CRITERION IV
PLANNING
CRITERION IV:
The institution can continue to accomplish its purpose and strengthen its educational effectiveness

This section of the self-study addresses ways in which the University of Northern Iowa can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness. First, a summary is provided of the current resource base - financial, physical, and human - that positions the institution for the future. A description is provided of the decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated challenges to the institution. We describe here UNI’s structured and continuous assessment processes, which provide meaningful and useful information for a variety of institutional constituencies. This section presents the plans - as well as ongoing, effective planning processes - necessary to the institution’s continuance. Finally, this section identifies resources that support plans for strengthening both the University and its programs.

Current and Anticipated Resource Base

Financial Resources

For fiscal year 1999, the University had total revenues of approximately $182 million. The primary sources of funds were tuition and fees of $37.4 million, State of Iowa appropriations of $89 million, and a total of $55.7 million from other sources, including transfers from the UNI Foundation. Total expenditures and transfers were $184.5 million. The difference between total revenue and expenditures was funded from prior year fund balances.


The UNI Foundation - Building Success With Alumni and Friends

The mission of the UNI Foundation is to sustain and promote the University of Northern Iowa to be the nation’s finest comprehensive university, known for high quality learning environments and a genuine sense of community. The UNI Foundation accomplishes its mission by building strong, meaningful relationships - partnerships - with alumni and friends who are an ever-growing source of support to the University through the Foundation.

The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of 30 members, including notable UNI graduates and friends throughout the country.

Although the UNI Foundation has been in operation since 1959, until the late 1980s the primary focus of its activity was in the Cedar Valley area, a radius of approximately 75 miles from Cedar Falls. At that time, the Foundation decided to extend its reach. Since the last NCA
Self-Study, the UNI Foundation has completed two successful capital campaigns, and a third campaign is now in the early implementation stages. Each of these campaigns substantially “raised the bar” of expectations and successes in reaching alumni and friends, sharing with them the value UNI provides, and enlisting their support in helping the University achieve its goals.

The “Leading, Building, Sharing” campaign, conducted from 1990 through 1995, was the first major campaign to reach outside the Cedar Valley. The campaign target was $25 million. At the conclusion of the campaign, alumni and friends had responded with total campaign gifts of more than $33 million. In addition to significantly increasing the endowment of the Foundation, the “Leading, Building, Sharing” campaign generated support for major campus facilities, including the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center and the outdoor intercollegiate track.

Recognizing the critical need for scholarships to attract and retain students, the second campaign, a two-year effort to raise $10 million focused on student scholarships, was launched in 1997. This campaign, which raised nearly $15 million, was the introductory phase of the current capital campaign, “Students First.” Putting “Students First” at UNI means addressing the challenges that students face in gaining access to and completing an outstanding education. The largest capital campaign in the University’s history, “Students First” aims to raise $75 million to meet student needs with scholarships, program support, and facilities.

The priorities for this campaign were developed with the advice of academic and non-academic department heads, deans and the President’s Cabinet. Trustees of the UNI Foundation advised the University on the feasibility of raising funds for these priorities and on the campaign’s overall dollar goal:

- **Scholarship Endowments** $36 million
  ($14 million raised in first phase)
- **Program Support Endowments** $16 million
  (professorships, visiting artists, chairs, academic program support)
- **Facilities** $23 million
  - Sports arena $15 million
  - Early childhood center $2 million
  - Russell Hall (music) renovation $1.5 million
  - McCollum Science Hall enhancement $1.5 million
  - Human Performance Center $1.5 million
  - Lang Hall (classrooms) equipment $1 million
The campaign priorities reflect the University's strategic plan, which sets goals for increased student financial assistance, enhanced faculty scholarship, and improved facilities. The campaign's facilities projects will contribute to academic programs that the University has identified as outstanding targets for growth, including teacher education, biology and music. The sports arena, which will accommodate men's and women's basketball, volleyball and wrestling, will help the University foster a broader sense of community among students, faculty, and staff and better serve its home community, region and state.

Following are a few examples of partnerships with alumni and friends that illustrate how the UNI Foundation is helping UNI reach its goals of providing high-quality learning environments and a genuine sense of community:

• A recent gift of $1 million from the R. J. McElroy Trust, along with a $1-million commitment from a UNI alumna, makes possible an early childhood education center at the Regents Center for Early Developmental Education in Waterloo.

