (SIMS), which will allow UI to track all information on its physical assets via one virtual location. Cleaning and transferring existing data to the new system should be complete in 2009. A second phase linking additional space information, including maps and web-accessible floor plans, should be complete in 2010.

General assignment classrooms are scheduled by Classroom Scheduling in the Office of the Registrar.

**Overview of Physical Teaching and Learning Facilities**

Table II-31 shows how much space is available in the campus learning environment, broken down by campus region. Spaces on the health sciences campus are reported only for those buildings that support undergraduate education: the Hardin Library for the Health Sciences (HLHS), the Nursing Building (NB), the Pharmacy Building (PHAR), and the Wendell Johnson Speech and Hearing Center (SHC). The “southwest campus” refers to the buildings west of the river and south of the health sciences campus, excluding Boyd Law Building (the region called the “Boyd Law District” on the Campus Master Plan map).

**Table II-31: Summary of Learning Spaces for Undergraduate Education by Campus Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Space</th>
<th>East Campus</th>
<th>Arts Campus</th>
<th>Health Science Campus</th>
<th>Southwest Campus</th>
<th>University Housing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># Rms</td>
<td>Sq. Ft.</td>
<td># Rms</td>
<td>Sq. Ft.</td>
<td># Rms</td>
<td>Sq. Ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assignment Classroom</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>173,376</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Classroom</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31,574</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11,929</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Lab/Studio</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>104,167</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48,501</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7,835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Open* Lab</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>59,587</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>26,925</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10,036</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study/Resource Room</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>187,163</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13,182</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>46,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25,176</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22,874</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lounge</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55,527</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,908</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMU Meeting Rooms</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20,340</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition Space</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,052</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>666,946</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>129,055</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>100,938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Used for instruction that is informally scheduled or unscheduled
The University of Iowa campus has 720 classrooms, laboratories, studios, computer labs, and other rooms specifically created to be teaching/learning spaces. Another 351 rooms are designated for study—most in University libraries, but also including some departmental resource rooms available for individual and group study. Additional spaces serve as informal gathering spots, where study or discussion about courses may take place, and as locations for public lectures.

See Appendix II-Q for a list of all general assignment classrooms and a summary of their capacity and how they are equipped; see Appendix II-R for a summary of classroom utilization rates.

Classrooms

Physical Condition

Facilities Management has designated funding for building and grounds maintenance. In recent years, a thorough survey of the condition of major structures has yielded more focused plans to address deferred maintenance. Building renovations have been prioritized, and it has been determined that no classroom buildings should be targeted for demolition due to building condition in the near term. Capital funds for construction and renovation will provide new teaching spaces in the Chemistry Building (CB) and Art Building (AB), currently under renovations. Other recent projects have built undergraduate learning spaces in the new Art Building West (ABW), the Pomerantz Center (PC), the Blank Honors Center (BHC), and the Adler Journalism and Mass Communication Building (AJB). In coming years, renovations are anticipated in Macbride Hall (NH), Jessup Hall (JH), the Old Music Building (OMB), and Seashore Hall (SSH).

Appendix II-S provides a summary of upgrades to classroom spaces over the past ten years.

Classroom Technology

Of the 215 general assignment classrooms managed by the Office of the Registrar, 153 are equipped with technology resources, including desktop computers, projectors, and other presentation equipment. In 2007, the University reorganized technology management for general assignment classrooms, in response to the finding of the Campus IT Review that “classroom support is fragmented between unrelated units across campus, making it unclear where to obtain support.” All staff who support technology in these classrooms are now part of the Instructional Services Unit of ITS Campus Technology Services.

Computer labs and classrooms are staffed by professional staff whose salaries are partially supported by student computer fees. In FY 2005, classroom and lab computers were supported by approximately 49 FTEs, which accounts for 6% (and $1.87 million of salary expense) of all campus IT staff, according to the final report of the committee that conducted the Campus IT Review in 2005-06.

In that report, the committee benchmarked University of Iowa IT structure and services against 29 AAU institutions that had contributed data to the then-most recent (2003-04) EDUCAUSE Core Data Service, an annual survey that collects data about the IT environment and practices on EDUCAUSE member campuses. This group includes Iowa State University, the public institutions in the CIC, and the members of the Regents comparison group, except for Pennsylvania State University and the University of California, Los Angeles. Among these 29 institutions, 16—including The
University of Iowa—have network connections in all general assignment classrooms. UI ranked third in proportion of computers available in classrooms, second for document projectors, sixth for availability of wireless connections, and 10th for number of LCD projectors and smart boards available.

A section of the survey on learning spaces conducted for this self-study asked students about technology in classrooms, breaking down the questions by classroom category:

- Small classroom—fewer than 20 seats
- Average classroom—20 to 50 seats
- Large classroom—more than 50 seats
- Science labs

A high percentage of respondents—about 50%—gave neutral responses to questions regarding the science labs, which may reflect lack of experience with those spaces, or may indicate that students did not find the technology in question relevant to those spaces.

More than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that University classrooms in most categories are up to date with multimedia technology: 58.0% agreed for small classrooms, 76.6% for average classrooms, and 83.7% for large classrooms. Less than half, however—42.1%—agreed with that statement when applied to science labs (only 6.7% disagreed, however, compared to a range of 4.0% to 19.6% who disagreed with that statement applied to classrooms). Responses were similar when students were asked whether the multimedia technology in classrooms is readily available for student presentations: 58.3% of respondents agreed for small classrooms, 69.2% for average classrooms, 65.1% for large classrooms, and 36.9% for science labs.

The survey also asked students which classroom technology most enhances classroom learning: audiovisual equipment, “clicker” (personal response system) technology (described below), internet connectivity, presentation software, or “other” (they could choose more than one). Respondents chose presentation software most frequently (69.5%), followed by audiovisual equipment (59.2%), internet connectivity (58.5%), and clicker technology (20.2%).

**Wireless Internet Access**

Wireless internet access is available in 67 buildings and in several open areas on campus, including the Pentacrest and Hubbard Park. Wireless access is centrally authenticated using 802.1x security, and requires the use of a University login ID (HawkID) and password.

Asked whether adequate wireless connectivity is available in classroom buildings, 28.5% of respondents to the learning spaces survey agreed or strongly agreed that it is; however, 58.6% gave a neutral response, which may suggest that they have not attempted to connect to the internet using wireless access.

The University is currently working to make wireless internet access available in four buildings on the medical campus. The next buildings scheduled to receive increased coverage are the Theatre Building, North Hall, the Field House, Macbride Hall, Phillips Hall, Gilmore Hall, Halsey Hall, the Becker Communications Studies Building, Voxman Music Building, the Biology Building, Biology Building East, and Van Allen Hall. A campus-wide committee formed to help prioritize this area of growth has recommended that classrooms and student gathering areas receive strong consideration for the funds
available to increase wireless connectivity. Classroom space in the University’s primary academic buildings should be complete before fall 2008.

Student Perceptions of Classroom Buildings

A section of the learning spaces survey asked students to comment on classroom buildings. Asked whether public spaces in classroom buildings (such as the lounge areas in the Pappajohn Business Building and in the Adler Journalism and Mass Communication Building) are good places to study, only 30.0% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Slightly more, 37.6%, agreed or strongly agreed that public areas in classroom buildings are conducive to interacting with faculty and graduate students. Only 24.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that classroom buildings are welcoming places to study in the evening hours.

The survey asked students if they would make use of study rooms if such rooms were made available in classroom buildings; 68.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would. Only 27.9% of respondents agreed that there is adequate space for personal study in classroom buildings, but 41.6% agreed that there is adequate space for group project work.

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that University classrooms are well maintained—72.9% for small classrooms, 83.6% for average classrooms, and 86.1% for large classrooms. Just under half, 49.6%, agreed with that statement applied to science labs.

Asked whether classrooms have good acoustics, 87.2% agreed or strongly agreed for small classrooms, 80.3% for average classrooms, 68.5% for large classrooms, and 47.1% for science labs. Respondents agreed that classroom lighting is appropriate in small classrooms (86.1%), average classrooms (90.0%), large classrooms (85.3%), and labs (59.5%).

Faculty Perceptions of Classroom Buildings

As described in the “Research Processes” section of the introduction to this special emphasis self-study, the subcommittee on Learning Environments solicited comments from faculty about University learning environments through small focus groups discussion and an informal e-mail survey. The feedback from these efforts was highly consistent. One theme that emerged clearly was the importance of flexibility.

Faculty views on the physical space in classrooms tended to focus on three dimensions: 1) the physical plans of classrooms; 2) the availability of classrooms of particular sizes; and 3) the availability of audio-visual and computer equipment in classrooms.

Flexibility of Classroom Layout

Faculty repeatedly mentioned the importance of being able to reorganize classroom seating, set lighting, and use whiteboard spaces in ways that suit individual teaching styles and formats. They mentioned their appreciation, for example, of classrooms with movable chairs and tables that allow for reorganization to accommodate both discussion and lecture formats. This seemed especially important in mid-range (50-to 70-seat) and smaller classrooms. Some faculty mentioned that some classrooms contain modular furniture that is too difficult to rearrange quickly between classes. Faculty also emphasized the need to reduce crowding in some classrooms—particularly mid-range and smaller rooms that seem to contain too many movable desks relative
to the space available—and to provide more surface space so that students can access course materials during class time.

