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PURPOSES OF THE REPORT

This self-study process has two major goals. One is to initiate the request for reaccreditation by demonstrating that Northern Illinois University (NIU) meets the criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). The second goal is for the institution to undertake a thorough and honest assessment of its components to determine strengths and concerns to guide the university as it plans for its continued growth and development over the next decade. This self-study is designed to facilitate both of these goals.

THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The process of self-study began in January 2002, with President John G. Peters' appointment of Dr. Jan Rintala, a Professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, as coordinator of the institutional self-study and chair of the HLC Steering Committee. Prior to the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Higher Learning Commission, the president appointed 14 members of the faculty to the steering committee, who also served as subcommittee chairs or co-chairs. Additionally, the steering committee included four ex officio members: Dr. Virginia Cassidy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Development, who worked closely with Dr. Rintala in coordinating the self-study processes; Mr. Craig Barnard, Coordinator of Assessment Services; Dr. J. Daniel House, Director of Institutional Research; and Ms. Donna Askins, Research Associate in the Office of the Provost. Ms. Phyllis Pleckham was designated to provide secretarial assistance to the steering committee. To prepare for the self-study process, Dr. Rintala and several members of the steering committee attended the Pre-Conference Workshop on the Self Study at the annual meeting. The steering committee met for an initial orientation during April, 2002. During the summer of 2002, Dr. Rintala and Dr. Cassidy met in Chicago with commission's staff liaison to the university at that time, Dr. Cecelia Lopéz, for additional discussions related to preparing the report. The majority of the work during the summer of 2002 was in planning and preparing materials for the steering committee. Part of that work included development of preliminary lists of NIU faculty and staff to serve as members of the subcommittees. This list was amended following input from members of the steering committee and a call for volunteers in August 2002.

The primary work of the steering committee and its subcommittees was initiated in August 2002, with the beginning of the academic year. The members of the steering committee met for a workshop on August 19 that served as an orientation to the self-study process, an opportunity to review
the planning notebook prepared for them over the summer, and a forum to receive instruction in the Blackboard® online course software, which was used to facilitate the committee’s work. In addition, Dr. Harold Kafer, Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts and an HLC consultant-evaluator, shared some insight into the process from his perspective. The remainder of the fall semester was primarily devoted to the 12 subcommittees’ gathering information and preparing the first drafts of their chapters. Approximately 180 NIU faculty and staff were asked to serve on subcommittees; approximately 140 agreed to do so. There were several additional members of the university community, primarily those in administrative roles, who served as resource persons for one or more of the subcommittees (See Appendix A for the listing of steering and subcommittee members and resource persons). The steering committee continued meeting on a regular basis to discuss progress, to clarify responsibilities when topics seemed to overlap, or to raise questions regarding information to be covered in the self-study. The meetings also provided a support system for the steering committee members. The majority of the initial chapter drafts were completed by the end of the fall 2002 semester.

During the spring 2003 semester, the steering committee met weekly through mid-March to review the initial drafts of all chapters. Following discussion of their chapters, the steering committee members made some modifications and suggestions or sought additional information to improve the chapters. The summer of 2003 was devoted to revising drafts of the self-study chapters for campus distribution.

In mid-September, 2003, the report was made available to the university community via an intranet site. While comment was welcomed from students, faculty, and staff in general, approximately 50 committees of the university were asked to review specific parts of the document. In addition to being asked to evaluate the self-study for accuracy and omissions, readers were also asked to reflect on three questions:

• What does NIU do well?
• In what areas does NIU need to improve?
• What are your recommendations for NIU in the future, given the parameters within which the university operates?

The intranet site included an email response form; responses were automatically sent to the chair of the steering committee. Following the comment period of approximately five weeks, responses were evaluated and final edits to the self-study were completed.
In addition to the email notification sent from the chair of the steering committee to university committees and other campus constituencies about the intranet site, two other means were used to solicit input on the draft of the self-study. First, the NIU Office of Public Affairs published a news release about the site and the call for comment on the self-study draft in Northern Today, an electronic weekly campus newsletter. Second, an article about the site and the call for comment was published in both the print and online versions of the Northern Star, the NIU student newspaper.

In compliance with federal regulations, numerous steps were taken to meet the requirement to provide an “opportunity for third party comment... concerning the institution’s ... qualifications for accreditation” (34 C.F.R. § 602.27(d) (1996)). First, letters requesting third-party comment were sent by President Peters to the presidents of all Illinois public universities, the presidents of all community colleges located in the northern portion of the state, and the presidents of the Mid-American Conference and Big-10 Conference universities. Second, the Office of Public Affairs faxed a news release requesting third-party comment to approximately 125 newspapers throughout the state of Illinois. Third, the news release was included in the Office of Public Affairs’ electronic “news clip” service, distributed electronically as a special all-campus news release, and sent out to the office’s media-based news listserv. Fourth, the news release was featured prominently, as the first item, in the news section of the NIU homepage.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The report is organized to show that Northern Illinois University fulfills the five criteria and the 24 General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) established by the Higher Learning Commission. In order to assist the university in the use of the self-study as a planning tool, the self-study is organized in four sections. Section I sets the context for the self-study. This section includes an introduction, responses to the recommendations of the last site review, and information on mission, governance and planning. Section II is devoted to the major aspects of the mission itself. It contains descriptions of the university’s students, graduate and undergraduate programs, the research and artistry roles of the faculty and students, and service and outreach. Section III focuses on the components of the university that support the missions explained in Section II. Section IV presents the university’s request for reaccreditation, and the ways in which the university fulfills all accreditation criteria and meets the General Institutional Requirements.
Section I: Setting the Context
Purposes of the Report
Mission
Governance and Planning

Section II: The Mission
NIU Students
Undergraduate Education
Graduate and Professional Programs
Research and Artistry
Service and Outreach

Section III: Supporting the Mission
Academic Support and Student Life
Libraries, Museums, and Galleries
Technology and Technological Support
Human Resources and Services
Finance and Facilities

Section IV: Request for Reaccreditation

SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION HISTORY

Northern Illinois University was conditionally granted limited status as an accredited teacher-training institution and given Class A rating as a four-year degree-granting college in 1931. After further review in 1933, the institution was granted full status in 1935. The university was accredited to offer the Master of Science in Education degree program in 1953 and again in 1956. In 1959, the university’s accreditation was extended to include the Master of Arts and Master of Science degree programs and the Certificate of Advanced Study. Preliminary accreditation for NIU to offer Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education degree programs was granted in 1962, with full accreditation at the doctoral level in 1974. Upon North Central Association reviews in 1983 and 1994, the institution was reaccredited. As a result of the 1994 reaccreditation, the university was required to file a report containing its plan for assessing student academic achievement and progress in implementing that plan by June 1, 1995, which was done. Additionally, the university was scheduled for an evaluation in 1994-1995 that focused on the master’s degree program being offered in Greece. This visit was unnecessary as the university ceased offering the degree program at this site.
INSTITUTION’S RESPONSE TO THE LAST NCA REPORT

The site-visitation team’s Report of a Visit in 1994 included several concerns. These concerns are listed below, followed by the university’s actions in response to those concerns:

1. Some NIU buildings are in need of refurbishing, remodeling, or renovation. Unless funds are identified to implement the University’s plans for remedying these problems, the State’s substantial capital investment will soon be in jeopardy.

The university has addressed the state of its buildings with new construction and through renovations. Several new buildings have been constructed and opened since the last site visit; these buildings include: the Campus Life Building, the Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault, the Convocation Center, the Campus Child Care Center, the Center for University Resources for Latinos and Latin American Studies, the Center for Diversity Resources, the Engineering Building, Faraday West, and Barsema Hall. The addition of these facilities enabled academic and support units to move from facilities in need of repair into new facilities, and permitted the university to renovate and improve the existing facilities to make them more suitable for new occupants.

Additionally, major renovation projects were started in the Stevenson Residence Hall Complex, Founders Memorial Library, and Altgeld Hall. While funding for deferred maintenance and renovation needs has been more limited than is desired, the university has been able to make substantial improvements to several of its facilities including new roofs for Cole Hall and the Holmes Student Center; heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning improvements in the Swen Parson Computing Center; a new condensation receiver tank in East Heating Plant; and the Storm Water Management Control Project to minimize future damage to facilities. The university has also engaged in several projects related to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and the renovation of numerous classrooms to accommodate instructional technology.

Renovations including improvements to roofs and ceilings, asbestos abatement, enhanced heating and cooling systems, energy efficient windows, and ADA compliance modifications are also planned for a number of academic buildings: Stevens, Gilbert, Wirtz, Reavis, Montgomery, Zulauf, and Watson Halls. Several projects related to adding, improving, or replacing elevators have been completed or are in the planning stages.
The university has a master plan for facilities and site improvements, which is, of course, dependent upon funding, most of which must come from the state. Deferred maintenance may not be among the higher priorities in the next budget cycle given the financial constraints under which the state budget is being developed. However, the NIU Board of Trustees and administrators are diligent in making the facilities needs of the university known to funding authorities.

2. While the University is doing a fine job of managing funds available to it, shortages of resources are apparent throughout the institution and are especially evident in the areas of faculty and staff salaries, graduate assistant stipends, and budgets available for the purchase of supplies, travel, and equipment maintenance and replacement.

During the ten-year period since the university’s last accreditation, NIU has experienced low and high points related to funding, which have affected salaries, graduate assistant stipends, and the budget lines available for purchasing, travel, and equipment. Benchmarking studies reported by the Illinois Board of Higher Education demonstrated that faculty salaries at Illinois universities were not comparable to their peer institutions. The higher education community in the state made salary increments one of its highest priorities, and in FY99 through FY02, increments above the cost-of-living rate were appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly for the “retention of critical faculty and staff.” These allocations were contingent upon a matching allocation from the universities for the “added plus” increments. Faculty and staff employed under collective bargaining agreements received increments specified in their contracts.

The university also routinely conducts its own benchmarking studies, which resulted in special increments in salary for supportive professional staff and operating staff. Data from these studies also assisted in supporting the higher education community’s case for faculty salary increments. The gains made in bringing faculty salaries closer to the midpoint of peer institutions were stalled in FY03 and FY04, when no funding was appropriated for increments due to the economic conditions in the state. However, in spite of the economic challenges the state and NIU face, the university was able, through internal reallocation and attrition to announce a 1.5 percent salary increment effective July 1, 2003, for 12-month employees and August 15 for 9-month employees; an additional 1.5 percent across-the-board increment is planned for January 1, 2004.

The university closely monitors graduate assistant stipends, and the Graduate Council has set the minimum and maximum stipend levels for graduate assistants across the campus. When increments for graduate
assistant stipends, as well as all salary increases, are appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly, they are appropriated on 95 percent of the university’s personnel base. In some units, an increase in external grant funding has enabled existing allocations to be used for an increase in stipends.

The allocation of funds for supplies, travel, and equipment are unit based with selective supplemental support from central cost centers, and are derived from general revenue appropriations, external grant funding, indirect funds, state grant programs, and other sources. Technological advances have provided a means for the university to enhance its instructional mission by making learning resources available to students in electronic formats. Course materials are available to students on electronic instructional platforms such as Blackboard® and through electronic reserve services provided by the University Libraries. Other information and services for students have been converted to electronic formats reducing the use of paper and other supplies, printing, and postage. Students now examine catalogs and the schedule of courses, register for classes, receive course grades, complete many financial aid forms, and review Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) reports online.

Funding from budget priority requests has supported the university's efforts to equip general purpose classrooms with smart classroom technology, to purchase software site licenses and file servers, and to hire tech-support staff, giving students and faculty access to high-speed Internet connections and audiovisual equipment that augment teaching and learning. Colleges and departments have also allocated funds to improve research and laboratory space, upgrade instructional equipment, and convert instructional space to smart classrooms with a combination of funds from general revenue sources, indirect funds, state grants, and corporate gifts, among other sources.

Funding for faculty and professional staff travel to professional meetings is appropriated from general revenue, grant funds, indirect funds, and endowments. It is typical for departments, colleges, and the Graduate School to contribute funds to support a portion of travel and conference costs. Modest appropriations are also available to support conference participation for a small number of graduate students.

3. Recent initiatives by the Illinois Board of Higher Education appear to reflect a role for Northern Illinois University that is at variance on several points with the University’s mission statement, a statement that has been approved by NIU’s governing board and has gained broad acceptance within the University community.
At the time of the previous site visit, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) was actively engaged in a Priorities, Quality, and Productivity (PQP) initiative. Among the activities of this initiative were the higher board’s comparisons of the Illinois public universities, which were based on objectives that were at odds with some elements of many universities’ mission statements, including NIU’s. When the initiative ended, the IBHE moved to a statewide master plan for higher education called the Illinois Commitment. This plan spells out six broad goals for higher education in the state of Illinois recognizing that each institution may contribute to those goals in its own unique ways. While the IBHE-assigned Focus Statement for NIU still exists, the current master plan for higher education eliminated any inconsistencies between the higher board’s focus for NIU’s and NIU’s adopted mission.

4. Following the decentralization of Continuing Education and the delegation of responsibility for undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education off-campus courses and programs to the colleges, there does not appear to be an effective mechanism for assessing needs and coordinating, facilitating, and promoting courses and programs at off-campus sites.

Although the Division of Continuing Education was decentralized prior to the last site visit, the division continued to exist in a new configuration. External programmers were assigned to the academic colleges, but the continuing education central unit provided services related to fee collection and distribution, the identification of classroom space at regional sites for credit courses, and non-credit programming, among others. Because of continuing and increasing demands to deliver the university’s programs at regional sites, NIU built three regional centers: NIU Hoffman Estates, NIU Naperville, and NIU Rockford. In 2001, the oversight of the centers was transferred from the associate vice provost for resource planning to the vice president for administration (now the vice president for administration and university outreach). The transfer of the oversight of these centers and the central unit of the Division of Continuing Education were some of the first steps the university undertook to create NIU Outreach. These units, reporting to the vice president for administration and outreach, are responsible for the planning of, assessing the need for, and facilitating the coordinated delivery of the programs and initiatives in which the university is engaged. The Division of Administration and NIU Outreach coordinates its activities with the Division of Academic and Student Affairs through the Outreach Advisory Committee, the Outreach/Academic Affairs Communication Committee, and regular communications with the college-based external programmers.
5. Decentralization of graduate education has not been accompanied by effective procedures to maintain quality control over on-campus and off-campus graduate courses and programs.

The oversight of graduate education at NIU is tiered at the department, college, and university levels. Curricular initiatives, programs, and courses originate at the department level and are then forwarded to the college for action. All curricular components of the university's graduate programs must then be approved by the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council, a university-level committee.

Courses and programs offered at regional sites are the same as those offered on campus, and they are administered at the department level. Departments typically initiate the request to deliver programs off campus. The dean and the provost discuss the demands for the program and the funding mechanisms for delivering the programs. With the concurrence of the provost, requests to offer the programs at regional sites are sent to the Board of Trustees for approval before they are forwarded to the higher board. Location is a matter of meeting the needs of the student population in terms of time and place, not offering programs of study that differ from on-campus programs, with the exception of the Master of Business Administration degree program, which is offered only at regional sites.

Admission processes for all students applying to the university are administered jointly between the Graduate School and the departments. Students are admitted to the Graduate School by meeting admission requirements established by the Graduate Council; students who meet those requirements may apply for admission to specific degree programs, however, admission to programs is determined at the department level.