• A gift from the estate of Everett Alderman in the amount of $3.5 million has significantly increased scholarships in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

• Gifts from Allen Memorial Hospital and Cedar Valley Medical Specialists were designated for a graduate assistantship in the UNI athletic training program. This position helps the UNI athletics program by providing a much-needed additional certified trainer to work with the Panthers' 450 student-athletes. It also gives outstanding real-life experience to a graduate student interested in pursuing a career in sports medicine.

• A public/private partnership involving funds from the State of Iowa and hundreds of private donors allowed for the April 2000 opening of the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center. A $23-million, three-hall complex, this state-of-the-art facility is the first major performing arts center to open in Iowa in more than 20 years. Equipped for the teaching and performance of theater, dance, jazz, and classical music, the 1,620-seat main hall will host more than 100 performances annually, including UNI ensembles, the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra, and international performers.

• A gift of $1 million from the Roy J. Carver Trust will fund biology and chemistry equipment for the upcoming expansion and improvement of McCollum Science Hall.

• The University recently received the largest gift in its history—$4 million—from Clark and Mary McLeod to support scholarships and construction of a new sports arena.

The UNI Foundation has taken innovative steps in both staffing and the use of technology to facilitate its efforts. In the past two years, the Foundation has built a staff designed to maximize the effectiveness of fund raising for the colleges in the context of overall fund raising for UNI. A director of major gifts is assigned to each college and works exclusively with the college to make contacts, nurture relationships, and involve college faculty and staff when appropriate. The Foundation also established a web site in cooperation with Firstar Bank to provide lawyers, accountants, and financial advisors with a free,
comprehensive resource center they can use to assist their clients with planning needs. The site address is www.uni.edu/infosys/general.html.

As the University moves toward its strategic goals, the UNI Foundation will continue to play a vital role in creating relationships with alumni and friends that meet the needs of our students for enriched educational experiences, scholarships, and facilities.

Physical Resources

The University of Northern Iowa embodies the commitment of the people of Iowa to education. The University has grown from its original campus site of 40 acres and one building to more than 40 principal buildings on a campus of 915 acres. As of June 30, 1999, the book value of the University’s fixed assets was approximately $303 million. In addition to classroom and research buildings, several of the relatively long-standing major buildings on campus include Rod Library, with shelving capacity of more than one million volumes; Maucker Union, which serves as the informal center of campus life; the Commons, which houses the University’s development division; and the UNI-Dome, the University’s sports and general-purpose stadium.

A number of buildings on the University’s campus have been recently completed or are currently under construction:

• A Wellness/Recreation Center opened in 1998 at a cost of $18.6 million, financed by Academic Building Revenue Bonds and student fees;
• The Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center was dedicated April 7, 2000. The total cost of the facility was approximately $23 million, financed from State appropriations and the UNI Foundation;
• Lang Hall is currently being renovated at a cost of $13.5 million. This project is scheduled for completion in 2001 and financed by State appropriations;
• Seerley Hall was renovated and its murals restored in 1993 at a cost of $4.7 million;
• The energy-efficient Center for Energy and Environmental Education, completed in 1994, was funded through a $4-million grant from the United States Department of Energy; and
• A 63,000-square-foot fourth floor was constructed atop Rod Library in 1993-1995 at a cost of $7 million.

The University currently has ten residence halls, which have a design capacity of 4,925 students. The newest residence hall, housing 382 students in apartment- and suite-style accommodations, was completed in 1994. One dining center closed in Spring 2000, and another is undergoing major remodeling; when it is completed, there will be three dining centers on campus. A total of 365 one- and two-bedroom apartments are available for married students, families, and graduate students.
A $5.2-million telecommunications project in progress includes a telephone switch system and a video system in all classrooms, financed with cash and through the Board of Regents’ Master Lease Agreement.

For a complete listing of building construction and renovation from 1990 through 2001, see Appendix F.

**Human Resources**

The University of Northern Iowa recognizes that its primary strength is in its human resources – its students, faculty, staff, and administrators. We are a dynamic community of approximately 15,000 persons. The University therefore monitors carefully these resources.

Enrollment predictions suggest that student enrollment will rise slightly toward a student population of about 14,000. See Criterion II, page 50, for enrollment projections to year 2010.

The University in the past has been able to replace retiring faculty. UNI’s enrollment has grown nearly eight percent in the last five years, however, and the most recent salary bill allocation was inadequate to fund fully the institution’s salary policy and increased benefits costs. Moreover, UNI’s 2001-2006 Strategic Plan calls for 75 percent of all classes to be taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty. In order to maintain a faculty appropriate for its academic programs without increasing class size, the University has undertaken a major initiative to seek from Iowa’s 2001 legislature the faculty resources it needs: full funding of salary and benefits costs and the addition of 65 critical tenure-track faculty positions.