Faculty also raised the issue of the importance of flexible lighting in classrooms. Faculty who use projectors, for instance, need to be able to adjust lights so that students can see the images projected on screen but can also see their classmates and instructor as they engage in discussion.

The Need for Different Classroom Sizes

The focus groups raised the issue of the need for more classrooms that can accommodate classes of 200 students. Further investigation is needed to determine if there is a shortage of 200-seat rooms, or if these rooms are being used by smaller classes because there are not enough smaller rooms for them to use. Or, some courses may be scheduled in these rooms because they project larger enrollments than actually occur. Adjustments to classroom scheduling policies might help to address either of these issues. The Classroom Advisory Committee is following up, beginning with a review of classroom utilization data.

In terms of the design of larger classrooms to be built in the future, faculty find breadth preferable to depth because it allows for better eye contact and communication, and reduces the potential for disruptive behavior.

Flexibility of Equipment Configurations

The third dimension of concern regarding classrooms centered on the flexibility of equipment configurations in classrooms of all sizes.

Most mid-sized UI classrooms have been equipped with standard audio-visual equipment, projectors, and computers. Because so many faculty are incorporating technology into their teaching, including in smaller classes, the University has been working to equip more of our smaller classrooms. Lack of funding has slowed this effort.

Faculty who teach large lectures, particularly those in the mathematical and natural sciences, voiced the need for dual projectors and screens in more of the large lecture classrooms. These faculty need to be able to show distributions, graphs, and other visuals while simultaneously using the document camera to project notes and formulas written as they speak. In very large lecture halls, many faculty do not like to use the whiteboards for notes because it is difficult for students in the back to see the board; in moderately large lecture halls, however, one projector and a whiteboard that remains exposed when the screen is lowered may suffice, especially if the design of the room is more broad than deep.

Again, throughout the discussion of technology in classrooms, faculty emphasized that the key is flexibility—so that instructors do not have to modify teaching style and format to fit technology, but can use technology in ways that enhance their own pedagogical methods. Faculty want to use technology to improve student engagement.

Some faculty also commented that they would like to see more classrooms offering wireless internet access, especially in classrooms with mid-range seating capacity. Faculty familiar with the personal response systems described below note that wireless technologies now emerging are likely to replace those systems soon, because they offer greater flexibility. To use the emerging technology, every student in the classroom would need to have access to the internet.
Another issue of increasing importance regarding technology in the classroom is the need for more electrical outlets, so that students in classes of all sizes can use laptop computers. This raises a safety issue as well, since outlets need to be located such that cords do not cross aisles and walkways.

**Heating, Cooling, and Acoustics**

Some faculty noted that in older buildings, it is not uncommon to experience problems with basic features of the physical environment, including temperature control, noise, and acoustics.

**Exterior Physical Environment**

The space outside buildings contributes to the quality of campus life for students, faculty, and staff. In addition, the extent to which the campus is perceived as attractive and modern makes a difference in our ability to attract new members to our community.

The development of the University’s physical environment is guided by the [Campus Master Plan](#), which describes how the University can respond to emerging academic and research needs while preserving the beauty of the physical environment and maintaining its distinctiveness. For example, the plan calls for creating a campus park along both banks of the Iowa River, to maximize enjoyment of the river landscape. The park will develop as projects along the river create opportunities; for example, the recent renovation of the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU) incorporated the addition of the IMU River Terrace, a green space and patio that serves as a venue for small concerts and plays as well as a student gathering area. In the long term, the river park will significantly increase quality outdoor space for gathering, socializing, or quiet contemplation.

Reaffirming the concept that ours is a “pedestrian oriented” campus, the Campus Master Plan gives high priority to the need for safe, efficient, and attractive pedestrian pathways. “A pedestrian campus,” the plan says, “supports social interaction and face-to-face collegiality that contribute positively to the quality of the campus life and the educational experience.” The plan also calls for undergraduate classrooms to be clustered, so that students can walk from one to another during the 10-minute class change period.

Outdoor gathering spaces, such as plazas and courts, encourage a sense of community and enrich the aesthetic character of the campus. A 2004 study called “Reinforcing Community: Campus Gathering Places Design Guidelines” mapped out design considerations and concepts for improving existing and potential gathering spaces. The report compares existing outdoor spaces that meet or do not meet the recommended design considerations.

**Iowa Memorial Union**

The student union on any campus carries a certain symbolic weight as the campus hub, or center of student life. Ideally, the student union should reflect the values, philosophy, and character of the institution.

The Iowa Memorial Union (IMU) was built in 1925. One of the most heavily used facilities on campus, the IMU houses a variety of services and facilities for students and staff, including the book store, retail food services, a hotel, the Office of Student Life, a
credit union, a coffee shop, office space for student organizations, and meeting rooms. Some other services and spaces in the IMU that contribute to student academic and co-curricular life include:

The **Campus Information Center**, the headquarters for general information about the University and for the University’s Master Calendar of Events

The **Copyhawk copy center**, which helps students create presentation materials for assignments

The new **IMU Gallery**, a unique venue where an art student may apply for high-traffic exhibition space for a period of one month

The ground floor entertainment space called **The Hawkeye**, which, with its nightclub-like atmosphere—dim lighting, pool tables, TVs, games, and Iowa memorabilia as the décor—was intentionally designed to compete with the Iowa City “bar scene” and to offer entertainment that is not alcohol related.

In 1998, the University began a process of “student services purposeful planning” with the goal of building a more student-centered campus environment. The **Student Services Master Plan** that grew out of this effort included plans for a major renovation of the IMU. A survey of students found that students considered improvements to the IMU a high priority, that student usage would likely increase from just over 50% to almost 80% with the proposed improvements in facilities and services, and that the majority of students were willing to fund the improvements with student fees.

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, granted the University permission to proceed with planning in **January 2003**. The University continued to collect input from faculty, staff, and especially students during the planning process. A series of focus groups and town hall meetings were held in fall 2004, and in **November 2004** the University presented the master plan for IMU renovation to the Board.

The plan called for two phases of renovation at a total cost of $30 million. The Board approved the schematic design for Phase I in **May and June 2005**. Phase I, **officially completed** in January 2007, added 13,860 gross square feet of space to the IMU, most of it in a three-story space (the Hubbard Pavilion) that improves circulation in the building and houses a new student lounge and study space, consolidated student organization offices on the second floor, and an in-development multi-use performance space on the third floor. Phase I also included building the River Terrace (described above), renovating the book store, creating a new food court, improving dining and lounge space, and addressing the most urgent deferred maintenance needs. Phase II has been **outlined** but has not yet begun.

Through the first six weeks of the fall 2007 semester, the IMU saw about 1,500 to 2,000 more people in the building each weekday than prior to the renovation.

The Phase I renovation increased the availability of electrical outlets for laptops and other electronic devices in some of these locations—an increasingly important feature for students looking for space in which to study or even socialize for a period of time. **Wireless internet access** is available in most of the IMU’s public spaces.

The survey on learning spaces asked a series of questions about the IMU.

More than 60% of respondents indicated that they do not spend time studying at the IMU.
Of the students who do not study at the IMU, 48.6% feel the Union is too distracting, 22.3% find the common areas not conducive to study, and 31.2% chose “other” as the reason.

Among all respondents, however, 57.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I do not know where to study at the IMU,” and 45.7% felt that the public spaces there make good informal learning environments.

Asked whether they find the public spaces in the IMU “comfortable, welcoming, and student-oriented,” 79.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

Almost as many, 71.1%, indicated that they perceive the IMU as an entertainment and extracurricular venue.

The IMU faces a number of challenges in its mission to meet the myriad expectations of a large and diverse campus while remaining accessible and reasonably priced. Our peer institutions face similar challenges, among them competition from private industry with regard to textbook sales and food services. Ninety percent of the IMU budget comes from the revenues it generates.

**Off-Campus Locations**

The learning spaces survey asked students about their use of off-campus sites, such as local coffee houses and the Iowa City Public Library, for study. Asked if they spend a significant amount of time studying at off-campus public locations, 42.7% agreed or strongly agreed and 39.9% disagreed, 16.4% of them strongly. The survey also asked whether students prefer to study at off-campus locations. While 28.0% of respondents were neutral on that question, the rest were split almost equally, with 34.5% agreeing and 37.3% disagreeing (11.0% strongly, on either side).

The University of Iowa campus blends into and overlaps the Iowa City environment at numerous points, and in fact informal interviews by the subcommittee on Learning Environments suggest that students do not perceive a clear boundary between on- and off-campus.

When asked why they left campus to study, students in several downtown coffeehouses replied consistently that they did not feel they were going “off campus.” They pointed to the proximity of buildings such as Seashore Hall, the Biology Building, and Phillips Hall, and indicated that the downtown area feels like an extension of campus. Several students noted that they are likely to see professors and TAs (past and present) in coffeehouses, and they appreciate the opportunity this provides for informal interactions. When asked whether they would like to see coffeehouses on campus, most students felt the existing coffeehouses were essentially on campus and that their needs were met.

