INTRODUCTION

Washburn University is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarly work, quality academic and professional programs, and high levels of faculty-student interaction. The University depends on a wide array of “assets” to accomplish these goals, including: faculty, administrators and staff; physical facilities and support services; students; positive public image; community support; and alumni and Endowment support, etc. Putting University assets to work educating students requires adequate revenue to support the academic mission, physical plant, enrollment management, student services, and administrative functions. Good stewardship of University assets requires that we control expenses to assure that assets are utilized efficiently and effectively. The Asset Subcommittee looked primarily at sources and uses of revenue and ways to increase revenue and reduce expenses. Because revenue is affected significantly by enrollment, the subcommittee also examined enrollment and factors that affect enrollment.

INITIATIVES

University Operations
Be proactive in assuring all assets are used efficiently and effectively to support the University’s core mission of educating students and in enabling it to adapt to changes in the educational and economic environments.

1. Examine opportunities to consolidate or modify administrative functions
2. Evaluate savings from outsourcing non-academic functions and services
3. Establish performance measures to assess academic programs and incorporate them into the program review process
4. Evaluate low-enrollment course sections, degree programs and academic departments to assure academic resources and campus facilities are utilized effectively while preserving academic quality and responding to new opportunities.
5. Evaluate faculty teaching loads along with enrollment data to realize efficiencies in academic resource allocation.
6. Evaluate benefits and costs associated with all academic support and student services departments
7. Enhance intra-University communication to strengthen understanding and cooperation at all levels

Budget and Financial Reporting
Improve transparency in the University budget process.

1. Evaluate the budget process to improve transparency and general understanding of University finances
2. Utilize benchmarks where valid comparisons are available in presenting financial data.
3. Educate campus departments about University finances and the need for shared responsibility in maximizing revenue and minimizing expenses.

Revenue Sources
Pursue new sources of revenue and strategies to increase existing revenue sources. Use tuition as a tool to build enrollment and increase revenue.
1. Evaluate potential for future increases in public funding.
2. Evaluate the effect of setting the full-time tuition at a flat rate.
3. Evaluate the effect of equalizing resident and non-resident tuition rates.
4. Evaluate whether a small, well-publicized decrease in tuition rates could drive a significant increase in enrollment to more than offset the tuition decrease.
5. Consider implementing fees for campus privileges or services.
6. Consider offering additional general education courses for high school Seniors at reduced rates as an inducement to interest them in attending Washburn after graduation.

Enrollment
Increase enrollment to between 8,000 to 9,000 students in the next 10 years to fully utilize excess capacity in physical facilities and faculty resources.

Marketing, Admissions, and Recruitment
Develop a formal marketing program that promotes the distinction and value of a Washburn education. Improve the admissions process so it is seamless and user friendly. Identify and target appropriate recruitment markets.
1. Develop a formal marketing strategy that capitalizes on Washburn’s strengths: small class size; accomplished, caring faculty holding terminal degrees in their field; safe urban location; attractive campus; employment and internship opportunities; active student life, etc.
2. Evaluate benefits of creating the position of Marketing Director dedicated to promoting Washburn to a variety of markets, including: prospective students; prospective employers; community colleges; and prospective faculty and staff.
3. Promote graduate programs and professional schools more prominently in marketing message.
4. Involve faculty more directly in student recruitment.
5. Create a nationwide network of alumni who teach in high schools and community colleges and develop a strategy for regular communication and distribution of recruitment materials.
6. Develop a specific strategy for communicating with Shawnee County high school seniors and guidance counselors.
7. Increase focus on Kansas City area, and urban markets in surrounding states.
8. Target high-growth states that have higher resident tuition rates and states unable to satisfy demand for University admissions.
9. Evaluate transfer policies and procedures to remove barriers for students.
wanting to transfer from another post-secondary educational institution.

**Retention**
Improve the first-time freshmen retention rate to stabilize enrollment and improve utilization of recruitment resources. Retention is an important factor affecting tuition revenue.
1. Improve retention rate for first-time freshmen by 10 to 15% over the next 10 years
2. Retain open enrollment policy
3. Establish a for-credit college enrichment course for selected first-time students.
4. Survey freshmen students who maintain a healthy grade point average, but do not reenroll.