Approval for graduate faculty status is conducted in a similar manner. While departments may have specific criteria that reflect the expectations of their disciplines, these criteria must be approved through the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee and the full Graduate Council. Department recommendations for the initiation or renewal of graduate faculty status must be approved by the Graduate Council.

6. While the University is engaged in a significant number of student assessment activities, the University Plan for the Assessment of Student Academic Achievements does not describe adequately, clearly, and concisely with reference to the five evaluative questions proscribed by the North Central Association the University's assessment initiatives at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The program for assessing student achievement at the graduate level should be improved and strengthened.
NIU submitted a follow-up report to the NCA in June 1995 that further delineated its plan for the assessment of student academic achievement. This report was accepted by the NCA in the same year. Since that time the university has instituted a formalized assessment process that has been greatly strengthened and improved. The University Assessment Panel (UAP), created in 1998, evaluates assessment plans and status reports, providing recommendations to academic and support units for improvement in their plans and activities. The work of the panel is closely aligned with the Academic Planning Council, which is responsible for conducting the university’s review of all academic programs over an eight-year cycle. The UAP also approves requests for funding to assist departments and support units with the implementation of assessment initiatives. The outcomes of these activities are incorporated into the program reviews, which document the use of evidence from assessment activities and other processes to improve program outcomes. To meet the requirement articulated in the Illinois Commitment that “all academic programs will systematically assess student learning and use assessment results to improve programs,” annual updates on assessment initiatives will be completed by the academic programs beginning in 2004.

7. Despite the efforts of the Human Resources staff, the Affirmative Action Officer, and faculty at the department level, NIU’s efforts to recruit and retain faculty who are members of minority groups have been less than successful in the past decade. This failure presents a particular problem for NIU because it has staked its future on and embedded in its mission statement a strong commitment to serving the entire population of the Metropolitan area.

The above-named units have continued in their commitments to diversifying the faculty at NIU, and positive changes have been made since 1994. From 1994 to the fall 2003, the number of faculty who are Black/Non-Hispanic (19 to 36) or Hispanic (22 to 36) has almost doubled. The number of faculty who are American Indian is still only 1, while the number of Asian faculty has remained relatively constant (63 to 64).

Increases in diversity have also occurred in the other employment categories of the university. The professional/non-faculty ranks have seen an increase in Internationals (143 percent), Black/Non-Hispanics (38 percent), Asians (5 percent), and Hispanics (50 percent). In all other employment categories, Black/Non-Hispanics increased 27 percent, American Indians increased 117 percent, Asians increased 50 percent, and Hispanics increased 95 percent. While these changes do represent positive movement toward the university’s goal of serving the entire population of the northern Illinois region, the active commitment to a broader constituency of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups continues.
8. NIU does not appear to have made sufficient progress during the last decade in hiring, tenuring and promoting women in faculty and administrative positions.

Since 1994 the university has made considerable progress related to hiring, granting tenure to, and promoting women in faculty positions. Fall of 1992 data showed 217 full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty who were women (23 percent of 962 total full-time faculty). While the overall number of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty decreased over the last decade, the number of women in these categories increased significantly. In fall 2002, 284 women were tenured or in tenure-track positions (32 percent of 895 total full-time faculty). In fall of 2003, of the full-time faculty with rank of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor, 39 percent (296 of 762) were women.

An examination of the organizational charts for NIU’s major divisions shows that women occupy 51 percent of the campus leadership positions. Of the 10 individuals reporting directly to the president, 50 percent are women: the vice president of the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach, the associate vice president and executive director of the Office of State and Federal Relations, the executive director of Community Relations, the athletic director, and director of Internal Audit. Within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs eight individuals, two of whom are women, report directly to the Executive Vice President and Provost: the associate vice provost for academic planning and development and the executive director of the Division of International Programs. The associate vice provost for student affairs, reporting to the vice provost for student affairs, is also a woman. Within the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach, five individuals report directly to the vice president; of these, the assistant vice president for public affairs and the executive director of Business and Industry Services are women. Leadership positions held by women in the Division of University Advancement (formerly the Division of Development and University Relations) include the associate vice president for development and president of the NIU Foundation, the assistant vice president for alumni relations, and the director of special events. Within the Division of Finance and Facilities, both the associate and the assistant directors of the budget are women. In total, women serve in 15 of 38 central administrative positions at the university level.

Women are also involved in administrative positions at the department and college levels. Two of the seven college deans are women. Three colleges, the University Libraries, and the Graduate School also have associate deans who are women. At the academic department level, in the fall of 2003, 11 of 40 chairs or directors of departments/schools were women. Women also
comprise a significant number of directors, associate directors, and managers in units and divisions across the university.

9. **NIU's library will soon have insufficient space to hold the collection and accommodate the numbers of students and faculty who use it.**

The renovation of the basement of Founders Memorial Library was completed in the summer of 2002. This project added 36,000 new gross square feet to the building. It is anticipated that this additional space will handle the growth of acquisitions for 15 years. Additionally, the increasing use of computers, which can be used outside of the library itself, and the acquisition of online journals, indices, and other materials, has brought about the opportunity for users to access library materials without placing a corresponding demand on the physical facilities of the library.

**MAJOR CHANGES SINCE THE LAST SELF-STUDY**

Any vital university must continually change, and NIU is no exception. Among the most significant changes during the current review period are the following:

- The establishment of the university's own governing board, the NIU Board of Trustees in 1996
- A major administrative reorganization
- The addition of new facilities to the physical plant
- The approval of new academic programs including the Ph.D. in Physics and the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.)

NIU has addressed the concerns from the 1994 site visit and continues to address its evolving mission. This mission, and the ways in which the university fulfills that mission, will be addressed in the chapters that follow.
MISSION

The central mission of the university is the transmission, expansion, and application of knowledge through teaching, research and artistry, and public service. (NIU Mission and Scope Statement)

EVOLUTION OF THE MISSION

Northern Illinois State Normal School opened its doors in 1899 to 173 students. Its 16 faculty were authorized to offer a two-year teacher education curriculum (Monat, 2001). In August of 2003, Northern Illinois University opened the new academic year with more than 25,000 students pursuing their educational goals in one of the university's 56 baccalaureate or 72 master's, specialist, doctoral, or professional degree programs administered in seven colleges. In just over 100 years, the university has evolved from an institution with a narrow focus to one with a comprehensive mission. This mission includes instruction ranging from general education to in-depth professional preparation across a broad spectrum of disciplines. In addition, the university has a commitment to research and creative scholarship by both its students and its faculty, and a service commitment to the northern region of Illinois with selected national and international activities. The institutional history of NIU is largely a history of its evolving mission. Excellent accounts of the university's history and development are provided by Earl Hayter (1974) and William R. Monat (2001).

The mission of a normal school was very basic; it was to prepare teachers through a two-year professional preparation program. During the first 50 years of its history, NIU experienced modest and relatively steady growth, while its mission remained squarely focused on teacher education. In 1949, Leslie A. Holmes was appointed as the new president. Holmes' presidency was characterized by growth of the university and expansion of its mission. This included the offering of graduate degrees in education and an undergraduate liberal arts program leading to both bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees. As the 1950s came to a close, the mission significantly expanded with the first graduate degrees outside of education. NIU also began offering its first professional degree when the board approved the Bachelor of Science degree program in nursing.

The 1960s mark the major transition from a teachers college to a university (Monat, 2001). New departments were developed and hundreds of faculty were hired to deliver the new academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. By 1970, NIU truly had the look of a university, with four degree-granting colleges; degree programs at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels; a College of Continuing Education to meet
the needs of non-traditional students and the professional development needs of those who had already completed a degree program; and faculty research and artistry in conjunction with the graduate education mission. In 1973, the College of Professional Studies (now the College of Health and Human Sciences) was added to the existing Colleges of Business, Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Fine and Applied Arts (now the College of Visual and Performing Arts). The academic mission was further expanded in 1979 with the addition of the College of Law and in 1985 with the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology.

The continual evolution of NIU has led to a university that today is recognized for much more than its teacher-education roots. It is a comprehensive university with a diversified mission in undergraduate and graduate education, in research and artistry of both its students and faculty, and in service that, while concentrated in the northern third of Illinois, has impact nationally and internationally.

The Mission
Throughout its evolution, and particularly in the last 50 years, Northern Illinois University has responded to the ever-changing needs of its primary service region. The university’s Mission and Scope Statement, adopted in January 1993, clearly expresses NIU’s responsibility to the region; the statement also clarifies that the character of the region and changing student demographics demands that NIU provide a broad range of programs and services appropriate to the social, cultural, political, and economic complexity of a rapidly changing urban/suburban and rural environment.

The Northern Illinois University Mission and Scope Statement is a comprehensive declaration that can be captured in the following: “The central mission of the university is the transmission, expansion, and application of knowledge through teaching, research and artistry, and public service.” However, the Mission and Scope Statement provides more specific guidance that clarifies the structures through which the mission is pursued as well as particular skills and behaviors that are entailed in this broad mission.

Instruction is offered for liberal, professional, and technical education at the undergraduate and graduate levels through seven colleges: Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, Law, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts. Providing educational opportunities for non-traditional students is also considered to be an important part of the mission of the university. Therefore, the institution’s professional programs are designed to be especially attractive to employed adults through offering courses both on
campus and at regional sites at convenient locations and times. Carefully
developed articulation agreements enable NIU to support one of the largest
baccalaureate transfer programs in the state.

The university has also assumed an obligation to provide a pluralistic
education for an increasingly diverse student body that mirrors the
population base of the region to which many of the university’s graduates
will ultimately return. General instructional goals that contribute to the
betterment of society include creating awareness of our diverse multicultural
heritage, developing a citizenry capable of participating in thoughtful
governance, stimulating consideration of ethical values, training the mind
for analytical thought, and teaching effective communication skills, all of
which are accomplished in an environment of academic freedom.

NIU is committed to basic research and artistry and to the application of
new knowledge. This commitment encompasses contributing to the
nation’s scientific and technological leadership, supporting advances and
innovations in education, bringing ideas to bear on issues of public policy,
contributing to the sustained appreciation of our diverse cultural heritage,
supporting business and industry, and enriching the performing and
creative arts. The university places a high priority on engaging in
partnerships with business, industry, education, government, health, and
cultural institutions in the expansion and application of knowledge.

Through partnerships and professional and scholarly associations, the
faculty and students of NIU take responsibility for contributing to their
professional disciplinary communities. The faculty, students, and staff of
the university are also committed to sharing their teaching, research,
artistry, and professional expertise with members of the broader public
through clinical and technical services, consulting, non-credit programs,
and cultural activities.

As a public university, NIU functions within the context of higher
education in the state. In the fulfillment of its mission, the university also
contributes to the fulfillment of the goals for Illinois higher education. In
1999 the Illinois Board of Higher Education launched the Illinois
Commitment: Partnerships, Opportunities, and Excellence initiative, delineating
six broad goals for higher education:

1. Higher education will help Illinois business and industry sustain
   strong economic growth.
2. Higher education will join elementary and secondary education to
   improve teaching and learning at all levels.
3. No Illinois citizen will be denied an opportunity for a college
   education because of financial need.
4. Illinois will increase the number and diversity of citizens completing training and education programs.
5. Illinois colleges and universities will hold students to even higher expectations for learning and will be accountable for the quality of academic programs and the assessment of learning.
6. Illinois colleges and universities will continually improve productivity, cost-effectiveness, and accountability.

In its annual Results Report to the higher board, the university outlines how its mission-related initiatives and outcomes also contribute to the fulfillment of these goals.

In short, NIU fulfills its mission, and in so doing, also contributes to the goals for Illinois higher education through the synergistic application of teaching, research and artistry, and public service. It does so while being responsive to its rural, urban, and suburban environments, its diverse citizenry, and the ever-changing expectations of the disciplines and professions that comprise its knowledge and artistic bases.

**EVALUATION**

The chapters that follow supply the evidence on the extent to which NIU accomplishes its mission. The mission itself is an appropriate one for a comprehensive institution and is consistent with the roles of public higher education institutions. It addresses both the general expectations for an educated and responsible citizenry as well as the need for an appropriately prepared workforce. There is a commitment to both breadth and depth in the teaching, research, and artistry of NIU’s faculty, staff, and students. The members of the NIU community also recognize, through the institutional mission, a responsibility to extend the knowledge and skills beyond the borders of the university itself.

Through its shared governance processes, the University Mission and Scope Statement is reviewed, and, when necessary, revised. This process is currently under way. In 2002 the Academic Planning Council and the University Assessment Panel reviewed the University Mission and Scope Statement, and provided a critique of its strengths and weaknesses to President Peters. While there is overall satisfaction with the university mission itself, there is a desire to develop a mission statement that more succinctly captures what NIU stands for as an institution of higher learning. Input from university constituencies will result in a revised mission statement that will be developed through the appropriate university governance structures for approval by the NIU Board of Trustees.
References


Criteria Addressed
Criterion One: The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

a. long- and short-range institutional and educational goals
b. processes, involving its constituencies, through which the institution evaluates its purposes
e. efforts to keep the public informed of its institutional and educational goals through documents such as the catalog and program brochures

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

a. student, faculty, and staff handbooks that describe various institutional relationships with those constituencies, including appropriate grievance procedures
e. relationships with other institutions of higher education conducted ethically and responsibly; appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions
GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING

Perhaps the most significant development in the history of Northern Illinois University in the last decade has been the establishment of the university’s governing board, the NIU Board of Trustees. Beyond the campus, the Illinois General Assembly (legislature), the governor, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) provide some degree of authoritative control of NIU. Ultimate authority over higher education in Illinois is vested in the governor and the General Assembly. The governor has general veto powers as well as line-item and line-reduction veto powers for appropriation bills, although the General Assembly may override such vetoes. The IBHE is statutorily designated as a coordinating board with specified limited powers.

The account that follows first focuses on the evolution of the new Board of Trustees governance system and examines its impact on the internal organizational structure of NIU. It then examines how the board’s administrative and governance structures are organized to implement the NIU mission. This account includes both a description and evaluation of the board, university administration, and faculty governance, together with consideration of the roles in governance of students, supportive professional staff, and operating staff. The chapter concludes with a discussion of planning processes within the university.

NIU HISTORY AND EXTERNAL REGULATION

Throughout most of its history, NIU has been under a board (Normal School Board, Board of Governors, and Board of Regents) that oversaw multiple institutions. The Board of Regents/Illinois Board of Higher Education governance arrangement was in place in 1994 when the North Central Association completed its most recent review of Northern Illinois University. During the early 1990s, NIU faced numerous challenges that were complicated by not having its own governing board. A national economic slump, a political climate that favored state budget reductions, and nationwide declines in student enrollment served as the impetus for Illinois, along with many other states, to look carefully at higher education. The IBHE launched a comprehensive review of higher education in the state, the Priorities, Quality, and Productivity (PQP) initiative, and soon recommended drastic statewide cuts in undergraduate and graduate education, administration, research, and public service, as well as the elimination of state funds for intercollegiate athletics. The Board of Regents bore responsibility for representing three institutions of varying size, scope, and mission, putting it in a position where it did not effectively represent NIU’s needs at the state level. As a result, NIU’s external governance system hamstrung the university’s response to the PQP initiative.
During the years since it lost its independent board of trustees in 1917, Northern periodically sought to regain independent governance status. Throughout the PQP initiative, the value of an independent voice for NIU repeatedly manifested itself, and efforts to obtain an independent board increased. After several initiatives in the early 1990s, the Illinois General Assembly in 1995 adopted legislation supported by then-Governor Edgar that gave NIU an independent governance status as part of a thorough reorganization of state higher education boards. The General Assembly created an NIU Board of Trustees with seven voting members appointed by the governor to rotating six-year terms. The NIU Board of Trustees assumed its responsibilities on January 1, 1996.