The institution is reasonably well positioned to maintain a staff (Merit staff, Confidential and Supervisory Merit staff, and Professional and Scientific personnel) with excellent credentials and accomplishments. As with faculty resources, the University’s strategic initiatives will determine to what extent new staff resources will be needed. For instance, there is currently a desire to improve the first-year experience of our students. Some of the programs under consideration to accomplish this goal – first-year seminars, learning communities, an expanded learning assistance center, supplemental instruction – would require a large investment of staff resources. We know from UNI’s experience with implementing the Presidential Scholars program that some programs, such as cluster courses and a University-wide honors program, would require more faculty resources, as well.

In summary, then, the University can anticipate a robust student enrollment but will need to enlarge its faculty and staff to keep pace. Recent increases in enrollments, as well as anticipated strategic initiatives, will require growth in human resources to meet future needs.
Effective Decision-Making Processes

The University of Northern Iowa's emphasis on effective decision-making is articulated in both the 1996-2001 Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plan for the years 2001-2006. Specifically, our current plan spells out support for the institution's decision-making goals under Goal 3D, Ensure that useful information is easily accessible, accurate and widely shared. Additionally, the University's Strategic Plan for the years 2001-2006 supports decision making under Goal 5, Increase faculty, staff, and student participation in university governance activities. With these objectives in mind, the staff, faculty, and students of the University of Northern Iowa have incorporated and benefited from effective decision-making in numerous ways:

- In recent years, the Office of Information Management and Analysis has enhanced its accumulation, summarization and coordination of data in a number of reports intended to aid in decision-making processes at many levels. Some examples of these reports include the Class Size Report, the Instruction Cost Report, the Enhanced Grade Analysis Report and the Graduate Variance Analysis Report. The Class Size report, for example, allows the Provost, deans, and department heads to monitor the effects of enrollment growth on class size and to adjust faculty resources accordingly.

- Using information technology resources, the University has built and continuously maintains and enhances a data warehouse to provide decision support at various administrative levels. This information system is available to administrators online through Access UNI and includes such databases as University budget detail by account and name, general ledger detail by account (updated nightly), enrollment reports by semester, and a voucher register.

- According to the University's decentralized budget policy, responsibility for managing departmental resources is primarily in the hands of the department head and/or college dean. Within budget policy, departments have the flexibility to reallocate savings from one budget line to another, thereby allowing more efficient and flexible decision-making related to resources at the department or college level. The data warehouse available through Access UNI provides essential data to support this decentralized decision-making.

- In an effort to further enhance the maintenance and dissemination of value-added information for effective decision-making, the University has undertaken a multi-year process of implementing a new administrative system using Oracle Applications. Key applications included in this project, titled the MEMFIS Project (Modern Executive Management Financial Information System), include general ledger, accounts payable, purchasing, payroll, projects, grants and contracts, and human resources. Data stored and manipulated in MEMFIS will be a key element of this enhanced data warehouse, enhancing information available to support decision-makers throughout the University.
Individual faculty participation in decision-making processes begins at the departmental level, where processes such as curriculum development and promotion and tenure decisions originate. Faculty also contribute to budgetary decisions through shared governance in their department. Additionally, the Faculty Senate, an elected body of faculty representatives, participates in budget development and other decision-making processes, such as curriculum development and educational policy review. The Senate recently exercised leadership for the periodic review of presidential performance.

Planning for effective decision-making also extends to students and their academic planning. Through Access UNI, students and their advisors have continuous access to various tools for academic planning, the most important of which is the Program of Study (POS). The POS provides students with their degree audits online, supplying also major and minor requirements, information about the general education program, and other academic planning data. Students can also create hypothetical degree audits to think through a proposed program of study for any major and calculate hypothetical GPAs based on anticipated grades earned.

Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG), the student governance organization on campus, is actively involved in decision making and governance at UNI. Student leaders meet regularly with University administrators and participate in various budget and other decision-making processes. NISG recently utilized Access UNI’s online database to conduct one of the first successful online student government elections in the country.

**Continuous Assessment Processes**

At the highest administrative level, the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, has established a series of governance reports to help carry out its assessment, oversight, and fiduciary responsibilities. (See “Board of Regents Calendar of Governance Reports,” Appendix I.) These reports include such items as annual institutional reports on academic program review and student outcomes assessment, faculty productivity, distance education, and faculty tenure. The Annual Report on Performance Indicators assesses progress toward various institutional goals, ten of which are common data sets for all three Regent institutions in Iowa. (See Annual Report on Performance Indicators, December, 2000.) The University of Northern Iowa’s performance is also reflected in reports to external agencies, such as IPEDS and national surveys.