Students in the Old Capitol Town Center (the mall adjacent to campus that now houses the University Capitol Centre) seemed to have very little understanding of whether the building is under the jurisdiction of the city or the University. They use the center for errands (e.g. at the CVS drug store), food, and a place to study between classes. Students have an equally vague understanding about Iowa Book and Supply, a private book store directly across the street from the Pentacrest. When students in the store were asked, easily half thought the University owned Iowa Book and Supply, or that a formal relationship existed. Even those aware that Iowa Book and Supply is a private business indicated that they consider it a campus book store.
The public libraries in both Iowa City and Coralville also see student traffic—especially in Iowa City. When students were asked why they chose to use the Iowa City library, frequent responses included: 1) it is closer to their apartment or dorm that the University’s Main Library; 2) it is more approachable; 3) it is a nice place to sit between classes; 4) they can get a lot of the books they need. Although students have a much clearer understanding of the distinction between on- and off-campus libraries, still students seem to feel as if the public library space in Iowa City is part of the UI campus.

Conclusions—Physical Learning Environments

Our study suggests that the University’s physical teaching and learning facilities are serving their function well. Classroom facilities provide adequate space, are used appropriately, and are equipped comparably to our peers. The learning environments survey indicates that students generally find classrooms well maintained, equipped adequately, and sufficient in lighting and acoustics. The exterior environment is designed to support the University’s educational mission.

The Iowa Memorial Union has undergone the first phase of a major renovation, which has been guided by a process of “student services purposeful planning” and a vision of creating a more student-centered campus environment. The University should collect more information about changes in student usage of the IMU as a result of the renovations.

Virtual Learning Environments and Academic Technology

Overview

Information technology, like the library system, is fundamental to developing skills students need to succeed in college and beyond. Of the respondents to the student satisfaction survey conducted for this self-study, 66% who had used UI academic technology services reported that the experience helped them build skills.

In addition, technology helps faculty incorporate innovative and effective new teaching methods in their classrooms; allows new modes of course delivery to meet the needs of a diverse student body; and gives students, faculty, and advisors fast access to information about students and courses.

The University’s 1997-98 self-study for reaccreditation by the NCA included a special emphasis on “the application of information and communications technology to teaching and learning in a research university.” As a result of that self-study and the advice of the consultant-evaluators, the University has made several significant changes over the last ten years to enhance virtual learning environments and academic technologies. Many of those developments were described in the institutional section of this self-study.

Management of Virtual Learning Environments

As is the case with the management of other technology resources, the management of virtual learning spaces is split between Information Technology Services, the central campus technology support provider, and various colleges and departments. The Colleges of Engineering, Education, and Nursing, for example, have faculty and IT support personnel dedicated to the development of specialized virtual learning environments.
Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services (ITS) provides campus-wide information technology support for the University of Iowa campus. ITS provides computing facilities; administrative information systems; voice, data, and video communications networks and services; technological resources for teaching and research needs; Instructional Technology Centers (ITCs); and a variety of related services and support. ITS is a single organization comprising four departments that report to the University’s chief information officer (CIO): Administrative Information Systems, Campus Technology Services, Systems and Platform Administration, and Telecommunications and Network Services. Each department provides services that directly and/or indirectly support students on campus.

The technology systems students use most often are (in order of frequency) (1) e-mail; (2) the 26 ITCs across campus, which comprise a network of more than 1,000 workstations; (3) ICON, which student groups also use for non-academic communication; and (4) ISIS (Iowa Student Information System), the web-based system students use to register, retrieve grades, and transact other business. Other services ITS provides to students include:

- Digital storage space. MyWeb and MyFiles or Student Academic File Space (SAFE) allow students the opportunity to publish individual, academic-related websites, e-portfolios, projects, assignments, and other University-related materials. Each student is assigned 50 MB of space for posting documents securely.

- The Virtual Desktop service, a web-based system that gives students access to a wide variety of software applications installed on a remote computer. Students can access the applications from any computer, on or off campus, over the internet.

- The opportunity to purchase common software packages at a dramatic discount through the Campus Software Program. Students can also download licensed applications such as antivirus software, FTP software, and wireless authentication software for free from the software download site.

- The opportunity to buy computers at very good educational discount prices, through contract arrangements with major computer manufacturers, including Dell, HP, Apple, and Gateway

- The constantly expanding wireless service, which is extremely popular with students

- SkillSoft and “Online@Iowa,” two completely online services offering training and support for technology use. The Books 24x7 component of SkillSoft makes available thousands of pages of technical documentation, which students can browse to find answers to questions and assist with troubleshooting, etc.

ITS is collaborating with academic units on campus to explore additional virtual learning environments, such as “e-portfolios,” which allow students to upload and organize evidence of their skills and accomplishments; “immersive learning environments” such as simulations, “virtual worlds,” and online games, which have various potential pedagogical applications; Web 2.0 collaboration resources such as blogs and wikis; and multi-point collaboration suites such as Elluminate.

ITS also offers special training opportunities for students. The Student IT Skills program is part of a training program for students who will work in IT support or web
development jobs for colleges, departments, or other administrative units. The program has three parts:

Training in core IT support skills—offered in an intensive, all-day format on five Saturdays, and available for credit

Training in web site design and development—offered in weekly studio sessions during the academic term, and also available for credit

Seminars on advanced topics in institutional IT support, offered on various topics throughout the semester

Students are actively engaged in all facets of IT services. A Student Technology Advisory Committee meets monthly during the fall and spring semesters to offer ITS advice and input on existing and needed IT support and services. ITS also employs students to:

Staff the Help Desk (60-80 student assistants)

Serve as Student Instructional Technology Assistants (SITAs). Currently, ten graduate students and two undergraduates work directly with faculty to incorporate technology into their teaching.

Serve as RAs (six to 12, mostly graduate students), which provides an opportunity for students to work on University research programs

Work with the Student Software Services Group (SSSG), a unit of the ITS Help Desk that services student-owned computers free of charge

Participate in the fall introduction to ResNet, the information network for the Residence Halls, which provides information to help students navigate dorm life. A group sets up stations in the dorms and participants help incoming students set up their computers correctly.

The students who participate in these programs are very active and engaged, and eager to respond to new developments in information technology.

ITS seeks information on student needs and desires with regard to technology on a regular basis. Typical student responses include “more connectivity,” meaning “more wireless connectivity.” Another common theme is greater integration among existing services—for example, the ability to log in once with a HawkID and password and access e-mail, ICON, ISIS, and other services without logging in additional times.

In 2005-06, ITS conducted a survey to collect baseline data from faculty, students, and staff about satisfaction with ITS services in five areas: the Help Desk, the Customer Information Desk, the ITCs (see Computer Labs, below), Software Services, and Survey-Desktop Services.

After using one of the designated services, individuals were asked to complete a brief survey in which they rated five areas: courtesy, skills and knowledge, performance, reliability, and overall experience. The survey used a five-step Likert scale with values ranging from “totally dissatisfied” to “totally satisfied.”

For the small group of respondents—about 100 each semester—the results indicated a high level of satisfaction with UI IT services. More than 90% expressed satisfaction with each of the five areas in fall 2005. In spring 2006 more than 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction with all areas except the ITCs.
Computer Labs

ITS manages 26 computer labs, or Instructional Technology Centers (ITCs), across campus. Funded by centrally administered student computer fees, the ITCs offer more than 1,000 Macintosh and PC workstations and more than 80 applications (a complete list is available on the ITC web site). Services available in the ITCs include:

- Hands-on instructional technology experiences
- Access to cutting-edge technology not easily purchased by end users (high end video editing, statistical analysis applications, graphic suites, etc.)
- Access to basic electronic resources for coursework and research
- Access to e-mail, instant messaging, and other communications tools
- Access to personal electronic resources (e.g., web pages, blogs) from campus locations
- Printing course documents (12 million pages in 2006-07)
- Access to digital file storage space

Of the 26 ITCs, six are accessible to students 24 hours a day.

In addition to the 26 centrally managed ITCs, there are over 100 departmental and college-managed computer labs at the University, offering students access to approximately 1,700 workstations using Mac OS, Microsoft Windows, and Linux/Unix operating systems. In general, departmental computing facilities are reserved for students from a particular discipline or major, and in many cases these labs are specifically configured to meet the needs of a given discipline—although a growing number of departments is collaborating with ITS to standardize software loads and printing services. Departments and colleges with particularly high concentrations of computer labs include:

- Tippie College of Business
- College of Engineering
- College of Education
- Department of Art and Art History in CLAS
- Department of Computer Science in CLAS
- School of Journalism and Mass Communication in CLAS

This balance of central and departmental resources is representative of the generally distributed support model for many IT services at UI.

Departmental and collegiate computer labs are, for the most part, also supported by student computer fees. Fees are assessed to each student by college, with students in the Tippie College of Business and the College of Engineering paying higher fees than students in other colleges because of the more technologically sophisticated facilities available to them. ITS produces a report summarizing how student computing fee funds have been allocated each year; the most recent report available is for FY 2006.

In addition to the centrally managed ITCs and departmental and collegiate computer labs, the University Libraries hosts more than 400 public workstations in 12 locations across campus. These workstations offer a software suite identical to that found in the centrally managed ITCs. The Main Library and the Hardin Library for the Health Sciences also have 75 notebook computers available for students to check out.
When asked how much of their study time they spend in an ITC, 52.3% of respondents to the learning spaces survey answered “some” (less than half of study time). Nineteen percent of respondents answered that they spend from about half to all of their study time in ITCs.