The creation of the NIU Board of Trustees fundamentally altered the university’s governance in both form and practice. While the higher board retained authority to create and monitor a master plan for statewide higher education; responsibility for approving new units of instruction, research, or public service; obligations to submit an overall annual operating and capital budget for state higher education; and the duty to administer federal programs that require statewide monitoring, the university achieved a much greater degree of self-government. Only the NIU Board of Trustees can approve the university budget; set student tuition and fees; approve new or delete existing academic programs and units of instruction, research, and public service; and approve the issuance of revenue bonds for nonacademic capital projects such as residence halls, student centers, and athletic or recreational facilities. In essence, the Board of Trustees became the voice of NIU in the councils of the state as well as an effective overseer of the university.

The importance of the new NIU Board of Trustees became evident almost immediately. The board and then-president John E. La Tourette implemented a streamlined administrative structure that reduced the number of individuals reporting directly to the chief executive officer. Two vice-presidential positions were abolished and their duties shifted to the remaining four senior administrators reporting to the president: an executive vice president and provost, a vice president for finance and facilities, a vice president for administration, and a vice president for development and university relations. As a consequence of the reorganization, clearer lines of administrative responsibility were established and the president gained freedom to devote more attention to addressing legislative issues, fundraising, and working with the board to advance the university’s mission.

Aided by the university’s administration, the new Board of Trustees also responded quickly to the issues raised by the board of higher education’s PQP initiative. When the IBHE proposed the elimination of NIU’s
doctoral programs in English and mathematical sciences, for example, the board had thorough reviews of the programs conducted, and in 1997 helped the university successfully defend both programs. Two years later, the university, with the support of the board, won IBHE approval for a new doctoral degree program in physics. The preservation and expansion of doctoral programs demonstrated the status acquired by the Board of Trustees, as well as the shift in effective governance authority from the state to an institution-specific board. The presence of a responsible governing board, able to evaluate and to explain university needs, continues to serve NIU well in protecting and fostering important academic programs and the university's mission.

Finally, the board acquired increased financial authority and flexibility for the university after 1995. For example, NIU gained the right to carry over income received from tuition from year to year. This practice, long common in other states, represented a fiscal breakthrough in Illinois. NIU also acquired authority to develop its holding of more than 200 acres of unused land west of the campus. Only the University of Illinois-Chicago, among the state's other public institutions of higher education, acquired similar authority.

Perhaps the clearest evidence that NIU was indeed being transformed under the leadership of its own Board of Trustees came from several long-sought construction projects. In 1996, the board approved a $49.9 million bond issue and launched a multi-year program to upgrade campus residence halls, infrastructure, and aesthetics. An additional outreach center in Naperville was built to supplement the facilities in Rockford and Hoffman Estates. Construction of a 10,000-seat multipurpose arena, sought by NIU since the 1970s, was approved by the board in 1999 and completed in 2002. The board was also able to move quickly to use a September 2000 gift of $20 million from NIU alumnus Dennis Barsema to build a state-of-the-art facility for the College of Business.

The face and facilities of NIU have been positively altered under the new system of governance. External acknowledgments of NIU's standing in the academic world testify eloquently to the advantages of the university having its own governing board. In 2000, NIU was admitted to membership in the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC); only two other Illinois institutions are members of this prestigious organization. In 2000, the university was also selected for full membership in the Universities Research Association, a distinguished consortium of 88 top public and private research universities across the country. Additionally, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classified NIU as a doctoral/research-extensive institution. These
national recognitions affirm that Northern Illinois University has achieved the respect as a well-governed and effective university.

**STRUCTURE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The NIU Board of Trustees consists of eight voting members; the governor appoints seven and the student trustee is elected by the NIU student body. No more than four of the gubernatorial appointments may be of the same political affiliation. The trustees normally serve six-year terms with staggered term-completion years insuring continuity among board membership. The board elects its own officers and carries out much of its work through a set of standing committees that interact closely with campus administrators.

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND INTERNAL REORGANIZATION**

One of the challenges of the new NIU Board of Trustees and the incumbent president was to deal with the dramatic change in political relationships that was created by the new higher education environment. In the absence of a system board and attendant staff, the president of each Illinois public university campus became the campus representative to a myriad of state and national governmental and professional organizations. In response to the new demands, the NIU president began to take on more of an external role. The president and the Board of Trustees were prepared for the change and began a program of reorganization in March of 1996. The NCA site team had also recommended restructuring during the 1994 review and visit. A reduction in direct reporting lines to the president allowed him to devote efforts to a more external role. Additionally the reorganization consolidated a number of units with overlapping authority and responsibilities, creating a more efficient organization.

The major changes achieved with the reorganization included the combining of multiple divisions into two. The Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs merged under a single executive vice president and provost to become the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. Similarly, the Division of Business and Operations was brought together with the Division of Finance and Planning under a senior vice president to become the Division of Finance and Facilities. The reorganization also placed several university-wide units under a new vice president overseeing the Division of Administration.

In 2000, Dr. John G. Peters was hired by the Board of Trustees specifically to expand the role of the external presidency and to build a more effective relationship with NIU constituency groups. The fully developed external presidency necessitated a system for day-to-day management of the
university's administrative functions. The role of the provost was expanded to that of executive vice president and provost with the reorganization of the university's administrative structure under the Board of Trustees. President Peters also expanded the role and duties of the senior vice president, designating that position executive vice president and chief of operations.

President Peters also accelerated the university's off-campus and outreach activities. Responsibility for coordinating the university’s regional programming, services, and facilities, was assigned to the vice president for administration, whose title is now vice president for administration and university outreach. A new NIU Outreach unit, managed by a new associate vice president for university outreach, was created in 2003. To advance the outreach mission, the president moved the Office of Public Affairs and Northern Public Radio from the Division of Development and University Relations (now the Division of University Advancement) to the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The chief executive officer at NIU is its president, who is appointed by the Board of Trustees. President Peters, who took office in March 2000, has retained the major organizational structure put in place in 1996. This structure consists of four major divisions: Academic and Student Affairs, Finance and Facilities, Administration and NIU Outreach, and University Advancement, each headed by vice presidents who report directly to the president (see Appendix B). The offices of State and Federal Relations, Community Relations, Intercollegiate Athletics, Internal Audit, and the Division of University Legal Services also report directly to the president. Changes in the units reporting to the president and within the divisions are noted in the information that follows.

The Administrative Divisions

The Division of Academic and Student Affairs is headed by Executive Vice President and Provost J. Ivan Legg. With administrative responsibility for the university's core mission, the provost oversees seven colleges and 41 departments and schools within the colleges, the Graduate School, the University Libraries, the Division of International Programs, the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, and all academic and student support service units. The provost chairs the Academic Planning Council, the University Council Personnel Committee, and the Council of Deans, and represents the interests of the division to the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee of the NIU Board of Trustees. The vice provost chairs the Undergraduate Coordinating Council, and oversees six major support units. The vice provost for resource planning has major responsibilities for matters related to budget and space within the
The vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School chairs the Graduate Council, and administers seven offices within the Graduate School. The associate vice provost for academic planning and development chairs the University Assessment Panel, and oversees the Office of Assessment Services. The associate vice provost for academic support services oversees seven academic support units. The vice provost for student affairs, assisted by the associate vice provost for student affairs, oversees nine units providing student services. Each of the college deans is assisted by one or more associate deans, and each chairs a college council composed of elected, tenured faculty members from the college's departments and a college senate, composed of the chairs and directors of the departments and schools in the college.

Executive Vice President for Business and Finance and Chief of Operations Eddie R. Williams heads the Division of Finance and Facilities. The division is responsible for appropriated and non-appropriated budgeting, architectural/engineering services, capital development and space planning, and general resource and project management. It is also responsible for auxiliary and revenue-bond activities, the controller's area, human resource services, parking, the physical plant, public safety, and purchasing. This division plays a central role in presenting the university's financial position to the NIU Board of Trustees, the legislature, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the general public and in helping the university acquire and manage its resources.

The Division of Administration and Outreach is headed by Vice President Anne C. Kaplan. The division is comprised of Business and Industry Services, Information Technology Services, the Office of Public Affairs, Northern Public Radio, and NIU Outreach. Units within the division play central roles in improving the level of workforce skills; building the university's technology infrastructure; linking the university to its constituencies within the region through broadcast, print, and web-based media; and coordinating credit and non-credit programming, public service, applied research, and public policy development.

The Division of University Advancement is headed by Vice President Michael P. Malone. The division includes the offices of alumni relations, publications, special events, and development. It also plays a liaison role relative to the NIU Alumni Association and the NIU Foundation. Publications provides editorial and graphic design support for the creation of print materials for university documents, and plays a central role in the production of the NIU alumni magazine, Northern Now. The Office of Alumni Relations works closely with the NIU Alumni Association in maintaining ties with alumni in the state and throughout the nation.
NIU Foundation, an entity legally separate from the university, is the unit with major responsibilities for developing and sponsoring programs that foster the financial support of the university; raising, managing, and stewarding gift funds to enable the university and its departments and units to achieve their strategic goals; and building and strengthening relationships with all constituencies, including students and alumni.

The Academic Colleges
Some of the administrative structures in the colleges have changed during this review period as well. The make up of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was changed somewhat with the merger of the Department of Journalism and the Department of Communication Studies into the Department of Communications, the addition of a Center for the Study of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and the Northern Illinois Center for Accelerator and Detector Development, and the move of the Center for Burma Studies to the Graduate School and the Center for Governmental Studies to the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach. Two departments underwent name changes: in 1997 the Department of Geology became the Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences, and in 1998, the Department of Chemistry became the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

In the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, the dean’s office added a position responsible for coordinating college-level assessment activities. The College of Business and the College of Law have not seen the need for significant changes in administrative structure or organization over the last ten years.

In the College of Visual and Performing Arts, the Department of Theatre Arts became the School of Theatre Arts in 1996; this name was subsequently changed to the School of Theatre and Dance in 1999. The title of the chairs of the Schools of Art, Music, and Theatre and Dance was changed to that of director in 2001 in keeping with national practices in visual and performing arts programs.

In 1996, The College of Professional Studies became the College of Health and Human Sciences. The only structural change in the college was a departmental name change from the Department of Human and Family Resources to the Department of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences, which better reflects the composition of the department’s faculty and its programmatic offerings.

The College of Education has undergone the most significant changes in structure during this review cycle. In 1999 a new college structure was announced to better address the changing climate of teacher education. The
number of departments increased from four to seven, and were subsequently reduced to six in 2003. One associate dean position was eliminated in 2001. Reorganization of the college was intended to improve flexibility in responding coherently to pressures for higher education to take direct responsibility for the learning outcomes in the K-12 sector, which required refocusing programs to achieve an improved balance between graduate and undergraduate programs, the new relationship between special and elementary education programs, a better-articulated approach to the delivery of programs and courses at regional sites, technological advances in instruction, and budgetary concerns. With the reorganization, the college appears to be better positioned to face new challenges in the development of authentic assessment systems, technological support for instruction, increased faculty and student diversity, and service to the K-12 sector, which are critical as the demand for teacher education candidates continues to increase dramatically in NIU’s service region.

**SHARED GOVERNANCE**

The basic structure of shared governance at NIU is laid out in the *Constitution and Bylaws* of Northern Illinois University, and the foundation for that structure is laid down in the preamble to the constitution. It states that:

- university governance shall be a shared process involving all constituencies of the university;
- that faculty shall predominate in all policy decisions relating to the faculty personnel system, the university curriculum, and admissions and academic standards;
- that students, supportive professional staff, and operating staff shall be involved in policy decisions as appropriate;
- that matters of substance shall be decided at the lowest appropriate level;
- that all university constituencies should have input into selection, review, and reappointment of university officers and administrators;
- that student perspectives should be considered at all levels; and
- that faculty should select their own representatives on all governance, personnel, and curriculum bodies.

The primary governing body, the *University Council*, is dominated by faculty, but also includes student representatives and members of the administration, the supportive professional staff, and the operating staff. The president of the university serves as the presiding officer of the University Council, but most of the council’s activities are organized by the executive secretary, who is elected from the faculty members of the council. The duties of the University Council, and the various councils and committees reporting to it, are to establish the educational and academic
policies of the university and to participate in and act upon matters that affect those policies. The council also advises on policies regarding academic salaries, sabbatical leaves, leaves without pay, tenure, and promotion, and advises the president and the vice presidents on policies affecting the quality of student life on campus. Approval of the University Council is required to amend the Constitution and Bylaws. The University Council’s standing committees enable it to fulfill these duties.

Each of the major constituency groups (faculty, operating staff, supportive professional staff, and students) in the university has its own governing council, and each has representation on the University Council. The Faculty Senate, comprised of representatives from each academic department and the faculty members of the University Council, is concerned with academic issues as well as with promoting the participation of faculty in all aspects of shared governance and the welfare of the faculty. The Faculty Senate has standing committees, and participates with the University Council in the Faculty Senate-University Council Committee on Resources, Space and Budget. The president of the Faculty Senate is also the executive secretary of the University Council. Recommendations from the Faculty Senate are generally forwarded to the University Council for consideration and action.

The **Operating Staff Council** consists of 16 members elected by the operating staff according to the council’s Constitution and Bylaws, which requires at least one representative from each division. The council serves as an advisory group to the university administration concerning the general welfare of operating staff employees, and is responsible for appointing operating staff employees as representatives on various university committees. The council also provides a means of effective communication between members of the operating staff and the university administration, plans and organizes recreational and education activities for the operating staff, and authorizes the expenditure of funds under its jurisdiction.

The **Supportive Professional Staff Council** is comprised of one representative (and one alternate) for every 30 full-time equivalent professional staff positions from each of six defined areas. Members of the supportive professional staff fulfill a variety of administrative and service roles including academic advisors, directors of major support and student-service units, non-academic vice and associate vice presidents, child-development specialists, head coaches, health educators, information systems managers, physicians, research associates, research scientists, teaching consultants, and the university counsel, among others. The council facilitates communication among the university’s professional staff and serves as a vehicle for articulating staff interests and concerns to the administration and other campus constituencies.
Nearly as old as the university itself, the NIU Student Association has gone through many name changes and reorganizations in the last 100 years. The executive branch of the association is headed by a president, elected by the students. The other constitutional officers, a vice president, treasurer, and student trustee, are also elected by the student body. Along with an appointed chief-of-staff and ten staff members, the constitutional officers function as an executive cabinet. The legislative branch consists of a unicameral senate with 40 elected members chosen by districts. The senate elects all of its officers, including a speaker, from its own membership. The senate has budgetary control, approval of all shared governance appointments by the Student Association president, and the authority to override Student Association presidential vetoes. The judicial branch consists of an appointed supreme court, which elects its own chief justice. The court rules on the constitutionality of actions taken by Student Association-recognized organizations, interprets constitutions and by-laws of those organizations, and rules on appeals related to the proper conduct of elections. A recent change in the Student Association bylaws gives members of the judicial branch tenure until they are no longer students at NIU. This membership extension has dramatically improved the consistency and professionalism of the court.

**PLANNING**

Planning is an ongoing process that occurs at all organizational levels, and is embedded within the responsibilities of both the executive and administrative offices of the university and the faculty/staff shared-governance committees. The discussion that follows presents an overview of some of the planning processes at the executive and inter-division levels and within each of the university’s four major divisions.