**Educational Programs**
Ensure educational programs add value to students’ educational experience without creating a disincentive to attend Washburn. Assure that educational programs offer flexible options to accommodate non-traditional and working students.
1. Evaluate all educational programming and degree requirements to determine whether some requirements create disincentives for students to enroll at Washburn without adding significant educational value.
2. Consider offering accelerated or fast-track degree programs, condensed winter and summer session classes, out-of-sequence courses, etc., that would appeal to students wanting to accelerate their college experience while maintaining academic rigor.
3. Evaluate and utilize existing and emerging technologies to provide educational programming.
4. Expand educational opportunities afforded by our partnership with Washburn Tech. Consider Washburn Tech as a transition point for conditionally admitted students.

**Financial Aid**
Make financial aid information available to prospective students and their parents as early as possible during the admissions process.
1. Post scholarship information online.
2. Be more proactive in addressing financial aid earlier in the admissions process.
3. Be more proactive in assisting students with scholarships from Washburn and other non-University sources.

**Partnerships**
Pursue partnerships with area businesses, military entities, and others in order to: attract new students; pursue innovative course and degree options; and increase employment opportunities for graduates.
1. Initiate efforts to attract military personnel and their families now eligible for the new GI bill.
2. Begin dialog with entities involved with the new Bio-security Research Institute to ensure WU is positioned to train students to work in and with the Center and related businesses
3. Consider expanding intra-University partnerships.
4. Explore ways to strengthen relationships with WIT.
5. Explore opportunities to offer classes on-site for local businesses.
Asset Development and Stewardship White Paper
Appendix A

Appendix A is a summary of the reasoning or justification for recommendations contained in the Asset Development and Stewardship Subcommittee White Paper.

University Operations
For the foreseeable future, increases in local sales tax revenue and state funding are highly unlikely. Increases in tuition are publically and politically unpopular and can have a direct effect on enrollment. In order to fund new programs, initiatives, and upgrades in facilities and support services, the University must focus on improving efficiency, productivity, and accountability.

1. As changes in priorities and operations evolve over time, the University should periodically review administrative functions and organization to identify opportunities to consolidate or eliminate administrative expenses.

2. Universities often outsource non-academic functions when there is long-term savings to be realized. Washburn should evaluate the potential savings from outsourcing non-academic functions, such as, information services, building and grounds maintenance, security, bookstore, etc.

3. The University should establish performance measures relating to student enrollment and graduation rates that enable academic departments and the University administration to identify low enrollment courses or programs that can be consolidated or eliminated. We aren’t prescribing specific measures, but recommending such measures be established and incorporated into the program review process.

4. Over time enrollment trends change and the University must identify ways to strengthen underperforming academic programs or eliminate them.

5. Faculty work loads can have an effect on student satisfaction and retention rates. Washburn uses small class-size as a marketing tool and it has always been a hallmark of a Washburn education. Faculty workloads are currently monitored by each department. We are not recommending increasing the current average faculty workload, but recommend workloads be monitored along with enrollment data to realize efficiencies in academic resource allocation.

6. Along with administrative functions and academic departments, we recommend all academic support and student services departments be reviewed periodically to achieve efficiencies in operation.

7. Keeping communication flowing is a continuous job requiring proactive efforts at all levels of the University. Improving communication between and among University constituencies should be a priority for administration, faculty, and staff.
Budget and Financial Reporting
In order for all campus partners to accept responsibility for controlling costs and looking for ways to increase revenue, the budget process needs to be understandable. The University should utilize valid comparison data to emphasize efficiencies and draw attention to areas that need improvement.

1. It may help campus constituencies be more budget conscious if there is better understanding of the budget process and factors affecting revenues and expenses. Such information should be presented in a clear and concise format.
2. Valid benchmarks should be used to compare Washburn to other similar postsecondary educational institutions, using resources such as, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, College Portrait, the Kansas Board of Regents institutional comparisons, etc.
3. Devise a system for educating campus departments about University finances in order to encourage individual responsibility for factors that affect revenue and expenses.