Asked, alternatively, if they primarily use the ITCs to do academic work, 54.5% agreed or strongly agreed. Asked whether they use ITCs for social networking, 36.3% agreed or strongly agreed. Just over 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the ITCs are well maintained, 65.9% agreed or strongly agreed that the ITCs are conducive to study, and 73.1% agreed or strongly agreed that the ITCs are open at hours that meet their needs.

**Iowa Courses Online (ICON)**

The University of Iowa hosts a centralized virtual learning environment in its course management system, Iowa Courses Online (ICON), which was developed to replace the University’s previous course management systems (Blackboard and WebCT) with a single service. The University developed ICON with the intent that it be easy to use and intuitive, in order to encourage faculty adoption and create an enhanced student experience. Additional reasons for adopting a single course management environment included the opportunity to provide better support and a variety of potential integrations. This full-featured system continues to develop to meet diverse on-campus and distance learning needs. ICON is intended to improve efficiency while eliminating barriers to teaching and learning.

During the spring 2007 semester, faculty hosted 1,686 courses on ICON, compared to 1,240 the previous spring. ICON statistics indicate that 23,000 students used the site during spring 2007. As of May 14, 2007, there were 2,177 active course sites on ICON, with more than 23,500 students enrolled.

**Teaching Technology—Personal Response Systems**

A number of faculty at The University of Iowa use personal response systems (PRS) units, or “clickers,” in their classes. Faculty members in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, for example, have used Interwrite PRS units for a number of years—primarily in large, introductory courses that meet general education requirements. In the Tippie College of Business, two faculty members—one in the “Introduction to Management” course and one in the “Statistics for Strategy Problems” course—have used Quizdom interactive technology. Students use these devices in classroom lectures to answer questions posed via PowerPoint, to participate in classroom surveys, and to otherwise provide feedback to the instructor. Audience response technology appears to have potential to enhance learning in a variety of large classes (Mazur, 1997). The University of Iowa has moved beyond the “innovator stage” and into the “early adopter” stage. As we monitor the effectiveness of this technology, we will need to provide support for those who will constitute the “early majority.”

At the end of the “Introduction to Management” course (required for all business majors and open to all undergraduates), students were asked to answer survey questions about clicker technology. In spring 2005 474 students responded (77% response rate), and in spring 2006 350 student responded (62% response rate). Most respondents agreed with positive statements about the use of clickers during lecture, as shown in Table II-32. Only a handful of respondents indicated that clickers were a distraction during class.
Table II-32: Student Perceptions of Personal Response System Technology, Introduction to Management Course, Spring 2005 and 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Percent Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clicker activities helped to keep my attention</td>
<td>68% 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicker activities helped me to feel involved</td>
<td>72% 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely to attend a lecture that uses clickers</td>
<td>54% 61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicker activities and feedback helped me learn</td>
<td>57% 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, the clickers are a worthwhile addition</td>
<td>70% 77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicker activities were generally a distraction</td>
<td>12% 9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in a 300-student physics and astronomy course also were surveyed at the end of the spring 2006 semester. Eighty-nine percent of respondents to that survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “PRS technology encouraged me to attend class, was beneficial in learning during lectures.”

Student Information System—the MAUI Project

MAUI (“Made at The University of Iowa”) is an Office of the Provost-sponsored project to replace UI’s 30-year-old, home-grown, mainframe-based student information system with a new, integrated, web-based system. The system will replace current functions related to admissions, student records and registration, financial aid, advising, continuing education, transfer course articulation, and degree auditing. That is, it will provide more and better information for advising, give students better access to degree evaluations, and increase our ability to innovate—for example, by adding “service learning” designations to courses, or offering courses with fractional credits.

In 2002, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Admissions, the Division of Continuing Education, the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of the Registrar, and Information Technology Services formed a steering committee to explore “build or buy” options for replacing the existing system. After a careful analysis, the committee determined that the best option for UI would be a hybrid model, purchasing software components for specific functionality and integrating them with internally developed modules and components.

This is a major, enterprise-wide project, involving significant effort and input from the units represented on the steering committee as well as the colleges. Implementation, which began in fall 2006, will take a phased approach, using short planning horizons and development cycles to divide the project into manageable components. The system should be complete in spring 2011.

Distance Education

Over the past two decades, social, demographic, institutional, and technological changes have led to a huge increase in the demand for distance education and also stimulated new directions in the way distance education is offered. In this self-study, we focus on...
programs and services specific to undergraduates and on the central distance education delivery unit on campus: the Division of Continuing Education (DCE). Some colleges independently offer additional distance education courses.

In spring 2005, at the request of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, the three Regent universities developed a strategic plan for distance education. The plan identifies the universities’ shared mission: to extend learning beyond the physical boundaries of our campuses to meet needs in the state, nation, and world.

The University of Iowa offers three bachelor’s degrees specifically designed for students whose location, work, or family commitments prevent them from attending classes on campus. The Bachelor of Liberal Studies (B.L.S.) and the Bachelor of Applied Studies (B.A.S.) were described earlier; the third is an R.N.-to-B.S.N. (Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing) degree program, which also can be earned with online coursework. In addition, three certificates can be earned entirely online: entrepreneurship, public health, and nonprofit management (an online certificate program in museum studies is in the planning stages). To support these programs, the University offers more than 200 courses online. Many degree- and non-degree-seeking students from other institutions and states look to Iowa’s online courses to find what they need, such as the hard-to-find online pathophysiology course (a prerequisite for admission to many colleges of nursing around the country) offered by the UI College of Nursing.

Undergraduates in distance education programs receive services similar to what the University provides to on-campus undergraduates. Upon enrollment, a student is assigned a HawkID and an advisor, with whom he or she will work by phone, e-mail, or in person if possible to plan a course of study and monitor degree progress. Distance students work with the distance librarian (described earlier) and with their instructors to navigate course work. A quarterly newsletter helps them stay connected. They have access to scholarships reserved for distance education students. They have full technological support from the ICON staff, from Information Technology Services, and from the Division of Continuing Education.

The DCE has made investments in software and hardware to be able to offer rich course environments incorporating a variety of media, as well as two-way live faculty-student interactions; to provide security; and to build a redundant system that will ensure courses will not be interrupted. Each online course starts with an introductory “test your connection” page that lists computer requirements for the course. There is a dedicated, toll-free number for technical support. DCE staff work extensively with instructors to teach them how to use software, and once classes are under way, a DCE staff member is always on hand in case issues arise.

The learning spaces survey asked students if they were satisfied with their ability to connect to campus technology resources from off-campus; 66.6% agreed or strongly agreed that off-campus connectivity is adequate, while 16.4% disagreed.

A frequent concern regarding distance education is whether distance offerings have the same value and quality as on-campus offerings. The DCE has set a goal for the coming year to restructure and enhance course evaluation procedures, to ensure that on- and off-campus students are treated alike, and to assess whether the goal of providing off-campus courses that meet or exceed the quality of on-campus offerings is being met.

Recent trends show more on-campus students registering for online courses, which leads to more diverse classroom composition and promotes good use of resources (this can, for example, be a mechanism for increasing enrollment in low-enrolled courses).
The number of on-campus students taking online courses is unlikely to increase much more, however, given that tuition is prohibitive—students pay for courses offered by the DCE, even if total tuition for on-campus and DCE courses exceeds the tuition cap. The dean of the Division of Continuing Education has submitted a proposal, now under discussion, to change this policy.

Faculty Perceptions of Virtual Learning Environments

In the subcommittee on Learning Environment’s focus group discussions, faculty seemed generally pleased with ICON, though they noted some aspects of the system that are not as flexible as they could be (e.g., the “grade book” utility). Faculty agreed that the late summer training sessions for using ICON are important and should be continued, so that new faculty and graduate teaching assistants can become acquainted with the software quickly.

Some faculty are using technology for online discussions and office hours. This kind of usage can be expected to increase, and the University will need to be prepared to offer more options for online collaborations and discussion (e.g., programs such as Elluminate).

Some faculty see the need for expanding options for varied course formats, including offering certain undergraduate courses completely online.

Currently, the Center for Credit Programs collaborates with various UI colleges to offer online courses, but opportunities for teaching courses in this format could be expanded. These courses are important for students who cannot attend classes on campus due to health, family, or other reasons but do not want to interrupt their education. Colleges recognize that teaching courses online is at least as time-consuming and challenging as regular classroom teaching, and should be treated equivalently.

Accessibility

An important point to note is that as technology evolves, so do issues of accessibility. The ADA requires that University programs be accessible, and those that involve electronic or web-based resources must meet Section 508 criteria. The University’s policy on Accessibility Standards for Web Resources provides information and guidelines for web designers, but this is an ongoing effort.

Conclusions—Virtual Learning Environments and Academic Technology

Recent and ongoing major upgrades to important academic systems—ICON and the MAUI project—reflect the University’s continuing commitment to enhancing learning environments through technology.