**Executive and Inter-Division Planning**

The president and the vice presidents who comprise the membership of the executive staff work with the NIU Board of Trustees to advance the university’s mission with external constituencies that include the Illinois General Assembly, the governor, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The president and the vice presidents meet regularly as a Senior Cabinet, which also includes key members of the president’s staff and the vice president for research. The cabinet engages in planning initiatives that address the overall management of university operations, budgeting, relationships with external constituencies, and NIU’s research and legislative agendas, among others. At appropriate times, individuals from among the staff of the president’s and vice presidents’ offices, deans, chairs, directors, faculty, staff, and students are enlisted to provide information or assist in the representation of NIU’s instruction, research and artistry, outreach, and legislative agendas to external entities.
Collaborative planning between and among the divisions is evidenced in the renovation of the university's infrastructure, the development of the university's expanded outreach mission, and the advancement of instructional priorities. For example, the coordination of academic building and renovation projects is orchestrated among the Division of Finance and Facilities, the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, and Information Technology Services within the Division of Administration and Outreach. Projects are planned to minimize the disruption of instructional activities and the loss of instructional space in times of high demand. The scheduling for the installation of smart classroom technology during the summer and other times when the use of classrooms is minimal has been in place since the inception of this project. The construction of Barsema Hall and other structures, such as Faraday West, and the renovation of space in many buildings that serve faculty and students are carried out in a coordinated manner to ensure that working and instructional space, technology support, and health and safety needs are met.

The installation of new institutional software platforms to support financial and human resource services operations was planned by the staff in the Division of Finance and Facilities, Information Technology Services, and Human Resource Services. These multiyear projects also involved representatives from all divisions as their impact was institution-wide. The planning for the installation and implementation of a new student information platform is a joint effort that involves primarily those in the Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs, Administration and NIU Outreach, and Finance and Facilities.

Coordinated efforts across divisions were employed in the development of the outreach centers: NIU Hoffman Estates (opened in 1992), NIU Rockford (opened in 1995), and NIU Naperville, (opened in 2000). Initial steps to create a new, central outreach organization involved the transfer of oversight for the outreach centers from the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, followed by the transfer of the Center for Governmental Studies from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, to the then-named Division of Administration. The two divisions continue to engage in ongoing outreach planning efforts to create new partnerships between the university and the K-12 sector and community colleges. These partnerships include the statewide P-20 Initiative, and the RVC/NIU partnership, which brings baccalaureate degree-completion programs to the community college campus, among other efforts.

The Division of University Advancement works with units across the divisions to design and to participate in the development of initiatives that support the university's goals. Plans for the re-creation of the university's alumni publication, Northern Now, from a newspaper to magazine format
arose in the Senior Cabinet as a strategic move to strengthen the university’s relationship with its alumni. Northern Now is funded by the NIU Foundation and is produced by collaborative efforts from the Offices of Publications and Public Affairs. The Office of Alumni Relations and the NIU Alumni Association sponsor on- and off-campus events that create ties with individual alumni and alumni groups, and support the Outstanding Alumni Awards for individuals selected by the colleges to honor the exceptional accomplishments of alumni. The NIU Foundation works closely with Intercollegiate Athletics, the vice presidents and deans, and others to identify donors who provide the gifts that support student scholarships, endowed chairs, facilities development, and other projects of import to NIU.

The Division of Academic and Student Affairs
Planning in the Division of Academic and Student Affairs occurs at multiple levels. The provost works with the Council of Deans, directors, the provost’s staff, and university committees in various configurations on planning initiatives to advance the university’s mission. In turn, each of these constituencies works with those within their units and committees to implement initiatives in a manner consistent with their responsibilities.

The deans coordinate planning through their college senates and advisory boards in concert with the colleges’ mission statements. Additional information about college planning and priorities is presented in the chapters on undergraduate and graduate programs, research and artistry, and libraries, museums, and galleries.

Among the recent initiatives carried out within the division was the development of two documents to create an overall approach for planning. Upon the recommendation of the NIU Board of Trustees and under the leadership of the provost, in the summer of 1998 the Council of Deans began work on crafting a statement to guide the academic colleges, the University Libraries, the Graduate School, and other units within the division, in addressing planning issues. The resulting document, The Deans’ Planning Framework, characterizes the university’s internal and external environments, its challenges and opportunities, and sets forth a context for planning within the units of the division.

A second initiative undertaken by the Council of Deans at the request of the president and under the direction of the provost was the development, in 2001, of Deans’ Framework for Maximizing Outreach. This framework identifies the qualities and purposes of colleges’ and the University Libraries’ contributions to and the issues that affect high impact outreach for NIU. The concepts promulgated in the framework were used in the creation of the new NIU Outreach unit, and continue to guide the
collaborative efforts between the Division of Academic and Student Affairs and the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach in advancing NIU’s service and outreach mission.

Planned changes within the division include the creation in 1998 of the University Assessment Panel and the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center. Additional information about the University Assessment Panel can be found in the University Assessment Plan. In the mid-1990s the provost instituted a comprehensive review of the existing Faculty Development Office to realign its mission and to create an organization that would have the greatest impact in meeting the training and development needs of faculty. As a result of this review, the mission of the office was refocused on faculty training in the use and integration of technologies into their instructional activities, and on approaches for increasing students’ engagement in learning. In 1998 the office was reconstituted as the Faculty Development and Instruction Design Center, a permanent director was hired to supervise its operations, and funds were allocated to support the mission of the center. In addition, the university made a substantial investment in the purchase of a site license for the Blackboard® software platform for faculty use in designing online and blended courses.

Although NIU had a long-established and effective means of responding to student complaints, in 1999 new procedures were put in place to meet federal regulations for documenting the number and disposition of these complaints. A system for recording complaints on issues related to academic affairs, student affairs, and other matters was devised, and individuals were designated to maintain logs of written student complaints. All specified offices endeavor to respond to and to resolve complaints in a timely and professional manner, maintain appropriate files and records, and follow-up with other offices to which complaints have been referred to assure an appropriate university response to all student complaints.

In 1999 the Illinois Board of Higher Education, in a coordinated effort with representatives of the Illinois public universities and the Illinois Community College Board, completed the major components of a program review redesign process. The results of this process eliminated the statewide schedule for program review, which enabled campuses to create their own schedule to best meet campus needs. The provost, the Council of Deans, and the Academic Planning Council took advantage of this opportunity, and developed a revised schedule of program review to best meet NIU’s needs.

The redesign process also permitted campuses to implement curricular offerings below the level of degree programs without seeking IBHE
approval, and changed the procedure for seeking off-campus degree-granting authority from individual community college districts to regional consortia. Both of these changes have greatly facilitated the division’s ability to revise its curricular offerings in a more timely manner, and to respond more quickly to increasing requests for the delivery of its programs at regional sites. They have also reduced administrative paperwork and the delay in bringing programs to students in the region, and significantly advanced the university’s overall outreach mission.

The IBHE’s development of the statewide plan for higher education, the Illinois Commitment, in 1999, involved a new reporting requirement in the form of a Results Report. The preparation of the university’s annual Results Report, coordinated in the Office of the Provost, is based on input solicited from the Academic Planning Council, the University Assessment Panel, the Council of Deans, the division vice presidents, and the provost’s staff. The development of the report provides one means by which the outcomes of planning efforts to fulfill NIU’s mission can be communicated to the campus community and the NIU Board of Trustees, as well as the higher board. The Results Report also provides a means to involve more university constituencies in decision-making processes. For example, in 2003 a set of “mission-specific indicators” was added to the report. These indicators were selected based on the recommendations of the Academic Planning Council, the University Assessment Panel, and other campus groups.

Upon assuming his responsibilities as executive vice president and provost in 2001, J. Ivan Legg commenced a coordinated set of activities designed to increase the diversity of the university’s faculty. In collaboration with the Council of Deans, a series of deans’ retreats were planned to discuss internal and external best practices, programming, and approaches for designing searches and retention strategies to increase the diversity of NIU’s faculty. The chairs and directors of the academic departments have engaged in several discussions of approaches that could be used to achieve this goal, and a nationally known speaker presented a workshop on diversity issues for chairs.

The Division of Administration and NIU Outreach
The Illinois state legislature, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the president have all emphasized the significance of service and accountability to the public-at-large. The Division of Administration and NIU Outreach implements and consolidates these important aspects of the NIU mission under one umbrella through continuing-education programs, off-campus sites, online education, technology services, and partnerships with business, industry, government, and educational institutions.
In 1996, the president and Board of Trustees created the Division of Administration in order to streamline and produce efficiencies for previously separated units that served both academic affairs and financial operations for the whole university. Units within the division include Business and Industry Services, Northern Public Radio, the Office of Public Affairs, and Information Technology Services, which has taken on increasing importance as the provider of the telecommunications and computer access for the university community. President Peters has further consolidated the function of service to Illinois citizens by adding the unit of NIU Outreach to create the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach. Each unit within the division has its own values/mission/planning documents and processes.

NIU Outreach, created in 2002, is still developing ongoing assessment and planning processes. The division was originally formed by a planning team appointed by the division vice president that included broad representation from the regional centers, external programming, grants, contracts, Information Technology Services, and Human Resources, which has since been moved to the Division of Finance and Facilities. At this time the nascent division is being guided by a Phase II NIU Outreach Coordinating Team and three planning teams. There is also an ad hoc group organized by the provost to facilitate communication between NIU Outreach and the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. This group consists of the provost, the vice president of the Division of Administration and NIU Outreach, and the deans of the Colleges of Business, Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Health and Human Sciences. These are the colleges that have the most extensive offerings at regional sites. There is also an Outreach Advisory Committee, which includes representative faculty from each of the academic colleges, the Graduate School, University Libraries, the provost’s office, and the vice president for administration and university outreach. A vision and mission statement has been developed for NIU Outreach. Units within NIU Outreach include Business and Industry Services (corporate training and consulting), eLearning Services, the Center for Governmental Studies (public policy development and public service), and the four regional education sites at Naperville, Rockford, Hoffman Estates, and the Lorado Taft Field Campus. Further discussion of this division is included in the chapter on service and outreach.

Finally, since the last self-study, Office of the General Counsel has moved from the Division of Administration to the Office of the President. In 2003, the Office of the General Counsel and the Office of the Corporate Counsel were consolidated to form the Office of Legal Services in order to strengthen and streamline legal operations, allow for more uniform reporting of legal issues, and realize administrative cost savings.
The Division of Finance and Facilities

Able planning and leadership in the area of finances and facilities is always valuable to a university, but it is especially critical during periodic downturns in the economy. A 1996 merger and consolidation of the Division of Finance and Planning with the Division of Business and Operations created the new Division of Finance and Facilities. This stimulated greater efficiency and coordination among units with closely related functions, eliminating duplicative reporting lines and realizing cost savings. The Operations area coordinates, plans, and manages physical facilities including maintenance, parking, buildings, physical plant, and grounds. The Financial Affairs area coordinates, plans, and manages materials procurement, purchasing, receiving, billing, property control, storage, accounting, the Office of the Bursar, the Office of the Controller, and all routine fiscal management. Both units report to the Executive Vice President for Finance and Facilities, but the most important planning functions for finance, facilities, and space fall directly under the purview of this division vice president.

For each area of the university, plans are developed in response to needs expressed by various university constituencies through shared governance or administrative initiatives, and they are reviewed by a broad representation of the university community. The University Council/Faculty Senate Resources, Space, and Budget Committee, which is widely representative of the entire university community, serves as an advisory and consulting body, for example. When appropriate, the City of DeKalb and other government agencies are also consulted. Major projects and policies that become a high priority in this process are discussed by the Senior Cabinet, with final decision-making power held by the president and, when necessary, the NIU Board of Trustees. Planning for financial, facilities and space needs is carried out for the short, intermediate, and long terms, and is annually reassessed in consultation with university constituencies; this results in flexible, timely responses to changing current priorities.

One of the greatest successes and evidence of good financial planning was realized in 2001 when Moody's Investor Services upgraded the rating on Northern Illinois University bonds to AA, thus effectively lowering the cost of borrowing for the university. Another signal success since the last self-study, which led to cost savings of over $500,000, resulted from accurate winter weather predictions by the staff meteorologist that allowed the university to develop an optimally efficient energy purchase strategy.

Planning is also essential to create and maintain facilities, buildings, and land usage. Proposals may originate from any level, are reviewed by the wider university community, and given final approval by the president and Board of Trustees. A campus master plan for maintaining and improving
the infrastructure of the university was developed in 1985, with Sasaki Associates acting as consultants. The plan is annually updated in response to expressed campus facilities needs. Space usage is benchmarked in the context of peer-institution practices. A priority list of campus infrastructure maintenance and renovation needs is reassessed annually and communicated to the state. The West Campus Master Plan, Far West Campus Master Plan, and North 40 Master Plan have resulted in a number of new buildings, residence-hall upgrades, and a vastly improved living/learning campus environment since the last self-study. These will be more fully developed in the chapter on finance and facilities.

The Division of University Advancement

The president of the university has insightfully indicated that the rapidly decreasing percentage of state funding support for NIU’s operating budget, currently at 30 percent, requires funds to be raised from other sources. While tuition, fees, grants and other sponsored projects, and the federal government are being tapped to provide some of the shortfall, the Division of University Advancement (formerly the Division of Development and University Relations) takes on added importance for the future of Northern Illinois University in this context. The three units of the division include Development, University Relations, and Alumni Relations. Each unit has their own planning processes and holds regular staff meetings. Management representatives from each unit hold monthly planning and coordination meetings.

Development maintains its own values/mission/vision document. The staff holds an annual planning retreat to develop annual strategic plans. The NIU Foundation, a separate legal entity from NIU, operates solely to further the university’s interests. It is designated by the Board of Trustees as the official gift-receiving entity for the university. The Foundation’s own elected Board of Directors establishes policy and reviews all activities. Privately donated funds support areas such as endowed scholarships and building projects, rather than daily university operations. Development support for the Foundation comes from a staff planning, implementation, and evaluation team. An extremely successful initiative implemented since the last self-study has been the NIU Huskie Telefund, an extensive telemarketing program through which students call alumni to solicit contributions. More than $1,000,000 has been collected annually by the telefund, a result far superior to previous results when an external telemarketing firm was employed. Total gifts to NIU have been rising rapidly, more than doubling in the last five years from $5.4 million to $12.8 million.

Alumni Relations provides services and networking to maintain good relations with graduates and to foster gift-giving to the university. It
sponsors special events, local alumni chapters, scholarships, NIU merchandise sales, an Alumni Association, and an alumni directory. Communication instruments are developed through the Office of Publications, and the Office of Special Events coordinates events for the NIU Foundation and the Office of the President.

EVALUATION

The biggest change in the governance structure at Northern Illinois University is the replacement of the Board of Regents, which was responsible for NIU, Illinois State University, and Sangamon State University, with the NIU Board of Trustees. The benefits of this change to NIU have been described above. All eight members of the present board reside in northern Illinois; four of the seven appointed members are NIU alumni; all of the members have demonstrated great loyalty to, and support for, the university. In conjunction with this change, the Joint University Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents was replaced by the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. This committee includes the presidents of the Faculty Senate, the Operating Staff Council, and the Supportive Professional Staff Council. Three additional faculty members selected to represent the faculty's multiple roles in the university, particularly those in teaching, research, and service also serve on the advisory committee.

The University Council, with its related councils and committees, has been constitutionally established as the primary governing body of the university. The NIU Board of Trustees has affirmed the principles and practices of the university's internal governance in its Regulations (Article I, Section 4).