Revenue Sources
General Fund revenue at Washburn comes from three sources: 18% from state aid; 27% from local sales tax; and 55% from tuition and fees. The tuition portion has increased by 13% since 1999 to offset decreases in both state aid and local sales tax revenue. State aid is unlikely to increase in the next decade. The public agenda for higher education is currently under discussion. Some states are talking about changing enrollment or input driven funding formulas to reward outcomes or graduation rates. Washburn should not rely on increases in state aid as a source of funds. Local sales tax revenue is directly related to the strength of the local and surrounding economies. Topeka has traditionally been a shopping destination for surrounding communities. Economic development in Wyandotte and Riley counties could change the dynamics of sales tax revenue distribution. Tuition is the only revenue source controlled totally by the University. Changes in tuition have a direct effect on enrollment and thus on revenue. Washburn should look at ways to use tuition as a means to increase enrollment.

1. The University should monitor the local and state political environments to assess opportunities and develop strategies for requesting increases in public funding.
2. Emporia State and Pittsburg State charge a flat-rate tuition for full-time students. There are different rates for resident and non-resident students with non-resident exceptions for students from designated locations. Both set the cutoff for full-time status at 10 credit hours. Washburn should consider adopting a flat-rate tuition for full-time students. The credit hour cutoff and tuition rates should be based on the average number of credit hours currently taken by full-time students. A flat-rate tuition for full-time students would encourage students to enroll in additional credit hours at Washburn rather than taking courses at a community college to save money. Another possibility is to offer a tuition compact for incoming freshmen that locks in a fixed-rate tuition for 4 years similar to what is offered at the University of Kansas.
3. Washburn should evaluate the effect of equalizing or reducing non-resident tuition. Existing University policies allow a non-resident student to apply for resident status
and most Regents schools offer reduced tuition rates to students from border-states. According to University Research, in the fall of 2009, Washburn has only about 250 students paying non-resident tuition. Having a lower or no non-resident tuition could be an effective marketing tool for Washburn with the potential to significantly increase enrollment. Consideration should be given to offering this benefit to students having better ACT/SAT scores or higher grade point averages. Some students attracted to Washburn would stay in Topeka or Kansas, so such a policy could be packaged as a tool for economic development.

- Washburn could consider creating new scholarships for Kansas students based on increments of increased revenue from non-resident students.

4. Tuition rates are a competitive factor for all regional public universities, especially in the current economy. Washburn could publicize a small tuition decrease in response to economic conditions, which could conceivably generate an increase in credit hour enrollments. An increase in enrollment could more than offset the loss of tuition revenue from the rate reduction.

5. The Kansas Regents schools have an elaborate fee structures that students pay in addition to tuition. Fees are often assessed for parking, library usage, technology, labs, activities, health services, assessment, or lumped into one “campus privilege fee.” Washburn has a tradition of charging one tuition rate that covers all services and claims this as a marketing tool. The University should consider adopting a fee structure to support student services. If the decision is made not to adopt a fee structure, then the absence of fees should be more prominently used in the marketing message.

6. High school seniors often take courses for college credit before graduation. Washburn has a program for Early College Enrollment (WECEP) that allows high school seniors to take up to 12 hours at a reduced rate (currently $100/credit hour). That rate is still above rates charged by local community colleges. (Allen Co. resident rate is $73.00/credit hr. and Highland is $83.00/credit hr.) More seniors might be encouraged to take courses from Washburn if our tuition rate for WECEP was closer to community college rates.

**Enrollment**

It is hard to evaluate the amount of excess capacity existing on campus with regard to facility and faculty resources. The Washburn Regents have set an enrollment goal of 8,000 to 9,000. The subcommittee agrees this is a reasonable goal for the next 10 years.