ITS provides a variety of important and helpful services to the general student population, and also provides especially meaningful opportunities that enhance the potential of students who have a particular interest in technology. Of respondents to the student satisfaction survey, 66% who had used UI academic technology services reported that the experience helped them build skills. ITS’s own survey indicated a high level of student satisfaction with UI IT services.

ITS seeks information about student needs and desires with regard to technology regularly. Current themes for development include increased connectivity—especially wireless—and greater integration among services.
As distance education and online courses become more widely used, issues of ensuring equal quality among online and traditional courses and fair treatment of course instructors will gain exigency.

**Summary and Conclusions—Environments and Resources for Learning**

**Signs of Success**

The many organizational units and programs that help students of all backgrounds cultivate their academic and personal potential play a key role in the University’s ability to fulfill our mission of “educat[ing] students for success and personal fulfillment.”

All of the units and programs investigated for this self-study showed signs of success. The University Libraries, academic technology services, Center for Diversity & Enrichment programs, and the Math Lab all did particularly well in the student satisfaction survey, with 65% or more of respondents who had used those programs or services indicating that they had helped their skill development. The University Libraries clearly are an extraordinary resource for students, and efforts to integrate librarians into undergraduate courses have had promising outcomes. Recent innovations and ongoing upgrades in academic technology, such as the MAUI project, promise significant benefits for students, faculty, and advisors. Students express a high level of satisfaction with advisors in the Academic Advising Center, and with many departmental advising programs. The Pomerantz Career Center is quickly growing into a world-class facility for career advising. The University of Iowa Honors Program has grown dramatically and is building on the extraordinary resources of the “Iowa Honors Connection” between the Blank Honors Center and the Honors House in Daum residence hall.

Our study suggests that the University’s physical teaching and learning facilities are adequately equipped and appropriately used. Computer labs—including centrally managed ITCs and departmental and Libraries computer labs—give students access to almost 3,000 workstations and more than 80 software applications on campus, and “Virtual Desktop” makes the same software applications available from off campus. Results of the learning environments survey suggest that students are very pleased with the ITCs as an academic resource.

The University’s residence halls also seem to be functioning well as learning environments. Learning communities like the Honors House are in great demand. Plans are under way to develop additional honors community clusters in residence halls other than Daum, and to make the large community in Daum smaller by creating smaller communities organized around themes.

The Iowa Memorial Union has undergone the first phase of a major renovation, which has been guided by a process of “student services purposeful planning” and a vision of creating a more student-centered campus environment.

As a central virtual learning environment, our new consolidated course management system has attracted a very high rate of participation from faculty and students. The University also offers more than 200 online distance education courses, including some that are difficult to find elsewhere. The University’s commitment to distance learners has long been demonstrated by the presence of a distance librarian to support these students.
Moving Forward

Our study suggests that we must investigate issues in academic advising. Students cite advising as one of their most positive experiences, and also one of their most negative. Although the Academic Advising Center receives very positive evaluations in general (on average, students give advisors marks above 3.5 on a scale of 1.0 to 4.0 “for doing [their] job well”), advising in the process of selecting a major area of study is an area of concern for students. Selecting a major can be difficult and anxiety-ridden for reasons that no advising service could eliminate, but the student satisfaction survey results suggest that we could do a better job of helping students through that process. Moreover, the system of specialized advising by colleges and departments results in wide variation in approaches to and quality of advising. This form of advising receives high praise from some students and criticism from others. Effective practices from some of the most successful departments might be implemented in less successful departments, or the University might find other ways to support advising within the departments.

With the shift in the mission of the University Libraries over the past several years—toward education, service, and helping individuals access materials electronically—both physical and virtual space needs have changed, and will continue to change. Faculty and students need more space for collaborative efforts, and consistent online access to materials.

University Housing recognizes that the residence halls play an important role in academic development, and the University should encourage efforts to increase academic programming, peer mentorship programs, and other positive interactions with faculty, staff, and peers in the halls. As suggested in the “Entry and Transition” section of this self-study, we should also build on the success of our existing learning communities. The residence halls also should be central to strategies that deemphasize alcohol consumption.

Interviews with faculty revealed a perception that there is a need for more classrooms of specific sizes. Further assessment of classroom use might help us identify some additional spaces that could help meet demands. As we renovate spaces and fashion learning environments, we must keep in mind the need expressed by faculty in this study for flexible room configurations, equipment, and lighting, so that rooms can support various pedagogical styles.

Student and faculty use of online teaching and learning tools will increase, and the University must be prepared to support those tools. At the same time, the role, philosophy, and value of online learning must be evaluated alongside traditional teaching and learning, to ensure consistent quality and fair treatment of both students and instructors.
Summary of Objectives for the Special Emphasis Self-Study

The University of Iowa chose to use the reaccreditation process as an opportunity to advance a campus-wide conversation about an area where we, like many other public research universities, have felt a need to refocus and recommit ourselves: our core mission, undergraduate education. Our goal was to make a critical, evidence-based self-examination, and thereby arrive at a comprehensive, shared understanding of what we do well and where we need to focus our attention to accelerate progress toward the first of our five top-level strategic planning goals: “To create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers.”

In short, this special emphasis self-study has a dual purpose: 1) to demonstrate (in conjunction with the institutional self-study) that we meet the high standards of the HLC criteria for accreditation, and 2) to set a direction for the University’s next steps as we seek to enhance the UI undergraduate experience.

Summary of Findings

Our inventory and evaluation of programs, policies, and practices related to undergraduate education at The University of Iowa—drawing on feedback from students, faculty, staff, University administrators, and members of the community—highlighted many signs of success, as well as challenges we must overcome as we move forward.

We measure student success in many ways, most fundamentally by students’ ability to persist at the University and to graduate in a reasonable period of time. We also
hope students make full use of the extraordinary resources we have to offer as a comprehensive, nationally ranked research university. Because we are constrained by state-mandated admission standards, the University has limited control over how prepared students are when they enter the University. We have met with some success over the last ten years in recruiting students who are better prepared to succeed, and have seen record numbers of honors students in the first-year class in each of the last two years. Our best opportunity to influence persistence and graduation rates significantly, however, will continue to derive from the development of student success initiatives that guide students of all levels of preparation to make wise academic and co-curricular choices. We are working to make this focus on “access to success” part of the University culture. Several innovative student success programs have had a positive effect on retention, a broadly representative Student Success Team has been formed and a director of student success initiatives appointed, and various promising new initiatives are in development.

We also know that our ability to provide an excellent undergraduate education depends on creating a diverse learning environment, and we have made important gains over the last two years in increasing the diversity of our student body, in spite of the relative lack of diversity in our state. We must make sure that our recent progress continues, and becomes a meaningful trend. To that end, we must do more to ensure that we are creating a welcoming environment for all students, integrating them into the University’s academic culture, and nurturing a sense of community.

The University’s General Education Program is strong and seems to be functioning well. It could benefit, however, from a more transparent structure, and a review of its intended outcomes. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has formed a committee to begin such a review. To the extent possible, the University should address obstacles to teaching communication skills, especially writing, in large general education courses.

We offer an impressive range of major programs and other opportunities for specialized study, and an equally impressive array of opportunities for educationally purposeful co-curricular activity. We might not be doing all we can, however, to guide students to these programs or to help students make good choices among them. Evidence from our study suggests that we may be able to improve advising for students as they work toward selecting a major program, and that we might find more effective ways to let students know about engagement opportunities and to help them find those that complement their academic development. We can do more to encourage meaningful student engagement, which research has shown contributes significantly to student success (Kuh et al, 2005a).

Many review processes are in place to ensure that individuals and programs accomplish stated goals, and the University has long required assessment of student learning outcomes as an element of academic program reviews. Nonetheless, efforts to assess learning outcomes of academic programs have been uneven, and formal assessment has rarely been applied to co-curricular programs. The University has taken action to begin to strengthen outcomes assessment in the undergraduate majors and in distance learning courses, and should encourage systematic assessment in other areas that affect student success as well.

Finally, the University provides excellent learning environments, but as we look to the future we must ensure new and modified physical and virtual spaces that maximizes flexibility for various pedagogical styles. We might also find ways to enhance the
effectiveness of spaces that are central to undergraduate academic and extracurricular life, including the Main Library and the Iowa Memorial Union.

Initiatives for Progress

Overview

We have identified a series of initiatives we believe will help us make significant progress toward our goals and meet the needs of those we serve, especially undergraduate students, more effectively.

We have grouped the initiatives into four interrelated, overarching areas of focus that call for the University to:

- Identify and implement improvements to the General Education Program
- Continue to focus on “access to success”
- Foster student academic and co-curricular engagement
- Enhance learning environments to encourage intellectual and physical vitality

In addition, we have identified four cross-cutting themes—issues that will affect our success in each of the four areas above. The themes are:

- The need to institutionalize a culture of assessment across the University, in all areas of our mission
- The need for better communication and collaboration among units, programs, and individuals
- The need to involve faculty more directly in each of the focus areas
- The value of cultivating a sense of “positive restlessness”

Initiatives Grouped by Area of Focus

Focus Area 1: The General Education Program

In choosing to incorporate a review of the University’s General Education Program (GEP) into our self-study, we sought to collect information and provide a report that would serve as a basis, if necessary, for a more focused reexamination and, if necessary, redesign of the GEP.