The governance functions of the university are carried out through an elaborate structure of committees, commissions, boards, senates, and councils. Since the last review, some streamlining of the committee structure has taken place, and committees, such as the University Assessment Panel, have been added to address assessment initiatives on campus. Other committees, for example, the University Council and Faculty Senate Publications Board and the University Committee for Naming Facilities, have been deleted. The formation of the joint Faculty Senate-University Council Committee on Resources, Space, and Budget was an innovative solution to the perceived absence of faculty and staff input into the budgeting process and long-range planning; it is still the only such joint committee at NIU. Its chair sits on the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee, and the committee is to be consulted by the president if a financial exigency is imminent, in order to create a Financial Exigency Advisory Committee.
Some changes in the Office of the University Council and Faculty Senate have occurred primarily due to budgetary constraints. There is no longer an editor of University Council and Faculty Senate publications, and the university no longer publishes the Faculty Bulletin, Faculty Senate News, or a paper version of the Faculty Handbook. Most of the information these publications carried now appears on the NIU website. Updating of the Faculty Senate Bylaws, the Committees of the University, and the Constitution and Bylaws is now the responsibility of the administrative assistant to the executive secretary of the University Council and president of the Faculty Senate. The responsibilities of a half-time webmaster have been assumed by the administrative assistant.

NIU’s shared governance system continues to mature. In particular, the Faculty Senate is now a well-integrated part of the governance system. Items that are of primary concern to faculty often originate in the senate, which then forwards its recommendation to the University Council. The president and provost have both spoken of the complexity of NIU’s committee structure, but also of how well it works. Procedures and processes are well laid out, leaving little question as to how searches are conducted or policies are decided upon.

The Faculty Senate, Supportive Professional Staff Council, and Operating Staff Council have all approved ethics statements for their constituencies. Also, a formal line of succession for the executive secretary of the University Council and president of the Faculty Senate has been established, so that in the event this person is unable to perform the duties of the office, it is clear who assumes the responsibilities of the position.

In discussions with the faculty, the effectiveness and usefulness of the university’s shared governance system receive mixed reviews. Faculty, as stated in the Constitution and Bylaws, do predominate in decisions concerning curriculum and faculty personnel matters, and they also have a significant voice in admissions and academic standards, but some would like to have a greater voice in the governance structure. Many faculty feel that there are too many committees with too small a voice in university policy-making. Additionally, many faculty desire a greater role in matters concerning the budget, especially in short-term emergency situations and long-range planning.

Staff participation in the governance structure has not changed significantly over the past ten years, although the role of these employees in the university continues to evolve, especially in areas in which the nature of work has been especially affected by new technology. The Operating Staff Council has become a recognized and respected voice in the shared governance system, and has developed an excellent working relationship
with the administration and the other members of the shared governance system. A second representative of the Operating Staff Council was added to the University Council in 1997, but this representative is a non-voting member. Despite this change, the council feels it is underrepresented on the University Council relative to its size and importance to the university community.

The dissemination of information to all operating staff employees is a challenge for the Operating Staff Council. The university's increasing reliance on electronic technology as a primary means of communication has made access to many documents, human resource service forms, newsletters, and other information more easily available to all employees. However, since not all positions covered by the civil service system need access to computers to fulfill their responsibilities, the council continues to try to distribute news and important information in multiple ways.

Progress has been made in the last ten years in many areas of professional staff governance and interaction with the administration, but the Supportive Professional Staff Council continues to strive to further improve areas such as representation, communication, career advancement, and recognition. Although a second, non-voting, professional staff representative has been added to University Council during this period, members of the professional staff believe themselves to be underrepresented, both on the University Council and on many of the governance committees on which professional staff employees serve. Additionally, the translation of shared governance from the university level to the department level is variable throughout the university, with some departments being inclusive of the staff in decision-making processes and others offering no such provision for input. In 2000, the council implemented an e-mail listserv to facilitate communication to and among the staff members on matters of governance and other areas of interest to the membership. Excellent progress has been made in provision of networked computers to professional staff employees.

Progress has also been made in recognition and compensation for the expanded scope of duties and responsibilities of professional staff employees. In 1997, staff in Human Resource Services, in consultation with the Supportive Professional Staff Council, developed defined procedures related to promotion and title changes within the professional staff categories. Some concerns in this area remain with regard to the consistency with which these policies have been implemented at the unit or department level. The university and the council have also made strides in recognizing the contributions of professional staff members to the fulfillment of the university's mission. The most significant of these have been creation of the Supportive Professional Staff Presidential Award for Excellence, an increase
in funds available for professional staff development, and the Gary Gray Award for Service to the Supportive Professional Staff Council. Improvements sought by the staff in these areas include additional increases in development funds as the budget permits, and the incorporation of the Presidential Excellence Awards monies into the base pay of the recipients of the awards, as is the practice in the case of similar awards for ranked faculty.

The last ten years have seen major changes in governance at NIU. The NIU Board of Trustees is in place and exhibits firm resolve and high interest in the entire institution and its relationships to the state and the region. The purposes and mission of NIU were reviewed in light of the formation of this independent board, and the board members have worked aggressively for the institution and have become well informed so as to fully meet their responsibilities.

In the past decade, major governance changes resulted from the revision of the Constitution and Bylaws, the maturation of the Faculty Senate and the Supportive Professional Staff Council, and reorganization at the executive levels. The university’s governance structure and processes have worked well through major challenges such as enrollment increases and changing student demographics; support for technology-mediated instruction, communications, and operations; maintenance of the campus infrastructure; and the current state of the Illinois economy and its impact on the university’s budget. The university’s administrators in general and the president in particular have provided open communications about university priorities, and the campus as a whole has been involved in important aspects of decision making.

The university faces many challenges within its governance structure. Because of the demands of shared governance, curricular and personnel processes are slow and somewhat cumbersome; however, the governance structure does provide a system of checks and balances and the involvement of many faculty at the department, college, and university levels.

Several factors may affect the university’s current governance structure in the future. Effective shared governance requires that a sufficient number of students, faculty, and staff are willing to volunteer the time and effort to participate in the processes. As faculty and staff are asked to assume more responsibilities with fewer resources and students seek ways to balance academic study with employment and family responsibilities, that willingness may be reduced. Historically, however, many people have demonstrated a willingness to make time to participate in governance structures. Differences in perspective exist regarding the kinds of decisions that fall under the umbrella of shared governance and those with administrative responsibilities; it is important to clarify these areas.
periodically. It is also important to balance the speed with which some decisions need to be made with the importance of shared governance input. The availability of electronic communications options, such as threaded discussions and email, could be used in better facilitating appropriate participation without compromising timeliness. The university community also has the opportunity to streamline its committee structures and decision-making processes to expedite actions on important matters. In the last decade the governance system has generally involved the appropriate constituencies in the decision-making processes necessary for the institution to carry on its mission and to respond to change. NIU continues to be dynamic in character with a shared governance system to match.

Responsibilities for planning within the university are clearly delineated and widely distributed. The president, vice presidents, deans, chairs, and faculty committees have the primary responsibility for planning under authority granted by the Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University and the NIU Board of Trustees.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion One: The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

a. long- and short-range institutional and educational goals
b. processes, involving its constituencies, through which the institution evaluates its purposes.
c. decision-making processes that are appropriate to its stated mission and purposes
d. understanding of the stated purposes by institutional constituencies
f. support for freedom of inquiry for faculty and students

Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

a. governance by a board consisting of informed people who understand their responsibilities, function in accordance with stated board policies, and have the resolve necessary to preserve the institution’s integrity
b. effective administration through well-defined and understood organizational structures, policies, and procedures
c. qualified and experienced administrative personnel who oversee institutional activities and exercise appropriate responsibility for them
d. systems of governance that provide dependable information to the institution’s constituencies and, as appropriate, involve them in decision-making processes

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

f. ongoing support for professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators
h. staff and faculty service that contributes to the institution’s effectiveness

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution
d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution’s continuance

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
d. institutional publications, statements, and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs
h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations
Providing educational opportunities, support, and support services for students is the primary mission of institutions of higher education. It is, therefore, important to review some of the characteristics of the students enrolled at NIU, and the implications of these characteristics for the university’s future planning. Discussion of the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that serve these students and the academic and student support services that address their interests and needs is found in subsequent chapters.

ENROLLMENTS

The last ten years have seen fluctuations in the number of students attending Northern Illinois University (see Table 1). In the fall of 1994, the enrollment of undergraduate, graduate level, and law students was 22,881, but by 1996, overall enrollments had decreased to 21,609 students. Since this period of decline, which had actually begun in 1992, the institution has experienced continual enrollment growth, surpassing the 25,000 mark in fall 2003 for the first time since 1987. The 4.9 percent increase from fall 2001 to fall 2002 was the single highest percentage increase in the decade; this increase was followed by an additional 1.3 percent increase in enrollments in fall 2003.

Trends varied slightly among the three groups of students enrolled during the 10-year period from 1994 to 2003. The above-mentioned trend of enrollment decreases through fall 1996, followed by a steady increase that has continued through 2003, is reflective of a 15 percent increase in the size of the university’s undergraduate student body. Graduate-level enrollments exhibited an 8 percent decrease from 6,158 students in 1995 to 5,674 students in 1999 that has been followed by a steady increase in enrollments. The enrollment of 6,651 graduate students in fall 2003 is the highest since 1982. Enrollments in the College of Law varied from a low of 276 students in 1999 to a high of 334 students in 2003, showing an enrollment decline in the late 1990s and recovery in the last several years. Enrollments in all three student groups have increased since fall 1999 and all three groups were at their highest enrollment levels in fall 2003.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Graduate¹</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Fall 1995</td>
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<td>334</td>
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¹In this chapter, graduate-level student is referring to two groups combined: those admitted to a graduate-degree program and students-at-large.
The current enrollment increases are likely due to several factors. One factor is certainly the general increase in the number of students graduating from high school, with a particularly strong increase in the high-school and general populations in the northern Illinois region. Data on high school seniors in NIU's primary service area show an increase in numbers from 86,384 in fall 1993 to 103,194 projected for fall 2003. This number is expected to increase by approximately 10,000 by 2011. Growth is related to at least two demographic patterns. First, there is a significant population movement toward DeKalb from the nearby Chicago metropolitan area. Second, Rockford, Illinois' second largest city, is also growing, and is less than 40 miles from DeKalb. According to U.S. census data, between 1990 and 2000, the population in the Rockford metropolitan area grew from 207,826 to 270,414. These population trends will not only impact the number of potential students in the service area, but may also increase the proportion of students who will commute to campus or increase the need to offer a greater number of courses, including those at the undergraduate level, at regional sites.

A second factor that may be contributing to the recent growth in enrollment is the economic climate. There is a general tendency for post-secondary enrollments to increase during periods of economic downturn. The current downturn and slow recovery have particularly impacted the technology, corporate, and industrial sectors, which are major components in the economy of NIU's service area.

While enrollment numbers and trends are important, they certainly do not tell the whole story of NIU's students. Students enter NIU through different paths. Each year, a significant portion (40 percent in fall 2003) of the new undergraduate students is transfer students, primarily from Illinois community colleges (70 percent). With 3,239 new freshmen and 2,152 transfer students, almost 30 percent of the undergraduate students were new to NIU in fall 2003.

There is significant variability in full-time/part-time enrollment by student sector. For undergraduates, the majority are full-time students (89 percent in fall 2002), which is also true for law students (99 percent in fall 2003). The picture is reversed, however, for graduate students, where the majority of students are part-time: in fall 2003, 69.5 percent were part-time students. It is worth noting that during the last three years, full-time graduate-level headcount increased by at least 115 per year. The graduate programs in the Colleges of Business and the College of Education are tailored to the needs of professionals who enroll in graduate work while maintaining employment in their fields, which accounts for the high percentage of part-time graduate students at NIU.
A similar pattern is seen in on- and off-campus enrollments. While undergraduates (98 percent) and law students (100 percent) enroll in coursework on campus, 38 percent of the graduate students complete courses at regional sites. Of these off-campus graduate students, more than 90 percent are enrolled part time. The majority take courses offered by the Colleges of Business and Education, taking advantage of the program foci of the colleges in addressing the needs of working professionals.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND DIVERSITY

In terms of gender, both the undergraduate and graduate-level student populations have remained relatively constant, with women comprising the majority of these groups. At the undergraduate level, women are 54 percent of the student body, a 1 percent increase over the proportion enrolled in 1994. At the graduate level, women compose the majority of students at 61.5 percent of the student body, 2 percent more than in 1994. Until 2001, men comprised the majority of the students enrolled in the College of Law. In fall 2002, however, 170 students (51.4 percent) enrolled in the college were women.

The undergraduate student body has become diverse in its racial and ethnic mix (see Table 2). In 1994, 78.8 percent of the undergraduate students were white. In 2002, this percentage dropped to 73.1 percent. Since 1994, there has been an increase in both number and percentage of Black, Hispanic, and Asian students, with the greatest increase among Black students.

The racial/ethnic composition of the graduate population experienced an increase in each minority group from 1994 to 2002 (see Table 3). The College of Law, however, has actually become less diverse, although there is greater variability from year to year within this group (see Table 4).

The diversity of the student body is also reflected in the numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Fall 1994</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1,435</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>883</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>16,121</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Graduate Students</th>
<th>Fall 1994</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>138</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4,747</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>5,729</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of international students and permanent residents. In fall 2002, 233 international and 557 permanent resident undergraduate students were enrolled in the university; the graduate student population included 578 international and 82 permanent resident students. These students were from 122 countries.

In fall of 2002, NIU’s students ranged in age from 16 to 78 years. The mean age for undergraduate students is 21 years; the mean age for graduate students is 33.9 years; and the mean age of students enrolled in the College of Law is 28 years. At the undergraduate level, the majority of students (87 percent) are clearly within the traditional 24 and under group. Approximately 10 percent of the undergraduate population is between the ages of 25 and 34, and 3 percent is 35 years of age and over. There have been slight variations in the percentage of students in each age group, but those 24 years of age and under have consistently comprised 84 percent to 88 percent of the undergraduate student body. As would be expected, graduate students are older than the undergraduate population.

Approximately 60 percent of the graduate students are 34 years of age and under, while 15 percent to 19 percent are 45 years of age and older.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC BACKGROUND</th>
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</table>

Undergraduate students attending NIU come from various academic backgrounds. More than 75 percent of new freshmen graduated in the top 50 percent of their high school classes. The mean high-school percentile class rank was 64.3 in 2002. This mean rank had declined slightly between 1992 and 2001, but rose in 2002 from 63.6 to 64.3. The same trend occurred in the percentage of students in the top 50 percent of their high school class: 80.3 percent in 1997, 74.2 percent in 2001, 76.2 percent in 2002. The mean NIU ACT composite score in 2002 was 22.2; this is the highest mean ACT composite score during the 10-year evaluation cycle.

NIU has a strong tradition of providing opportunities for high school students who may not have had a strong academic background. Each year, the special admission program, Counseling, Help, and Assistance Necessary for a College Education (CHANCE), admits approximately 500 students who do not meet traditional admissions standards but who show the potential to succeed in college. The NIU student body also includes many students who are first-generation college students. Data on new freshmen in
2001 show that 42 percent of NIU freshmen have a father with a college degree (versus 58.6 percent of all Illinois public university freshmen), and 36.9 percent of NIU freshmen have a mother with a college degree (versus 53.6 percent of all Illinois public university freshmen).