As already discussed in Criterion III, educational effectiveness is assessed through internal processes established by the President, Provost, and other administrative officials. In addition, faculty are deeply involved in UNI’s processes of curriculum review, academic program review, outcomes assessment, and faculty evaluation. The faculty’s rights and responsibilities in these areas are enumerated in the Constitution of the Faculty of the University of Northern Iowa, as approved by the Board of Regents in 1986, specifically in Article IV: Jurisdiction, Points 2 and 3, and in the Master Agreement Between the Board of Regents and the UNI-United Faculty.
Assessment and accountability at the University of Northern Iowa are achieved by a complementary set of external and internal processes. The rigor of these processes is ensured by the professional integrity of the University’s administration and faculty, as well as by routine monitoring carried out by the Board of Regents.

Continuous Planning Processes

The University of Northern Iowa holds as one of its core values “excellence in all its endeavors” and recognizes that achieving excellence requires ongoing effort. The University seeks to achieve excellence through a process that starts with strategic planning and is augmented by ongoing assessment and feedback to improve future efforts. President Koob re-emphasized this approach of University involvement, collaboration, and cooperation when he came to UNI five years ago, reaching toward continuous improvement on a day-by-day basis.

The following examples illustrate how the University engages in continuous planning:


• The Board of Regents mandates a five-year strategic planning process for all Regents institutions. UNI developed a new five-year plan with input from internal and external constituencies. The new five-year plan, which builds on the past five-year plan, was approved by the Board of Regents in November 2000. Progress toward strategic accomplishments is reported to the Board annually.

• The University’s five-year strategic plan provides overall direction to the institution, and each college, division, and major unit of the University fashions its own strategy for implementing the plan.

• The University Cabinet, headed by the President and involving division vice presidents, meets weekly to address issues important to the entire institution, including advancement of strategic initiatives.

• The Academic Affairs Council, headed by the Provost and involving all the deans and assistant or associate vice presidents, meets weekly to address issues with implications for all academic units, including advancement of strategic initiatives.

• The department heads of each college meet with their deans at least twice a month to address issues relevant to departments in that college, including advancement of strategic initiatives.

• The Facilities Planning Advisory Committee (FPAC), composed of representatives of all University constituencies, is charged with assessing and making recommendations toward the effective and efficient use of all University facilities. The group meets on a monthly basis to identify and assess facilities needs. Recommendations are forwarded to the Cabinet for approval.
The Planning and Policy Committee for Information Technology (PPCIT) (see http://www.uni.edu/its/ad/committe/ppcit/) is charged with addressing the rapidly expanding and changing needs of the University related to information technology. The PPCIT, including representatives of all on-campus University constituencies, generally meets monthly during the academic year to identify and address issues and draft policy. Committee recommendations are forwarded directly to the Cabinet for review.

• The Executive Committee of Educational and Student Services meets weekly to address the changing needs of students, coordinate departmental activities, and discuss new initiatives in assessment and technology. Efforts to enhance collaboration with other divisions, particularly Academic Affairs, are also discussed.

• A wide range of other committees serve the needs of the University and contribute to its continuous improvement.

Resources for Strengthening UNI and its Programs

The University recognizes its ongoing responsibility for finding the resources necessary to strengthen its programs. UNI therefore maintains a close relationship with its major sponsors to ensure continuing financial support.

The State of Iowa has a proven track record of support for higher education. The State has chosen to create and support only three public universities, each with its own mission. UNI is the state’s only public comprehensive university and therefore is able to work cooperatively with the other two state institutions.

Responsibility for governmental relations at UNI resides with the Executive Assistant to the President. A full-time Associate Director of Governmental Relations works in Des Moines and is at the Capitol on a daily basis during the legislative session. The lobbyists for the three state universities work jointly to achieve the legislative program approved by the Board of Regents. In addition, each Regent university has developed an advocacy network of alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, and students.

Cognizant of the need for broader awareness and support beyond the State of Iowa, the University develops a federal appropriations agenda each year and shares it with the Iowa Congressional delegation.

The University’s resources are conscientiously applied to its educational and other programs. Given the University’s linkage of the annual budget cycle to the Strategic Planning process, and the annual reporting to the Board of Regents of its resource allocation and reallocation in accordance with Board-approved strategic plans (see Appendix C), we believe our resources are organized and allocated to support the Strategic Plan, which is intended to strengthen our institution and its programs.