**Marketing, Admissions, and Recruitment**

Everyone associated with Washburn can enumerate a long list of Washburn’s strengths. The University hasn’t done an effective job of taking that message to prospective students. The University needs to develop a marketing message that sells what Washburn does best and a
plan to take that message to targeted markets. A strong marketing plan needs to be reinforced with a seamless and user-friendly admissions process.

1. Washburn needs to develop a marketing message that communicates the value of a Washburn education to prospective students in targeted markets.
2. Washburn needs to broaden the concept of Marketing to include marketing, not only to prospective students, but also to prospective employers, community colleges, and prospective faculty members. The University should explore creating the position of Marketing Director dedicated to ensuring Washburn’s message is distinct and clearly broadcast to all markets.
3. Marketing material and electronic ads should include references to Washburn’s graduate and professional schools. We heard testimony people outside Topeka don’t know the University has a Law School or other highly regarded graduate programs.
4. Washburn has highly qualified and caring faculty who need to be involved directly in student recruitment. Individualized attention from a member of the faculty demonstrates the benefit of a smaller campus and smaller class sizes.
5. Washburn alumni teach in high schools and community colleges all over the country. The Admissions office should designate one person to communicate regularly with alumni high school teachers and counselors and community college faculty to keep them current on what’s happening at Washburn and encourage them to forward contact information for prospective students.
6. Approximately 45% of first-time, full-time freshmen come from Shawnee County. The subcommittee heard anecdotal recounts of Shawnee County seniors who receive no recruitment material from Washburn. Washburn needs a specific strategy for communicating with Shawnee County high school seniors and guidance counselors.
7. Washburn is an excellent choice for Kansas City area students and students from surrounding states who want a traditional college experience, at a smaller school, close to home, and in a safe urban area.
8. Washburn should target states like Missouri and Texas where resident tuition is close to, or more than, non-resident tuition at WU. States like California and Florida are graduating more students than their state systems can absorb. Students from those states might be attracted to Washburn for reasons enumerated above.
9. Comments were made at several open forums about Washburn not being transfer-friendly. Due to the current economic conditions, it is likely more students will begin their college experience at a community college and then transfer to a 4-year institution. In order to be competitive in attracting these students, Washburn needs to be seen as transfer-friendly. That could require a review of course requirements that frequently create problems for transfer students.

Retention
Washburn has done a good job of retaining students after their freshman year, but retention rates for first-time, full-time freshmen lagged below all Regents institutions for students beginning a program in 2006 (IPEDS Enrollment Survey and College Navigator). Improving retention of first-time freshmen has a rippling effect on future enrollment figures and allows the Admissions Office to make better use of limited recruitment resources.
1. In 2007, the retention rate for full-time, first-time freshmen was 62.6% (Washburn University Retention Analysis Fall 2007 to Fall 2008). The subcommittee requested retention data for Kansas Regents schools from Institutional Research. Washburn’s overall retention rate for full-time, bachelor’s degree-seeking students who began a program in 2006 was lower than all Regents Universities. Retention of all students should be a priority, but improving retention for first-time, full-time freshmen will stabilize enrollment and allow for better utilization of recruitment resources.

2. Washburn should retain its open enrollment policy, because of its reliance on public money to fund its operations. In 2007-2008, 18% of general fund revenue came from state aid and 27% came from local sales tax.

3. The 2007 to 2008 Retention Analysis Report found conditional students were being retained at a lower rate than priority students. In the fall of 2007, less then 1/3 of first-time freshmen conditional admits (155 students) were retained. Washburn should consider a for-credit college enrichment class for selected first-time students.
   - Course could be offered in the summer preceding admittance. Allow students to live on campus while taking the course to help them acclimate to college life.

4. Identify freshmen students who leave Washburn with a healthy grade point average and devise a way to ask their reason for leaving and whether they are enrolling in another institution.

**Educational Programs**

Adding new programs, courses, and credit requirements is a natural way for universities to respond to competition for student enrollments. Eliminating less-than-vital or underperforming programs, courses, credit requirements, etc., is more difficult and can be painful. Washburn must look at projected changes in student demographics for the next decade and determine if current curriculum requirements are necessary and whether program offerings satisfy what “students” want from their educational experience.