In comparison with national GRE scores, graduate students new to the university in 2002 entered with a mean verbal percentile slightly below the national mean (47.3), and a mean quantitative percentile slightly above the national mean (56.1). The verbal scores, both raw and percentile, have been steadily decreasing during the review cycle, but quantitative scores have increased. Mean GMAT scores for entering graduate students have also declined from a high of 548.1 in 1993 to 510.1 in 2002. Several significant factors may account for the trends in these data. First, the number of international students enrolled at NIU increased by approximately 170 students (2 percent) over the review period. For many of these students, English is not their first language, and while they often score well on the quantitative portions of the examinations, they may struggle more on the verbal portions of them. Second, departments may now waive the national examinations as an admission requirement for their own undergraduates who have GPAs of 3.00 or who are higher seeking admission to their graduate programs. This change in the admissions process removes some of the better-qualified students from the pool of those who write the national examinations for admission to NIU, thus reducing the mean scores of those applicants who do. Finally, some programs no longer require either the GRE or GMAT, but have alternate requirements for admission. For example, the programs in the visual and performing arts rely on portfolio reviews or auditions rather than test scores. Some programs, such as the Master of Science in Taxation, will waive the examinations for those with substantial professional experience or a law degree. These practices also remove potentially very strong candidates from the ranks of those who are required to write the examinations to meet admission requirements.

EVALUATION

One of the important challenges for the university is enrollment management. As the university emerged from the effects of the higher board's Productivity, Quality, and Priorities initiative in the mid-1990s, an enrollment-management plan was implemented as a result of a combination of factors. These factors included a reduction in the number of tenure-eligible faculty positions, a decrease in the proportion of university funding appropriated by the state, changes in enrollment patterns that made historical projections about the proportion of students admitted to the university who matriculated less accurate, and the state's method for appropriating the income funds generated by tuition. At that time, the state required that universities surrender the annual tuition funds collected by
the campuses for re-appropriation the next fiscal year. The re-appropriation level was based on enrollment projections for the fiscal year, and if actual enrollments were greater than the projections, the amount of the re-appropriation was not adjusted to reflect the enrollment increase. This model severely limited the university's flexibility in accommodating students' needs for course sections and support services.

Concomitant with the change in the system of governing-board oversight of the state universities, when each institution acquired its own governing board in 1996, was a change in the management of tuition funds. The management of the university's budget, including tuition income, was assigned to the NIU Board of Trustees. This change gave the university the flexibility it needed to allocate funds for instruction to areas of greatest demand, and made the need for stringent enrollment management less critical. The late-1990s was also a period in which some new funding from state general revenue sources for university priorities further enabled NIU to begin filling faculty positions that had been lost earlier in the decade. The funding also permitted NIU to augment faculty salaries, to expand instructional support, and to begin addressing deferred maintenance issues.

Today the university faces challenges similar to those it faced almost a decade ago, again creating the need for increased attention to enrollment management. With budget rescissions over the last three years, hiring freezes for certain employment categories, guaranteed tuition legislation, increased costs for utilities and other services, and an enrollment increase to more than 25,000 students, the university has again focused its efforts on developing strategies to configure a student body that can derive the greatest benefit from its academic offerings.

National and state demographics suggest that thousands more students will be entering colleges and universities in the next 5-10 years. NIU is located near a high-density, increasingly diverse population base, and expects to be the beneficiary of this enrollment boom given its proximity to Chicago and the western suburbs, its reputation for quality programs, its reasonable costs, its commitment to serving a diverse student population, and the high levels of satisfaction alumni report about their NIU experiences. The projected undergraduate enrollment trends pose both challenges and opportunities for NIU. As costs for a college education continue to rise, and the financial burden for higher education is shifted from state support to tuition and fees, a greater number of undergraduate students may need to enroll part-time, as commuters to DeKalb or to regional centers, to meet their educational goals. More students may choose to attend community colleges, and complete associate degree programs prior to enrollment at the university, or as is currently the case for some students, enroll at community colleges and the university simultaneously. For those who do choose to attend full-time, the pressure to take a full course load to complete degree
requirements within the timeframe for guaranteed tuition rates is likely to increase.

All of these factors present challenges for the university in balancing enrollment demands with budget constraints, maintaining accessibility and affordability, selecting a diverse mix of undergraduate students from the total number of those qualified for admission, and preserving a commitment to serve under-prepared students. Predicting the specific patterns of enrollment that students can elect from among the choices they have for attending full- or part-time, transferring from community colleges, or simultaneously enrolling in more than one institution and matching those enrollment patterns with an appropriate configuration of courses that will enable timely degree completion also presents challenges. A final challenge lies in assisting students who enter as undecided or change majors after admission with the selection of majors appropriate to their interests and abilities.

These same factors provide NIU with opportunities to grow to a size that will better meet the needs and better reflect the diversity of its service region, and to expand its degree offerings on campus and at regional sites. The major threat to seizing these opportunities is the erosion of state appropriations to the university. Nonetheless, some initiatives are already in place that will enable NIU to both meet these challenges and take the greatest advantage of the opportunities to serve its region. These initiatives are explicated more fully elsewhere in the self-study, but two points are also worthy of note here. First, the university has initiated a new enrollment management plan. Now in its third year, the enrollment management team has begun to implement the processes to position the university to meet the changes in enrollment patterns anticipated in the future. Second, expanded collaborative efforts among the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, the Division of Administration and University Outreach and the Division of Finance and Facilities have created new levels of synergy and momentum that underlie the planning processes for recreating the university into the “premier regional university” envisioned by the president, and for serving all students who can benefit from NIU’s programs.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

f. a sufficient number of students enrolled to meet the institution’s stated educational purposes
Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The Northern Illinois University Mission and Scope Statement places a strong emphasis on undergraduate studies, and reflects the central role of baccalaureate education as a principal component of the university’s contributions to higher education in the state. The changes that have occurred in undergraduate education between 1994 and 2003 demonstrate efforts across the university to preserve and to strengthen the university’s commitment to providing the northern Illinois region and beyond with graduates who are well prepared to be effective members of a complex society and of a workforce of adaptive, lifelong learners. NIU offers a wide variety of undergraduate degree programs that are delineated in the discussions below, and is dedicated to providing a solid educational foundation to all students through the delivery of a coherent general education program.

This chapter presents an overview of undergraduate education, curriculum development, and the University Honors Program at NIU, and then focuses on the two major components of undergraduate education: the general education program and the undergraduate degree programs. A brief discussion of the minors and certificates of undergraduate study is also presented.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

NIU delivers its undergraduate mission through six colleges: Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts. The assignment of programs to their respective college produces administrative economies, appropriate disciplinary oversight, and synergies between and among programs, faculty, and students.

The university seeks external validation of the quality of its educational programs through accreditation by U.S. Department of Education-approved accrediting organizations. All of the NIU undergraduate programs eligible for accreditation are accredited, and several subunits of degree programs have professional approvals. This standard of excellence is achieved by the selection of highly qualified faculty; vigilant attention to changing disciplinary practices; the regular review of curricular offerings; the creation of affiliations and partnerships that augment classroom, laboratory, and studio instruction; the assessment of outcomes; and the allocation of resources to support outstanding educational offerings for students.
In accord with best practices in higher education and the principles of shared governance at NIU, the faculty predominate in all programmatic decision-making affecting undergraduate education. The Constitution and Bylaws state that the “[r]esponsibility for the university’s curriculum is vested in its faculty. As the university’s body of learned scholars, the faculty shall have primary determinative influence over matters of curriculum policy.” Faculty set the requirements for degree programs and other curricular offerings. When students meet these requirements, notations are recorded on their transcripts.

Evidence of faculty voice in the development and implementation of curricula, program admission and retention standards, and academic policies is found in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog, which reflects the decisions made and approved by faculty committees at the department, college, and/or university levels. While faculty predominate in these matters, undergraduate students are members of curriculum and academic policy committees at all levels. Academic policies are also included in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual.

At the university level, the Undergraduate Coordinating Council oversees a number of standing committees charged with specific responsibilities related to the delivery of undergraduate programs and the implementation of academic policies. These committees include: the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum, the General Education Committee, the Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee, the Committee for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education, the Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment, and the Honors Committee. Curricular matters related to teacher-preparation programs must also be approved by the Committee on Initial Teacher Certification. The oversight of these committees by the Undergraduate Coordinating Council provides the means for ensuring a breadth of input from faculty across the colleges, while at the same time promoting consistency in academic standards and policies.

Following the approval of curricular changes or new curricular offerings by the Undergraduate Coordinating Council, additional action may be necessary for some items. The listing below reflects the sources of additional action required on approvals by the Undergraduate Coordinating Council only, both the Undergraduate Coordinating Council and the Graduate Council (described in the chapter on graduate and professional programs), or the Graduate Council only. This information is presented here in an effort to avoid repetition in reporting on the requirements for additional action.
• The president approves name changes for departments and research and service units, and title changes for degree programs, emphases, specializations, minors, and concentrations.

• The Academic Planning Council endorses the creation of all new degree programs and permanent research and service units.

• The Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee of the NIU Board of Trustees forwards its recommendations for approval to the Board of Trustees of the deletion of existing or the approval of new degree programs, emphases, specializations, minors, and concentrations; the off-campus delivery of degree programs; and the deletion or creation of permanent research and service units.

• The Illinois Board of Higher Education approves requests for new degree programs, off-campus degree-granting authority, and the creation of temporary or permanent research and service units.

In addition to the committee system in place for the development and refinement of curricula, NIU has an established process of program review that is conducted by the Academic Planning Council. This council conducts the internal reviews of degree programs at all levels and the university’s research and service units. Based on a peer-review model, subcommittees of faculty on the council review the program documents, meet with department and college representatives, and present their findings and recommendations to the full council. These reviews provide an important opportunity for departments, colleges, and the provost’s office to examine the structure, processes, and outcomes of its degree programs and research and service units, and serve as one mechanism for planning within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs. The results of the program reviews are presented to the NIU Board of Trustees and then forwarded to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. In concert with the program review process is the review of program assessment plans by the University Assessment Panel. The articulation of the work of the Academic Planning Council and the University Assessment Panel and the integration of evidence from and the action taken on assessment findings into the program review process are discussed more fully in the University Assessment Plan.

NIU participates in, and contributes to the development of, the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), which is administered by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in coordination with the Illinois Community College Board, to establish articulation guidelines throughout the state. The Illinois Articulation Initiative stipulates NIU’s acceptance of associate in science degrees and other course work from Illinois community colleges as evidence of completion of a student’s general education program of study and the equivalence of courses between and among Illinois public institutions. This initiative decreases the duplication of course work previously encountered.
by students transferring from community colleges to senior institutions, increases the ability of students to progress in a timely manner in their chosen degree programs, and upholds the principles of the core competency and general education programs. This initiative is particularly important to NIU, which has the largest population of students transferring from community colleges in the state. Approximately 40 percent of NIU's undergraduate student body is comprised of transfer students.

Related to the Illinois Articulation Initiative are the university's numerous dual-admission agreements with community colleges. These agreements provide students with the opportunity to enroll simultaneously at the community college and NIU, and to receive the benefits of advisement and other services from both institutions as they progress in completing degree requirements. Laudable in principle but seldom taken advantage of by community college students, these agreements have the potential for serving more students as the university establishes more formal links with community colleges as exemplified in the NIU partnership with Rock Valley College.

**EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING**

Because teaching is a central means for fulfilling the university's mission, outstanding teachers are acknowledged by the university community. Among other university, college, and department awards for excellence in teaching, in 1991, NIU Presidential Teaching Professorships were established. These professorships recognize those individuals who have demonstrated over time their commitment to and success in the many activities associated with outstanding teaching at the undergraduate and/or graduate level. The title, Presidential Teaching Professor, not only recognizes and honors past excellence in teaching but also provides tangible support for those individuals so honored in the form of a $2,000 increment in base salary and a grant of $5,000 each year for four years to support activities for the improvement in teaching. In addition, each recipient is provided with one semester of release time to develop new teaching materials or techniques. No more than three awards may be made in any year. Since 1994, 29 individuals from six colleges have been recognized as Presidential Teaching Professors.

**THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM**

The principal mission of the University Honors Program is to promote and support excellence in undergraduate education at NIU. This mission is achieved by identifying and recruiting exceptional students to the program, providing students with enhanced learning opportunities, and delivering extracurricular programs and support services for students. In spring 2003,
approximately 1,100 students, or 6.5 percent of NIU student body, were enrolled in the University Honors Program. These enrollments reflect a 10 percent increase from 2002 and a 49 percent increase from 2001. The majority of students in the program are women (64 percent), and 19 percent are ethnic/racial minorities in comparison to 54 percent and 27 percent of the overall undergraduate student body, respectively.

The program is structured to allow options for students to participate in honors experiences based on individual circumstances or needs. University Honors is conferred upon students who complete 27 semester hours of specified honors course work including an honors seminar and a capstone experience, and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.20. Students graduate with Lower Division Honors upon completion of 15 credits in honors courses, while meeting grade point requirements. Upper Division Honors is conferred upon students who complete 12 semester hours of 300- and 400-level honors courses, including an honors seminar and a capstone project, and meet grade point requirements. A major purpose for Upper Division Honors is to provide an option for those transfer students who are academically qualified and interested in an honors experience. Students’ attainment of University Honors or Lower- or Upper-Division Honors is noted on the transcript.

In order to better serve the students in the program, there is an assessment plan that guides its future directions. One of the recent changes has been to enable honors students to have priority registration; this assists not only in the recruitment of students to the program and the retention of students in the programs, but also helps students to meet honors requirements. There are three main programmatic goals currently on-going: increasing the number and ethnic diversity of students participating in the program; increasing the number of students who participate in the Honors House; and increasing the number of honors seminars to provide more diversity in course offerings, as well as enhancing the students’ abilities to meet honors requirements in a timely manner. This is a challenge during times of restricted resources and increasing numbers of students enrolled in the university overall. Departments may find it very difficult to assign a faculty member to teach an honors class, which by design has fewer students enrolled in it, at the expense of another course in the department that would enroll a larger number of students and/or meet the needs of students in the major.

The alumni of the University Honors Program are satisfied with their experiences. In the most recent survey of alumni, 95 percent indicated that if they had it to do over again, they would join the honors program. In addition, 91 percent indicated their interaction with other honors students was satisfactory or highly satisfactory; 94 percent indicated their interaction
with both the honors faculty and the honors staff was satisfactory or highly satisfactory. They also rated the following components of the program as valuable: academic advising in honors (80 percent), honors residence program (83 percent), capstone project (92 percent), and off-campus events (83 percent).

GENERAL EDUCATION

Northern Illinois University’s General Education Program was developed in the mid-1980s and is required of all students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs. As an integral part of NIU’s baccalaureate experience, the program is designed to provide undergraduate students with the broad educational foundation that underpins the requirements in the major area of study.

Overview of the General Education Program

The General Education Program is comprised of course work in core competencies, and distributive studies in four areas: humanities and arts, science and mathematics, social sciences, and interdisciplinary studies. The four broad learning goals of the program are that students will develop:

- Habits of writing, speaking, and reasoning necessary for continued learning.
- An ability to use modes of inquiry across a variety of disciplines in the humanities and the arts, the physical sciences and mathematics, and the social sciences.
- An understanding of the interrelatedness of various disciplines by integrating knowledge from several disciplines and applying that knowledge to an understanding of important problems and issues.
- Social responsibility and preparation for citizenship through global awareness, environmental sensitivity, and an appreciation of cultural diversity.