Our study found that we have a strong, well-administered, flexible GEP that is working well. Some students and faculty find its organization confusing, however, and feel it lacks coherence. Our study also suggests that we may be achieving some of the desired learning outcomes of the GEP better than others.

Initiative 1a: Reorder General Education Program structure.

Faculty find the names of the GEP subject areas unclear and inconsistent and the organization confusing, and the subcommittee on Common Academic Experiences reported that students agree. “Humanities” and “social sciences,” for example, are names of traditional disciplines, and students do not always understand what they encompass. “Interpretation of literature” and “rhetoric” are names of specific GEP courses. “Quantitative or formal reasoning” is a skill. The name of the “distributed”
category does not help students understand what it offers.

The inclusion of “cultural diversity” and “foreign civilization and culture” sub-areas in the GEP distributed area is one of many strategies the University has implemented to advance its goals related to diversity and globalization of the curriculum. Because the distributed area differs in structure and name from the other subject areas, however, many find it confusing. Its placement near the end in all GEP charts and schemas might reinforce the sense that this area and its sub-areas are “add-ons,” not well integrated into the program as a whole.

In short, the organization and names of the various components of the program fail to create a sense of coherence.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), in consultation with the Office of the Provost, in August 2007 appointed the General Education Advisory Committee to study the GEP organizational structure and area names, and suggest revisions. Building on the recommendations of the Common Academic Experiences subcommittee, the committee’s goal is to arrive at a more coherent, integrated program that focuses on the unique educational and cultural experiences offered by The University of Iowa. Most of the committee’s members are CLAS faculty who are involved with the GEP, but the committee also includes representation from the College of Education, the Tippie College of Business, and the Academic Advising Center, as well as a student member. At the time of this writing, preliminary results from the committee show good progress toward developing a way of representing the GEP that will be clear to students and faculty members.

Initiative 1b: Revise the General Education Program criteria and outcomes.

The UI General Education Program is ambitious, with many, detailed criteria and intended outcomes that sometimes lead to confusion about the program’s goals, or to a sense that not all of the goals are achievable. Moreover, as the program has evolved, some confusion has arisen about both intended and unintended outcomes.

The General Education Advisory Committee should suggest revisions to the criteria for and intended outcomes of the program, with the goal of simplifying them and also highlighting the distinctiveness and coherence of the reorganized program.

Initiative 1c: Assess desired learning outcomes.

CLAS should determine a schedule for isolating selected GEP desired learning outcomes, and assessing them in a manner it finds practical and useful. The preliminary work of the General Education Advisory Committee suggests that the GEP outcomes can be grouped into a small number of areas. Outcomes in each of those areas can then be assessed, perhaps on a rotating basis.

If the General Education Advisory Committee determines that the two learning outcomes identified as under-represented—social responsibility and life of the mind—should be brought into balance with the others, one assessment might focus on how to strengthen these two areas.

We suggest that a top priority for assessment is communication skills, since faculty feel that practice and achievement in writing skills are insufficient in the GEP. Faculty find writing skills especially difficult to teach in large courses, and although some have found creative solutions, many see teaching GEP courses as a burden because of it.
As part of examining this issue, the College should address performance standards in writing and other communications skills.

As we consider the assessment of general education outcomes, we must keep in mind the relationship between general education and the University’s major programs. The assessment plan for general education must be implemented as part of an overall strategic plan for assessment of undergraduate student learning.

In spring and fall 2008 UI will administer to a sample of first-year and senior students the writing and critical reasoning test modules of ACT’s Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) program. The University hopes this will provide useful information about the effectiveness of our current general education strategies.

Focus Area 2: “Access to Success”

Our mission as a public university demands a continued focus on “access to success.” Our admissions policies define the students we seek to serve, and within those policies, we have recently demonstrated some success in attracting increasingly well prepared classes to enroll in the University. Once we have admitted students, we must focus on finding ways to help all of our students cultivate the skills and habits they need to succeed in college and beyond. We will build on the positive developments of the past ten years, and put to effective use our more sophisticated understanding of the factors that contribute to student success.

Initiative 2a: Find more and better ways to instill an understanding of what it means to be a University of Iowa student.

The RISE study strongly reinforces our sense that the University needs to do a better job of creating appropriate expectations among new undergraduates and reinforcing those expectations with continuing students. We must find new ways to teach what it means—or what we want it to mean—to be an Iowa student. What kinds of learning do we want them to seek? What kinds of relationships do we want them to build? What kinds of community do we want them to create?

The Student Success Team (SST) will continue its work on the “Message Project,” which aims to identify the core messages we should impart to all students. In summer 2007, the SST surveyed the University community to ask “What messages should the University communicate to prospective and current students about what it means to be an undergraduate at The University of Iowa?” About 2,400 individuals responded, and from their feedback the SST created a draft of what is called, for the time being, “the Message.” The collaborative and consultative process of revision will continue, as will discussions about how to incorporate the final message into University print and web materials most effectively. In addition, we will continue discussions about strategies for ensuring that the message is a “lived” message, supported by the actions of the faculty, staff, and administration of the University.

Pursuing this initiative will help the University advance several of the other initiatives and themes presented here, especially those under Focus Area 3, “student academic and co-curricular engagement.”

Initiative 2b: Study issues in academic advising

Our self-study suggests that we could improve academic advising in some areas.
One acknowledged area of difficulty is helping students through the difficult process of selecting a major. We are investigating creating an online course to help guide students in making educational and vocational choices. This resource would engage students in a self-reflective process before they meet with their advisors—making the time spent with advisors more focused and more effective.

Another challenge is the uneven quality of advising within academic departments. We must find ways to encourage departments to strengthen their advising systems and encourage faculty advisors to improve their mentoring skills. This might be done, in part, by increasing awareness of successful programs and by providing public recognition for effective advisors.

This is an area in which the findings of our self-study seem less conclusive than in others. We might need to conduct a more specific study of advising to develop a thorough understanding of the issues we face.

**Initiative 2c: Create a comprehensive early intervention system for students in difficulty.**

Research has demonstrated the importance of “redundant early warning systems that identify and respond to students whose academic performance or other behaviors put them at risk of failure or dropping out” (Kuh et al., 2005a, p. 260). The University will develop a comprehensive, coordinated system to identify and respond to students in difficulty.

In fall 2007 a task force has been charged with addressing this issue. A Phase One report, due early in 2008, will include descriptions of proven practices in early intervention systems. The report will also assess the resources available and the particular needs that must be met and challenges to be overcome at UI. A Phase Two report, due in spring 2008, will constitute a proposal for a comprehensive early intervention system at UI, including elements of the systems, models for governance and staffing, resource needs, and assessment methods.

**Initiative 2d: Build on the success of learning communities.**

The RISE study and other evidence demonstrate a positive correlation between involvement in a learning community in the first year at The University of Iowa and persistence into the second year. In spring 2007, the senior associate provost for undergraduate education created the Task Force on Learning Communities, charged with identifying successful practices in undergraduate learning communities, assessing current UI contexts for expanding learning communities, and initiating a proposal for a “scalable” program of learning communities at UI. That task force is completing its report in December 2007, and the University administration will carefully consider its recommendations.

Demand for the Honors House in Daum has been particularly high, and the Honors Program is considering plans to create clusters of honors students in other residence halls, as well as to create themed “sub-communities” in Daum.

**Initiative 2e: Consider an extended orientation program**

In recognition of the limitations of a two-day summer orientation program, The University of Iowa is exploring options for extended orientation experiences. Under the umbrella of the Student Success Team, interested parties, including Orientation Services, University Housing, and UI Student Government, will investigate a variety of
possibilities—including a several-day program, to be held immediately before classes begin—that could help new students feel more connected to the University and more prepared to engage actively in the academic and co-curricular life of the campus than is possible after a one- or two-day summer program. Students would become acclimated to campus, and learn how to make the most of the resources available to them, before the stress of classes begins. The program would foster cooperation among faculty, student support staff, and other campus resources by giving them shared responsibility for a program focused on student success. Also under consideration are additional first and second semester transition programs.

Initiative 2f: Augment efforts to improve graduation rates of racial/ethnic minority students

Although overall four- and six-year graduation rates have improved over the past ten years, the University continues to struggle to increase the graduation rates of racial/ethnic minority students, particularly African American and Latino students.

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, has formed a Regent Interinstitutional Task Force on Retention, Graduation, and Diversity, which will issue its report in March 2008. We expect that report to indicate that many of the key challenges we face lie in the general area of “climate.” Some part of the climate issue might be attributed to the relatively low proportion of our campus community, at all levels, that are members of groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education. To the extent that that is the case, our recent success in increasing the enrollment of students of color is a positive development. We hope the fact that these students are as well prepared as they are will lead to improved persistence. Increases in faculty of color also can be an important factor in improving student persistence.

We are convinced, though, that we can do more. At the time of this writing, we are in the process of arranging for an external team of experts to study the University’s efforts and challenges and recommend changes to policies, programs, and practices to improve success among students of color.

Focus Area 3: Student Academic and Co-Curricular Engagement

A host of current research, including the University’s own RISE study and other analyses, has demonstrated that both academic engagement and participation in educationally purposeful co-curricular activities have positive effects on outcomes related to student success.