1. The committee heard anecdotal reports that requirements for courses such as, EN 300, PE 198, foreign language requirements, and the WTE have an adverse effect on student enrollment at Washburn. Washburn should compare such requirements to requirements at other top-level schools in the region and determine whether these requirements put Washburn at a competitive disadvantage.

2. The cost of education for many students includes income lost while completing their degree requirements. The University of Phoenix and other for-profit institutions are attracting students to accelerated degree and online programs. While degrees from such programs are generally not regarded as equivalent to those offered by traditional 4-year programs, they siphon off tuition revenue and potential students. Washburn should evaluate the demand for these programs and determine if there are viable opportunities to compete for these students. The University should also consider offering condensed winter and summer session classes, out-of-sequence classes, etc., for students wanting to complete their degrees more quickly while maintaining academic rigor.
3. Online courses are popular with students for a variety of reasons. They are sometimes cheaper, more flexible, can be accessed at any time from any location, and do not require transportation to a campus. Online classes are generally not cheaper for universities to offer and can require more faculty time than the traditional classroom format. Students frequently opt to take classes at Washburn and at a community college concurrently to save money. Washburn should utilize current and emerging technology in delivering educational programming for associates, bachelors, masters, and select professional degrees in the future.

4. WIT is an exciting new partnership for Washburn. WIT is currently going through the strategic planning process. Washburn should consider adding college enrichment and some general education courses at WIT. Consider using WIT as a transition point for conditional/probationary students.

Financial Aid
The average student at Washburn graduates owing $17,000 to $18,000 in student loans. Law students graduate owing an additional $66,000 in loans. Those figures are below national averages. Financial aid and scholarship aid will continue to be important factors in student recruitment and retention. Washburn has an attractive array of scholarship opportunities for freshmen and upper level students. The University can do a better job of publicizing scholarship opportunities and assisting students and parents in sorting through the maze of financial aid and scholarship information.

1. Scholarships can be attractive incentives for students when they are selecting a university. Washburn has an impressive array of scholarship opportunities for students at all levels. More Washburn-specific scholarship information should be accessible from the Washburn Web site.
2. Financial aid and scholarship opportunities should be addressed as early as possible in the admissions process.
3. Students and their parents are sometimes overwhelmed with the paperwork related to college admittance and financial aid. The Financial Aid and Scholarship offices should be proactive in making sure students are aware of all scholarship and financial options.

Partnerships
Cultivating partnerships with local and regional businesses, the military, and pursuing other prospects is staff intensive and ongoing; however, such efforts pay dividends over time. Washburn administration and university staff must be proactive in pursuing creative partnerships that can satisfy the needs of students and local businesses.

1. Education benefits authorized under the Post-9/11 GI bill apply to service members who have at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after 9/11/01. Those eligible can transfer unused benefits to their spouses or dependent children. Washburn should make a concerted effort to attract individuals eligible for these new benefits through partnerships with area military entities. Schools that accept students whose tuition and fees are paid by this program have significant reporting responsibilities under the
program. Washburn should consider adding an additional position to handle related paperwork if a significant number of eligible students enroll at Washburn.

2. It is likely a new Bio-security Research Center will be located in Manhattan. Although funding for construction of this facility is still tentative, Washburn should initiate conversations with federal and state departments involved in development of the Center to ensure Washburn is positioned to train students to work at the Center and in related businesses.

3. For-profit Universities are attracting students with accelerated graduate and undergraduate degree programs. Washburn should evaluate the benefits of intra-University partnerships in offering combined degree programs, such as, MBA/JD, MBA/MSN and MBA/MSED.

4. The slow economic climate may create increased interest in programs offered at WIT. The University should explore ways to make general education and other basic skills classes attractive and more easily accessible to WIT students.

5. Washburn has many varied partnerships with local businesses. The University should determine what local businesses have tuition reimbursement programs and work with those businesses to assess the market for on-site course offerings or degree programs.