To meet these goals students must complete up to 12 semester hours of course work in the core competency areas of mathematics, English, and oral communication. The courses included in these areas were selected to ensure that students have the opportunity to acquire basic skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and mathematics for their baccalaureate studies. Students also select a minimum of 29 semester hours of course work from the four distributive areas, which “...will help students attain a sound liberal education and acquire sufficient general knowledge and intellectual versatility to enable them to become informed and resourceful members of society” (2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 28-29). Additional regulations require that students take courses across several departments to
assure breadth in the general education component; the majority of the courses are delivered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In the mid-1990s, student learning communities emerged as a way for students to link courses together under a common theme, or Focused Interest Groups (FIGs). While each course is taught as a discrete class, faculty focus on the common theme as it relates to their discipline. Students register for linked courses that meet the general education requirements, and also provide the opportunity for them to get to know each other and work together as a learning community. One FIG is organized around general education requirements and is offered within the residence hall communities.

**Oversight of the General Education Program**

The General Education Committee was created to oversee the General Education Program. The committee consists of a constituency of faculty members from all NIU colleges with undergraduate degree programs and three undergraduate students. The vice provost and the assessment coordinator serve as ex officio members of the committee. The committee is charged with the responsibility for ensuring that the goals of general education are met.

As part of its responsibilities, the committee reviews and revises the program goals as needed. In addition, the committee carefully chooses courses for the program that are consistent with the above-stated program goals. Courses submitted for inclusion in the program undergo the committee’s scrutiny, and once approved must undergo a re-approval process every eight years for continued inclusion in the program. Courses initially approved for the program in the 1980s and early 1990s were primarily survey courses, providing a broad background of a specific field. However, since 1994 new course submissions and course re-submissions require that departments identify more precisely how a specific course meets one or more of the four program goals. The most recent (1998) requirements for courses submitted for the program specify that the department provide satisfactory answers to the following questions:

- What are the objectives for student learning in this course?
- How do these objectives address the four learning goals of the General Education Program?
- How does the course evaluation form assess the extent to which the four goals of the General Education Program are being met?
- What assessment tools do you use to indicate that the objectives for the General Education Program are met?
- Based on the outcomes of your assessment activities, what plans do you have for improvement of the course?
In 2001 and 2002, the submission and resubmission documents were reviewed and revised based upon both committee evaluations and responses from faculty who use the documents. Due to greater expectations for the documentation of courses’ contributions to the general education goals and the complexity of the new submission and resubmission documents, the committee has conducted workshops to assist faculty members with developing assessment strategies to document the ways in which the courses meet the goals of general education.

Another major component added to the 1998 (re)submission requirements deals with multiculturalism and diversity. As stated in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual: “As far as feasible, general education courses should attempt to achieve gender balance in knowledge presented by incorporating female as well as male experiences and treating both experiences as authentic and significant. As far as is feasible, an attempt should be made to achieve ethnic minority balance in knowledge presented by incorporating Black, Hispanic, and other ethnic minority experiences and promoting recognition of ethnic minority achievement.” During the (re)submission process, the following items are to be addressed, if they are relevant to the course:

- Pedagogical strategies that accommodate diverse learning styles
- Class materials that use diversity in examples, assignments, or examinations
- Awareness of and accommodation for a diverse student audience
- Scholarship, theories, concepts, facts, contributions, and perspectives of diverse peoples
- Incorporation of cultural democracy, paying attention to a plurality of voices
- Opportunities for seeing other cultures from both insider’s points of view and from non-mainstream points of view
- Promotion of valuing diversity and equal opportunity for all people through understanding the contributions and perspectives of people of differing race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and physical abilities and disabilities

**Assessment in General Education**

The impact of specific components of the NIU General Education Program on the development of students’ knowledge and skills has been a challenge to assess. One factor that contributes to this difficulty is that students select courses from a broad “cafeteria style” menu of courses, particularly those in the distributive areas. In addition, students may take courses that apply to the program at different times during their baccalaureate experience and/or more than one institution.
To assist in addressing these challenges, a tiered approach to assessment in the program was adopted. The first tier involves assessment at the course level (within-course), which is addressed in the (re)submission criteria and process. The department proposing the course for the program is responsible for these assessments, and for providing the committee with evidence of the attainment of learning outcomes. The second tier or across-course assessment is conducted by the committee. Across-course assessment involves the determination of how all of the courses in the program match with the general education goals. The committee uses a matrix to show which of the courses addresses which program goal(s), and to ascertain whether a sufficient number of courses are available for students to meet all of the program goals. The third tier, university-wide assessment, was established in 1999 by the Office of the Provost to determine whether the general education goals associated with core competency courses are being met and at what levels. Third tier assessments also provide individual programs with evidence for the assessment of their curricula. The third tier assessment projects include the junior-level writing project, the critical thinking project, the capstone project, and the portfolio project.

The junior-level writing project was initiated in 1999 to ascertain the level of students’ written communication skills. Students in junior-level courses in various degree programs across the university were asked to produce a writing sample based on project criteria. The Department of English faculty evaluated those writing samples using a holistic grading rubric to assess defined aspects of writing competency. To date, more than 1,800 students have participated in this project. The results show an average level of writing competency overall, but a wide variance in competency among individual students. The project has resulted in modifications to the assessment process itself through the creation of a writing topic applicable to students in all undergraduate programs, the development of junior-level writing criteria, and the recognition that the qualitative as well as quantitative analysis of writing samples provides the richest assessment of students’ attainment of this core competency. Beginning in 2002, the assessment coordinator, the coordinator of the freshman English program, the director of the University Writing Center, and the chair of the Department of English met with the deans of the colleges or their designees to review how students from each college performed on the writing exam.

Based upon the recommendation of the Council of Deans, in 2000, to conduct a pilot assessment of critical thinking skills, the Office of Assessment Services selected and administered the critical thinking component of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). Four hundred and twenty-nine students, freshmen through seniors, from all six colleges participated in the project. The results indicate that overall, NIU students score slightly above the national average (53rd percentile):
sophomores scored in the 59th percentile, seniors scored at the 55th percentile, and juniors scored at the 50th percentile. More data over time will be necessary to give a clearer picture of how well students are able to think critically.

In fall 2000, two additional initiatives to assist in assessing the attainment of general education goals were implemented. With new state funding, NIU was able to offer faculty the opportunity to create or refine capstone experiences within their programs or to engage in training to develop and use student portfolios to illustrate learning outcomes. The portfolios can be used to document learning outcomes in the degree program, as well as general education objectives such as writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, an appreciation for multiculturalism, or the use of technology. Samples of these indicators will be collected as evidence of the extent to which students have achieved the goals of the program by their senior year. Additional information about all of these projects can be found in the University Assessment Plan.

As part of an ongoing assessment of the general education program, alumni are surveyed one-, five-, and nine-years after graduation on a rotating basis. Several survey items solicit perceptions of the effectiveness of the general education program, or how well the goals of general education have been met. Table 5 shows the percent of alumni who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements related to their overall satisfaction with the general education courses and goals of general education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5. Overall Satisfaction with General Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My general education courses were a valuable part of my education</td>
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<tr>
<td>My university experience increased my understanding about people of different races, cultures or traditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Respondents</td>
</tr>
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These perceptions have held up over time. The survey of 1994 graduates five years after graduation showed 70 percent agreed with the value of the program as part of their educational experience; 74 percent agreed that their university experiences had increased their understanding of cultural diversity.

The surveys administered to the 1999 and later graduates were modified to make the questions related to general education and the overall undergraduate experience more specific. Table 6 shows the percent of respondents who agreed
that the following elements of the program were somewhat, moderately, very or extremely helpful to them.

In 2001, a new method was employed in the administration of the alumni surveys. Prior to that time alumni had two options for completing the surveys: paper and web-based formats. For the 2001 graduates, alumni who did not return surveys via mail or on the web were contacted by telephone by the NIU Public Opinion Laboratory, as a means of increasing the response rates to the surveys. Approximately 50 percent of the responses were gathered in this manner. This change in both the options for completing the survey and the proportion of alumni from whom data were collected may account for the noticeable differences between the 2001 responses and those from previous years. However, even with the addition of this third method for gathering feedback from alumni, for most items, 80 percent or more of the respondents agreed that the general education courses were at least somewhat helpful in developing their competencies.

The General Education Committee receives assessment data as part of the resubmission process and can use that to monitor the extent to which general education goals are being met. The committee also receives data from the university-wide assessments on writing and critical thinking. Since the new assessment plan and (re)submission process have only recently been instituted, extensive data are not yet available.

The committee continues to communicate the assessment expectations to faculty who teach courses in the program. There is a challenge to this assessment piece from the perspective of the faculty. Some faculty continue to question the criteria for and approaches to assessment for lack of clarity; for their perceived tendentiousness; and for a perception that they reduce the learning process to a collection of minute tasks. The committee, as well as other units on campus such as the Faculty Development and

<table>
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<th>Table 6. Satisfaction With Elements of General Education</th>
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<tr>
<td>Criterion</td>
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<tr>
<td>How helpful were your overall university experiences and courses in developing the following abilities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining and solving problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking critically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking analytically</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking creatively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading and guiding others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting along with people of diverse cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing appreciation of the arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructional Design Center, continues to offer workshops to assist faculty in understanding both the importance and the logistics of assessment in all parts of the educational experience.

**MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY**

Undergraduate majors are delivered through six colleges. As one would expect in a comprehensive university, the majors serve different purposes: preparation for a career, preparation for graduate or other advanced education, or pursuit of an interest. The following discussion outlines the degree programs offered by each of the colleges, notes significant changes in the curricula and programs, provides a broad overview of assessment practices, and presents the challenges and opportunities perceived by the colleges as they plan for the future.

The university's long history of teacher preparation has expanded with the evolution of its mission and the growth of its program offerings. NIU now offers teacher certification programs in four colleges: Education, Health and Human Sciences, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts. While meeting disciplinary standards and developing the curricula of the programs occurs under the direction of the faculty teaching in the programs, the university has established common requirements for all programs in regard to grade point average, clinical experiences, and retention in the programs (2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 37-39). Students in the teacher certification programs are offered opportunities for clinical placements and student-teaching experiences appropriate to their majors in a wide variety of settings working with students from diverse populations.

Because of the distribution of its teacher certification programs across four colleges, Northern Illinois University is the unit accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and approved by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) for several of its programs. NIU has been continuously accredited by NCATE since 1954. In fall 2001, NIU hosted the NCATE site visit and received notice in spring 2002 of the reaccreditation of all programs. In addition, the undergraduate programs have met standards set forth by the professional organizations affiliated with NCATE. The State of Illinois now requires all teacher candidates to pass the ICTS Basic Skills Test prior to admission to any teacher education program and requires passage of the content-area test prior to student teaching; these criteria are met in all programs. Prior to being certified by the State of Illinois, teacher candidates must pass the Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT). The alumni of NIU’s programs have consistently been successful in meeting teacher certification requirements,
with first-time pass rates on certification examinations in the 98 percent to 100 percent range.

The College of Business

The College of Business offers bachelor of science degree programs in accountancy, business administration, finance, management, marketing, and operations management and information systems. The goal of the college is “preparing learners to succeed in the global business environment.” The college is among the 393 U.S. schools accredited by AACSB International - American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business. Also noteworthy is the Department of Accountancy’s baccalureate degree ranking as seventh in the nation in the annual survey conducted by the Public Accounting Report.

The college requires all majors to complete a business core comprised of 45-50 credit hours in specifically identified courses (2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog pp. 64-65). Students are also required to complete two gateway courses to advance into upper division coursework: UBUS 310, Business Core; and UBUS 311, Business Core: Application Seminar; and a capstone course to graduate, Management 468, Strategic Management. These courses are interdisciplinary and integrate content from all the functional business areas. Students are exposed to business research throughout the business curriculum, and group and team projects often require a review of research and a coherent presentation of data.

AACSB International requires the examination of the ethical dimensions of business. The college fulfills this requirement by infusing a consideration of personal, social, and civic values throughout its curricula. In 2002 the college, in partnership with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Northern Illinois Ethics Consortium, developed an interdisciplinary Undergraduate Certificate in Applied Ethics, which provides an additional opportunity for students to develop an appreciation for the ethical aspects of business.

Prior to 1996, the college was a limited admission college. Under this limited admissions system, students were not admitted to the college until their junior year, and admission was competitive based on a floating cumulative grade point average and a 2.0 GPA in 10 identified tool courses. Prospective accountancy majors also were required to achieve a threshold score on the Accountancy Qualifying Test. In 1996, in response to the prospect of declining enrollments and to create greater flexibility in achieving diversity within its student body, the college abandoned its limited admission system and offered admission to freshmen and sophomores. The college continued to require a 2.0 GPA in the 10 tool courses. In 2002, responding to a disproportionate number of students...
failing in UBUS 310, Business Core, the college established a fixed 2.75 cumulative GPA for admission into UBUS 310.

The college has established ongoing assessment activities for each of its strategic objectives. The college has amended its mission a number of times since 1992 as a result of activities of the Strategic Planning Council. Elements that most notably receive increased attention in the current mission statement are related to increasing partnerships with the regional business community as well as supporting a more global view and acknowledging the centrality of the international business environment. The new mission statement also places research in a more central role for the college. Implementation, monitoring, and ongoing development of the methods for assessing achievement of the strategic objectives are conducted by Strategic Planning Council Action Teams. In addition to strategic college objectives, each department has established program objectives, specific learning outcomes, and assessment methods for its majors.

The College of Business was housed in Wirtz and McMurry Halls until the fall of 2002. In 1992, AACSB - International identified a number of inadequacies in physical plant and facilities and in the configuration of space that was not conducive to interactive student learning, or permit student teams and student organizations to meet and communicate effectively. All of the identified inadequacies have been addressed and remedied by the college’s move to Barsema Hall, a 144,000 square foot facility containing 24 classrooms including two large, tiered classrooms, and a 375-seat auditorium, all equipped with cutting-edge instructional technology.

The college has expanded its vision and, equipped with Barsema Hall, has the state-of-the-art technology and facilities to pursue it. Distance and online education from outside vendors pose a potent threat to enrollments in the college’s programs and a golden opportunity for the creative delivery and expansion of its academic programs. A recent agreement with Rock Valley College offers an opportunity to develop a degree completion program in business at that community college.

The College of Education
The College of Education offers bachelor of science in education degree programs in elementary, special, and physical education; and bachelor of science degree programs in kinesiology and the interdisciplinary major in early childhood education. All of these programs with the exception of the B.S. degree program in kinesiology prepare students for initial teacher certification in their respective areas. Continuing the university’s 100-year history of preparing professional educators for the region and nation, the college’s programs have been developed through adherence to the research-
grounded and philosophical bases that have shaped its various disciplines. All programs meet national standards for colleges of education and the specific disciplines represented by their program offerings.

The changes in the college's programs include the 2000 change in the title of the B.S. degree program in physical education to kinesiology. In 2001, the program's emphasis in fitness leadership was deleted and the emphases in athletic training and preventive and rehabilitative exercise science, which had been areas of study in the emphasis in fitness leadership, were added. In 2002, two emphases were added to the interdisciplinary major in early childhood studies, which is shared between the College of Education and the College of Health and Human Sciences: the emphasis in 04 certification and the emphasis in 04 certification with preschool special education approval. Within the B.S.Ed. degree program in special education, the emphases in high-incidence disabilities, developmental disabilities/multiply disabled, and deaf and hard of hearing were deleted in 2003 and replaced with the emphasis: learning behavior specialist I in the same year to meet new state standards for the preparation of special educators. The B.S.Ed. program in elementary education is offered in Rockford as part of NIU's partnership with Rock Valley College, and the program with an ESL/bilingual endorsement is offered in Elgin.