The RISE report suggests that UI students are spending surprisingly little time on academic work. Students in the RISE focus groups described their experience as lacking in academic challenge and characterized by low expectations. Survey respondents reported completing small numbers of assigned readings, essay exams, and papers, and spending a low number of hours in class preparation.

One special concern related to this issue is the problem of alcohol use by UI students (see Focus Area 4). We are struck by the suggestion made by seniors interviewed for the RISE report who asserted that Iowa’s ‘reputation as a party school’ was associated with its perceived lack of academic challenge; that is, if UI provided more academic challenges, students would not be able to spend so much time partying as they do.
This compelling observation—along with the report’s finding that 10 to 12 hours of class preparation, or less than half of what faculty and advisors say they expect, is enough for students to earn a B average—lends a particular urgency to the goals of setting clear expectations and engaging students in the academic life of the University.

At the same time, in spite of the wide variety of options available, it appears that a smaller percentage of the student body than we wish actually engages in educationally purposeful co-curricular activities. Evidence from this self-study and from the RISE study suggests that students feel it is up to them to find engagement opportunities and to create positive experiences for themselves. They describe as “challenging,” however, the process of finding the opportunities and resources necessary to craft a successful and engaging college experience (RISE report, p. 46), particularly in the first year of college. The report also makes clear that UI has a very student-driven culture, in which students learn about opportunities—and how, or whether, to take advantage of those opportunities—primarily from their peers, not from faculty and staff.

We must find better ways to help students make good choices when faced with the extraordinary array of options available to them, and we need to set clear and appropriately high expectations.

Several initiatives mentioned under other areas of focus and themes will also help foster student engagement, including the “Message Project” (Focus Area 2), implementing outcomes assessment for academic and co-curricular programs (Theme 2), and building on the success of learning communities (Focus Area 2).

Initiative 3a: Participate in national surveys.

The University of Iowa plans to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) in spring 2008. Many institutions have found these surveys very useful. We expect them to provide considerable data to help the University make informed decisions about future directions.

Initiative 3b: Assess the outcomes of current academic initiatives such as Friday classes and the pilot “D, F, W study.”

As mentioned in the “Environments and Resources for Learning” section of this self-study, in fall 2008 the University will begin a project to shift some Monday classes to Fridays. The use (or lack of use) of Friday classes plays a significant role in shaping University culture. It sends a message about priorities and expectations; and, as noted, research has suggested that students who take Friday classes are less likely to engage in binge drinking on Thursdays. The pilot project will emphasize classes that enroll first-year students, and will include required attendance.

The vice provost is conducting a pilot project to study classes with high incidence of D, F, and W grades. The goal of the project is to investigate ways to improve the success of students in those courses without decreasing the courses’ academic rigor.

The outcomes of these pilot projects will be thoroughly assessed. If they meet their objectives, the University should extend their reach.
Initiative 3c: Identify, inventory, and communicate opportunities for student co-curricular engagement.

Although a comprehensive list of student organizations is available from the Office of Student Life, students seem to find the list itself overwhelming, and lacking in information that would help them make the choice to investigate any particular organization. Students report that they delete most of the tremendous volume of e-mail they receive from campus units, including student organizations, so e-mail is an ineffective form of advertising.

Word of mouth seems to be the most effective method of communicating with students about events and organizations. Students learn about opportunities from their friends, and appreciate hearing about them from faculty and teaching assistants in class or from resident advisors in their residence halls. Students also make extensive use of web sites to seek information of particular interest to them.

The Office of Student Life and a committee of Student Success Team (SST) members are working to create an expanded inventory of involvement opportunities, which will become a comprehensive, one-stop resource for students. The committee also will consider how to implement this resource most effectively.

In summer 2008 the SST will implement a new program called “Pick One,” which encourages new students, during orientation, to pick one co-curricular activity in which to get involved. The team will follow up with an assessment of this initiative.

Initiative 3d: Create more peer educator opportunities and communicate them to students.

Although there are several successful peer education and mentoring programs on campus (as described in the “Learning Alongside the Curriculum” section of this self-study), there is no central resource for students to learn about available opportunities. We will consider ways to create more of these opportunities (which benefit the mentor as much as, if not more than, the mentee), and ensure that we advertise them so that more students can realize their benefits.

The University can do much more to connect new students with positive role models among their peers, and help shape the messages students receive from other students. Involved students will encourage other students to get involved, creating a culture where involvement is the norm and building community in the process.

We should expand, for example, on programs such as the one being developed by the College of Engineering, which has upperclass students mentor newer students. Orientation Services should continue to use peer advisors in their programming, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences should encourage expanded use of peer mentors in first-year seminars. The University will consider how to formalize an institutional commitment to peer mentoring programs to support underrepresented students.

Initiative 3e: Encourage collaboration among departments, units, and colleges to promote educationally purposeful engagement opportunities.

Although many units are involved in providing engagement opportunities for students, they seem to share their experiences infrequently. As described under Theme 2, programs sometimes work in “silos,” without sharing resources, ideas, and effective practices. Students, faculty, and staff in our study mentioned that this contributes to the difficulty in finding out about opportunities and effective programming across campus.
The University will investigate ways to encourage collaboration among departments, units, and colleges, and include them in efforts to create a centralized method for communicating engagement opportunities to students.

**Focus Area 4: Learning Environments that Encourage Intellectual and Physical Vitality**

The “learning environment” at UI includes the physical setting, virtual teaching and learning tools, and the culture and climate that shape our expectations of ourselves and others.

The University’s physical and virtual teaching and learning environments seem to be functioning well, and have been enhanced significantly by recent developments such as the renovation of the Iowa Memorial Union and the consolidation of course management systems into ICON. Our study identified no issues in urgent need of correction, but did point to some issues that will have increasing importance in our planning processes, including the need for greater flexibility in classroom environments and for more effective collaborative learning spaces.

The larger learning environment—our culture and climate—includes many remarkable aspects that encourage physical and intellectual vitality, such as the balance between cutting-edge research in the sciences on one hand and remarkable strength in the arts and humanities on the other. But the “drinking culture” at UI clearly interferes with student success, and the high rate of binge drinking endangers students’ health and well-being. As stated in the focus areas above, the University must set and communicate clear expectations and help students make good choices about their health and priorities.

In addition, the most effective learning environment for all members of the UI community will include and support people diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, and many other characteristics. In this self-study, to avoid duplicating efforts already undertaken, we have pointed to the recommendations of the Diversity Action Committee and the results of the diversity climate surveys, as well as the report of the ADA compliance review task force, among others. What bears emphasis here are the climate survey results that demonstrate undergraduate students from racial/ethnic minority groups report experiencing significantly less access, equity, and inclusion—and significantly less satisfaction with their UI experience—than their majority peers. Minority students also question the commitment of the University and its leaders to diversity, despite assertions to the contrary in *The Iowa Promise*. In the face of these and other challenges, however, the University will continue to strive to create welcoming, supportive, and effective learning environments for everyone. To do otherwise is unacceptable.

**Initiative 4a: Continue to address alcohol issues.**

In fall 2007 the interim executive vice president and provost convened an alcohol task force to recommend ways that UI can combat the problem of binge drinking. That task force should work closely with Student Health Services, the Office of Student Services Campus and Community Relations, and others with expertise in the issue and how it affects UI students.

**Initiative 4b: Implement the Healthy Living Network.**

As mentioned in the Environments and Resources for Learning section of this self-
study, the Division of Student Services is developing a “Healthy Living Network” to encourage collaborative efforts to promote student health. The division has identified desired outcomes and measures that will be used to evaluate the program’s success.

The University will seek broad support for this promising effort and follow up with a thorough examination of assessment data.

**Initiative 4c: Plan for flexible physical and virtual learning environments.**

As we develop physical spaces in the future, we must pay increased attention to issues of flexibility, including room size, configuration, equipment, and lighting. The University’s classrooms need to support various pedagogical styles.

Future large classrooms should be built with “breadth over depth” in mind, a design that permits greater eye contact and reduces the potential for disruption.

In addition, demand for dual screens and projectors and for blackboards and whiteboards that are not hidden when a projection screen is lowered will increase. Availability of electrical outlets will become more important as more students use laptops in class. And the wireless network should be available in all general assignment classrooms, in addition to the Libraries, meeting rooms, and other student-focused spaces.

With regard to virtual learning environments, we need to be prepared to support new collaborative technologies—and to ensure that as we implement new technologies, we continue to monitor them for quality that is consistent with traditional, physical environments.

**Initiative 4d: Explore ways to make common spaces more effective in meeting student needs.**

The University will conduct a survey to determine student reactions to the Phase I renovation of the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU), and use the results of that survey as one source of data to inform plans to encourage the use of the IMU as a study venue.

The Iowa Memorial Union should consider extending the hours of The Hawkeye (the new entertainment space) to compete with the bar scene.

Our study identified a growing need for collaborative work spaces in the Libraries, to support interdisciplinary endeavors and interaction among students and between students and faculty. These spaces should also offer access to online materials.

**Themes**

To this list of focus areas and initiatives for progress we add four themes that emerged during the self-study. Addressing issues related to these themes will have a positive impact on each of the focus areas and initiatives above. The themes are:

- The need to create a culture of assessment across the University, in all areas of our mission
- The need for better communication and collaboration among units and programs
- The need to involve faculty more directly in each of the focus areas
- The value of cultivating a sense of “positive restlessness”
Theme 1: Creating a Culture of Assessment

Assessment takes place across the University and at many levels. The systems of promotion and tenure evaluation, faculty review, program review, administrative office review, and staff performance evaluation are designed to ensure that we reflect regularly on how well we are meeting our goals as individuals and as an institution. This self-study describes the rigorous processes of curriculum review in place in each of the undergraduate colleges, as well as the mechanisms for individual course evaluations. Many units undergo accreditation reviews. The University reports each year to the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, on progress toward our strategic planning goals, and we benchmark ourselves frequently against our peers.

As this self-study highlights, however, assessment of student learning outcomes across academic and co-curricular programs is uneven, and in many areas we are not tracking and using data as evidence to help us improve units, programs, and services. In addition to completing the development of formal outcomes assessment plans for each of the University’s undergraduate majors—and implementing those plans—we must encourage other units to collect meaningful data and use them to improve performance. Our goal is to institutionalize a culture of assessment.

This culture shift must extend not only to undergraduate major programs but also to the General Education Program (a process the General Education Advisory Committee is positioned to begin), service courses (courses required by one college but delivered by another), and academic advising (the Academic Advising Center has begun to identify learning outcomes for advising, and will follow with an assessment plan). The shift also should extend to co-curricular programs. Several UI offices and departments report having established objectives for their co-curricular programs and services, but in many cases those objectives have more to do with student satisfaction or other departmental goals than with defining desired learning outcomes. Even among those with established objectives, many units do little to evaluate the effectiveness of their programming in a systematic way. This seems to stem from a lack of widespread knowledge about how to conduct meaningful assessment, and a lack of perceived need to do so. We need to find ways to train departmental staff to conduct meaningful assessments of their programs and services.

New efforts to move toward the goal of institutionalizing a culture of assessment—in addition to those already described—might include:

- The creation of a core assessment team, responsible for moving forward with systematic, holistic assessment efforts
- Development of an institution-wide strategic plan for assessment of undergraduate student learning
- Implementation of workshops to train faculty, staff, and students in effective assessment practices

We also must consider whether the University can do more to encourage the collection and dissemination of useful data about UI units, programs, and services. While conducting this special emphasis self-study, several subcommittees encountered difficulty gathering data they had hoped would be readily available. In part, this reveals that some offices simply have not collected data that would be valuable for assessment purposes. It also reflects the challenge presented by the University’s lack of an Office of Institutional Research.
Given our decentralized nature and tendency toward lean central administration, The University of Iowa has chosen not to establish an Office of Institutional Research. The administration might reconsider this choice, however, or at a minimum consider options such as a “virtual office of institutional research,” which would coordinate and leverage the expertise in existing, distinct units. We must also find ways, as noted above, to educate departmental and unit staff about the value of data they could, and should, collect for themselves.

The Student Success Team has created a Research Coordination Council (RCC), chaired by the director of Evaluation and Examination Services, to investigate ways to expand the University’s capacity and programs devoted to research and assessment of student success. The RCC’s charge will include making recommendations about new data collection efforts and about better dissemination of new and existing data to units that deal with undergraduate students.

The University of Iowa has been accepted to participate in the Higher Learning Commission’s Academy for Assessment of Student Learning. We expect to use the knowledge we gain as a result of participation in the academy to strengthen student learning outcomes assessment efforts.

**Theme 2: Communication, Collaboration, and “Silo-Busting”**

We have noted repeatedly in this self-study that The University of Iowa’s size and our decentralized and distributed nature serve us well in many ways. Because of our size, we can support a wide range of major programs and a remarkable array of opportunities for educationally purposeful co-curricular activities. Our distributed model, in many cases, keeps decision-making in the hands of those who know a program or constituency best. And, in many ways, decentralization encourages innovation and entrepreneurship.

These same characteristics, however, present some significant challenges. Decentralization complicates the development of policies that govern overall quality and consistency. Efficiency and effectiveness suffer when units with similar objectives fail to share expertise and resources—or worse, when they have a different philosophy or develop an unhelpful sense of competition with each other.

In much the same way that academic institutions and funding agencies have recognized, with increasing urgency, the need for cross-disciplinary interaction—to create lines of communication among the “academic silos” that have been built up over 50 years of exponential knowledge growth and the concomitant move toward focused academic specialization—so we must find ways to break down the academic and functional silos that have built up over time at The University of Iowa. We must find ways to foster more effective communication among individuals and units, better coordinate the activities of units and programs that have similar goals, and ensure that expertise and best practices in successful units and programs inform growth in other areas.

The theme of improved communication and coordination should inform all aspects of our operations so we can better fulfill our mission.

**Theme 3: Faculty Engagement**

According to the RISE report, one predictor of student persistence to the second year is the perception of having received effective teaching during the first year. The RISE study also demonstrated that even a single interaction with a faculty member can have a lasting impact on a student’s satisfaction with the University and/or with him- or
herself. These data illustrate the most immediate way in which faculty are central to student success. They also highlight the concept that interaction with students outside of the classroom might be considered one of the most important service activities a faculty member engages in.

This is why, for example, the Learning Communities Task Force (completing its work in fall 2007) has prioritized creating a program that brings students and faculty together in substantive ways. The hope is that this interaction will encourage students to continue engaging with faculty as they progress through their undergraduate careers. The program will also include a faculty development component.

Another area in which faculty are clearly central is outcomes assessment for academic programs. Faculty need to lead—and are leading—the effort to establish outcomes assessment plans for their undergraduate majors. Faculty must likewise be at the center of assessment of the General Education Program. It is the faculty who can ultimately effect a cultural shift from teaching courses to teaching students—that is, to assessing not what is being taught, but whether students are learning what they should be learning.

“Faculty engagement” emerged as a theme because there are many other ways in which faculty need to be engaged in student success initiatives—ways that touch on each of the focus areas outlined above, from fostering student engagement to creating healthy and supportive learning environments. Faculty members set expectations, model good decision making, and communicate the University’s message about what it means to be a UI student. Faculty are the heart of the University, and must be at the heart of efforts to address our challenges and advance our priorities. The University will achieve maximum success on the proposed initiatives only if faculty support these efforts actively.

**Theme 4: Positive Restlessness**

Throughout this self-study, we encountered a feeling of what Kuh et al. (2005b) refer to as “positive restlessness”: “a ‘can-do’ ethic that permeates . . . campuses [that are successful in the areas of student engagement and retention]—a tapestry of values and beliefs that reflect the institutions’ willingness to take on matters of substance consistent with their priorities” (Kuh et al., 2005b, p. 48). “Positive restlessness” means having the motivation to improve; those who demonstrate it “continuously monitor what they’re doing, where they are, and where they want to go, in order to maintain momentum” (Kuh et al., 2005b, p. 48).

The decision to conduct a special-emphasis self-study is evidence of that motivation and we hope it plays a role in cultivating that momentum. We began this section of the report by recounting efforts since 1999 to focus more systematically and meaningfully on improving the experiences and outcomes of undergraduates at UI; we noted that the special emphasis self-study was the next logical step in that endeavor. The decision to pursue a self-study of undergraduate education was, without question, a decision to “take on matters of substance consistent with [our] priorities.” In doing so, we hoped to gain a clear picture of where we are now with regard to undergraduate education—both what we are doing well and what needs improvement—and where we need to go from here if we are to fulfill the commitments of The Iowa Promise. We were pleased to discover that many of the individuals and units the self-study committees interviewed were engaged in discussions about how to do more and how to do better in support of student learning. They expressed eagerness to address challenges and to build on
success in ways that will either extend the benefits programs can offer, or extend the benefits of successful programs to more students. Further, they were eager to work with others across traditional barriers, as evidenced by the rapidly growing membership in the Student Success Team.

This growing sense of “positive restlessness” may be one of The University of Iowa’s greatest strengths. As the special emphasis self-study makes clear, we have much work to do. If we can cultivate and reward “positive restlessness” throughout the University community, we can tackle that work together in all the ways we serve our students and the larger community.
Section III: Conclusion/Request for Reaccreditation

A distinctive, future-oriented, and learning-focused organization, The University of Iowa builds upon a record of discovery, service, and, especially, preparing students for lives of inquiry, engagement, and understanding.
SECTION III: REQUEST FOR CONTINUED ACCREDITATION

Section I of this report demonstrates our compliance, as an institution, with the HLC criteria for accreditation. Because we chose to conduct a special emphasis self-study, Section I is necessarily concise, drawing heavily on existing documents. We believe it provides appropriate evidence to demonstrate that we meet the criteria, and in fact that we value—in our planning and in our actions—the four cross-cutting themes the HLC has defined as a way of integrating the criteria: we are a distinctive, future-oriented, connected, and learning-focused organization.

Section II is our special emphasis self-study on undergraduate education, which provides additional evidence that that we meet the criteria for accreditation. It also identifies areas in which we believe we must improve if we hope to take the next steps toward improving the undergraduate experience at The University of Iowa.

Based on the evidence provided in this self-study report and in other materials available to the Higher Learning Commission and the members of the consultant-evaluator team, The University of Iowa formally requests continued accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.