Several of the undergraduate programs in the college are limited admissions programs: elementary education, early childhood studies, and the emphasis in athletic training within the degree program in kinesiology. In 2001, the elementary education program established a 3.0 GPA requirement for admission and a 2.75 GPA for retention in the program. In 2001 the interdisciplinary major in early childhood studies also increased its admissions and retention requirements to 2.75.

The college has a strong teacher-education focus at the undergraduate level. In both the teacher-education programs and degree program in kinesiology, students have extensive clinical experiences throughout their undergraduate education. Many of these experiences occur through formal partnerships with school districts, businesses and other agencies. College faculty and supervisors routinely discuss programmatic issues with supervisors in the field to ensure that teacher candidates and kinesiology majors receive the best possible educational experiences. The information gained from these sources is used in curricular revisions, program review reports, and reports for other constituency groups.

The number of faculty positions in the college has dramatically decreased in the past few years, while the number of students has increased; the demand for the programs in the college has exceeded its capacity to deliver them. It will be important that the college be vigilant about the role of both for-
profit businesses and community colleges as they attempt to expand their missions into teacher preparation. The college has undergone major programmatic restructuring and changes in leadership personnel in the last four years. With organizational stability, the college should be in a strong position to address the challenges it faces.

**The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology**
The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology offers bachelor of science degree programs in electrical, industrial, and mechanical engineering, and technology. The college's scope and mission statements clearly identify its commitment to achieving excellence in teaching and maintaining the highest standards in engineering and technology professional preparation, to conducting research in engineering and technology, and to providing service to industry and practicing engineers and technologists.

The engineering programs are accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and the emphasis in industrial technology is accredited by the National Association of Industrial Technology (NAIT). Only a few universities offer three different engineering programs, and almost none in the same college where they can be well coordinated, as well as share leadership, resources, and professional expertise; these are strengths of the college. A state-of-the-art facility, opened in 1995, facilitates both curricular and research innovations.

Currently, the college has open admissions to each of its degree programs. Each department requires course work in addition to general education requirements prior to enrollment in upper division courses in the major. All departments expose students to current research methods, literature reviews, industrial speakers, research laboratory visitations, and required course projects throughout the program. Students are also exposed to, and some participate in, faculty research projects funded by external agencies and industry. Each department requires students to enroll in a capstone course where senior design projects are the focus. Students are required to integrate what they have learned across their general education, technical, and theory-based courses; use their acquired knowledge and skills to design and produce a problem-based project; and justify their approach, process, and methodologies based upon current best practices in the field.

The college has both program and course-by-course articulation with several community colleges. In addition, the college has dual enrollment with several community colleges where students are admitted simultaneously to both the community college and NIU, thus eliminating the need for later NIU admission procedures.
The college has established an ongoing assessment process. The faculty use assessment practices and accreditation guidelines to ensure that the curricula evolve with the changing needs of the professions. All student learning outcomes for the college's programs are derived directly from accreditation requirements. The faculty of each department and program developed a matrix that identifies each learning outcome, aligned assessment activities, and the method(s) for measuring student achievement of those outcomes. With college and university support, departments have generated assessment plans, improved them, and are now using data for program improvement.

The college is very diverse, not only in terms of its faculty and students, but also in terms of its programs. Among the concerns that the faculty and administrators are addressing are diversity of both students and faculty, particularly related to gender. They are also trying to address the need for off-campus course offerings in a climate where on-campus demand is great. The college acknowledges the challenges and seeks to resolve conflicting issues while moving forward with program enhancements, additional student options and opportunities. For a relatively new college, it has established itself and is prepared to continue to deliver in its teaching, research, and service missions.

The College of Health and Human Sciences
The College of Health and Human Sciences offers bachelor of science degree programs in clinical laboratory sciences; communicative disorders; community health; family and child studies; health sciences; the interdisciplinary major in early childhood studies; nutrition, dietetics, and hospitality administration; nursing; and textiles, apparel and merchandising. The mission of the college is to promote health and well-being through education, scholarship, service, and practice. The vision of the college is to enhance the lives of individuals, families, and communities across the lifespan. The college mission and vision are distinguished by the integration of teaching and research in clinical settings that serve the public.

In addition to changing the college's name from Professional Studies to Health and Human Sciences, there have been important curricular changes within the college. With the change in the accreditation standards for physical therapy, requiring a master's degree for certification, the B.S. degree program in physical therapy was deleted in 1998. It was replaced by the B.S. degree program in health sciences, which comprises the undergraduate component of the Master of Physical Therapy degree program. The B.S. degree program in health education, which had been a minor in the Department of Physical Education, became an undergraduate degree program in 1999. With the reorganization of the College of
Education in 1999, this major was housed in the Department of Counseling, Adult and Health Education. In July 2003, the program and its faculty were moved to the School of Allied Health Professions in the College of Health and Human Sciences. Approval to offer the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree program was received in 2003, and three minors were also added in the college: community health in 2000; communicative disorders in 2001; and nutrition, dietetics, and hospitality administration in 2002.

The School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences, and School of Allied Health Professions offer general education courses, which are highly subscribed. The college also offers students the opportunity for a contract major leading to the B.S. degree. In an effort to meet student demands for the college's programs, the number of limited admissions programs decreased from eight in 1992 to five. The degree-completion program for registered nurses is offered at several regional sites to provide access to the baccalaureate degree in nursing for these working professionals.

Each program in the college has developed an assessment plan linked to the mission and goals of the university as well as to the goals and objectives of the college. All plans include a description of what the department/school intends students to know, think and/or be able to do upon completion of a degree program.

The college has many strengths. Faculty have professional experiences in the entry level positions for which the students are preparing and supervise the students in their field experiences. These clinical programs are affiliated or are in cooperative arrangement with many areas of the community, state, and federal agencies, business and industry, and professional organizations. Such relationships facilitate mutual information exchange, professional growth, and field and/or internship student experiences. Student enrollment college-wide continues to increase. All of the entry-level programs in the college are accredited and meet the requirements of state and national accrediting agencies.

One of the greatest challenges for the college has been space. In 1997 most of the college, with the exception of the Department of Military Science, the clinical laboratory sciences programs and the School of Nursing moved from different buildings around campus to a more central location in Gilbert Hall. The greatest inadequacies of Gilbert Hall were that it was not accessible to those with disabilities, and it did not have classrooms or central locations for students or student organizations to meet. To address these issues, the college moved to Wirtz Hall in June 2003, following the move of the College of Business to the newly constructed Barsema Hall. Wirtz Hall provides students with computer labs and three smart classrooms.
Wirtz Auditorium was recently renovated to accommodate large class needs. With the majority of the faculty and students now located in one facility, there is an opportunity to more easily facilitate collaboration across departments. The college also faces the challenge of replacing faculty positions that have been lost to rescission, retirement, or resignation. These positions have been difficult to fill because of a shortage of professionals trained at the doctoral level in some fields.

**The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**
The mission of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is “to provide high-quality education that contributes to the intellectual growth, self-discovery, and enhanced expertise of all members of the university community” (2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog p. 159). The college is comprised of 17 departments divided into the humanities, natural sciences, and the social sciences. In the humanities, the college offers bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree programs in communication studies, history, and journalism, and the bachelor of arts in English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and philosophy. In the natural sciences, bachelor of science degrees are offered in biology, chemistry, computer science, geology, mathematics, and physics. In the social sciences, the college offers bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree programs in anthropology, economics, geography, political science, psychology, and sociology.

In addition, the college offers a bachelor of general studies program to serve non-traditional students. The program is delivered primarily at regional sites to meet students’ needs for access to the course work for the program. This flexible degree provides students with the opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree with a broad liberal arts and science focus.

Among the changes in the college since 1994 are the addition of the B.A. degree program in geography in 1998, and emphases in applied sociology (1998), earth science education (2000), geology (2001), and environmental geosciences (2001). Minors in Chinese or Japanese studies, environmental management systems, and elementary mathematics education were added in 1999, 2000, and 2002, respectively. The following emphases were deleted during this review period: general science teaching-physics (1994); communication education (1994); materials sciences-physics (1994); French studies (1994); and applied geography and natural environmental systems (1999).

Three degree programs, communication studies, computer science, and sociology, are limited admissions programs. The college provides guidance for those students preparing for entrance into professional schools in areas such as law and a wide range of medical fields. There are formalized assessment activities in the college, and all departments have assessment
plans for their programs. Additionally, the majority of general education courses are delivered through the college. As previously discussed, all of these courses must be (re)approved to be included in the general education offerings. Assessment activities and results play an important role in that process.

During the last ten years, there has been an increase in both the availability and use of technology in instruction, and undergraduate students are becoming increasingly involved in research activities through the USOAR and URAP programs (see Research and Artistry). Assessment activities are becoming better understood and accepted as evidenced by the fact that several departments are adding senior capstone experiences and/or portfolio assessments for their majors. The college has become increasingly active in external fundraising, which provides needed funds to support scholarships and activities of import to the college’s programs.

In a college as large and diverse as the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the challenges and opportunities may be more easily identifiable at the department level than at the college level; however, a few common elements do emerge. One of the college’s strengths is that many of the laboratories and learning facilities are state-of-the-art, such as the Foreign Language Learning Center. The use of technology in the Department of English is a strength, particularly in the freshmen English program, as is the department’s support of the development of students’ writing skills university-wide. On the other hand, facilities and technology are also areas that have been identified by some departments as areas of greatest concern. Some of the classroom and office facilities used by the college are in need of refurbishing; there is also need for more space.

There are several opportunities for the college. One is to strengthen connections to its alumni; this will enhance the expanding internship opportunities for students and may result in additional external funds through alumni support. Another opportunity and challenge for the college is to match student numbers to resources. Some departments identify a need to increase their majors while others are in a position of having to devise innovative ways to try to accommodate the large number of students seeking their programs.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts
The College of Visual and Performing Arts offers bachelor of arts degree programs in art, art history, music and theatre arts; the bachelor of music; the bachelor of science in education in art education; and the bachelor of fine arts in studio art and theatre arts. All degree programs are accredited by their respective accrediting organizations: the National Association of
Schools of Arts and Design, the National Association of Schools of Music, or the National Association of Schools of Theatre.

Degree programs in the college are clearly defined and intellectually rigorous. As a result of changes made to several programs in the past two years based upon new standards by accrediting organizations, NIU is offering degree programs in the arts with both significant breadth and depth. There have been two deletions from the college’s offerings since 1994: the minor in music (1994) and the emphasis in theatre education (1999).

The School of Music and the School of Theatre and Dance employ auditions and interviews to admit students to their degree programs. All degrees employ tool courses appropriate to the broad field, many of which require a grade of “C” or better in order to pass the course, which is considered minimum mandatory preparation. Nearly all degrees employ a mid-point evaluation for continuation in the degree program.

In the college, much of the required coursework is done in small group settings or on a one-to-one basis. The structuring of courses and their prerequisites assure that students have achieved appropriate levels before proceeding to the next course in the prescribed curriculum. Capstone-equivalent experiences vary among the three schools and include experiences such as a senior recital or senior project. All students receiving scholarship awards in the college are required to regularly participate in a public service and/or volunteer capacity.

Because each school within the college is a unique discipline, each has established program-specific objectives, learning outcomes, and assessment methods for its majors and areas of study. All degree programs have entrance, mid-point, and/or exit assessments of student learning. The college uses an advisory board of both alumni and regional arts directors as a focus group. Their evaluations address student preparedness as they enter the workplace, curricular offerings, public presentations, and outreach efforts. Additionally, each school has a committee of faculty to monitor and evaluate learning objectives and the school’s curricular and public goals.

The undergraduate programs of the college are served by a faculty of national and international reputation. As a result, those programs attract student majors of extraordinary talent and commitment who have built an enviable history of alumni success. The Schools of Art and Music have substantial teacher preparation programs, in keeping with institutional history and mission. The School of Theatre and Dance is a member of the University Resident Theatre Association (URTA), consisting of 33 academic programs nationally that house professional companies. URTA membership
is a value-added component that strengthens both student and faculty recruitment and retention.

The Schools of Art and Music are housed in outstanding facilities that enhance the instructional mission of those schools. The most serious weakness in the college is the state of the theatre facilities. The Stevens Building, a “fine arts” building erected in 1958, which now houses the School of Theatre and Dance and the Department of Anthropology, has suffered from years of deferred maintenance. The university has made its best case to the State of Illinois for funding this project for the past several years to no avail. Continued delay of funding by the state threatens the long-term viability of the college’s programs in theatre and dance through the potential loss of faculty and students who choose to affiliate with institutions whose facilities are more supportive of their work.

The college’s greatest opportunities relative to its undergraduate programs lie in creative responses to resource challenges, particularly in the area of curriculum. The leadership of the college met in October of 2002 to consider this opportunity. The schools are currently engaging in strategic thinking related to curriculum.

Faculty retirements over the past five years have interfaced with serious budgetary shortfalls resulting in an inappropriate ratio of full-time to part-time faculty in the Schools of Arts and Music. While the college is fortunate in its geographic location, resulting in an exceptional pool of available part-time faculty, those faculty still do not and/or cannot devote the kind of time and effort beyond their actual teaching duties to maintain the historic strength of creative communities which have existed in these two schools.

Failure to address noted weaknesses will put the college at a competitive disadvantage with increasingly aggressive regional competition. At some point, quality will override access and affordability as deciding factors for talented undergraduate students in the arts. Given the present budget situation, and on the heels of the budget cuts in the early and mid 1990s, the college has had to work hard to manage financial resources to meet its purposes. The faculty and staff of the college are committed to providing excellent programs for NIU’s students and the northern Illinois service region.

UNDERGRADUATE MINORS AND CERTIFICATES

In addition to the undergraduate major programs, students may elect to complete one or more of the 61 minors available at NIU. Each of the six undergraduate colleges offers two or more minors, and there are 12
interdisciplinary minors. NIU also offers two additional courses of study for undergraduates, a certificate of undergraduate study and a concentration. A certificate of undergraduate study is awarded upon successful completion of an approved set of courses that are organized around a specific theme. Currently, there are certificates of undergraduate study in applied ethics, geographic information systems, and philosophy of education. The university also offers an interdisciplinary concentration in medieval studies.

**EVALUATION**

Specific evaluation of the undergraduate majors occurs at the departmental level through curricular review, outcomes assessment, and program review processes. In looking at the overall university picture, three items from alumni surveys provide a picture of alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate degree programs:

- If I had it to do over again, I would still pursue the same major. The graduates from 1994 through 2001 consistently answer that they would. Those who answered “agree” or “strongly agree” ranged between 71 percent and 74 percent.
- In general, how well did your bachelor’s degree prepare you for your present job? Again, the responses were fairly consistent. The percentage of students who responded “very well,” “well,” or “adequately” ranged from 87 percent in 1995 to a high of 93 percent in 1998.
- In general, how well did your bachelor’s degree prepare you for your additional degree program? The alumni responded even more positively to this question. For those students who were going on to graduate work or other additional education, between 91 percent and 96 percent of the students responded “very well,” “well,” or “adequately.”

In the five year out survey, 63 percent to 65 percent indicated they would pursue the same major. Alumni also continue to indicate that their NIU baccalaureate degree prepared them for either employment or additional education. In the survey of 1994 graduates, 88 percent indicated that their degree prepared them for the career path they are following. The questions differed slightly in the survey of 1997 graduates. Eighty-seven percent of the alumni answered the question “In general, how well did your bachelor’s degree prepare you for your present job?” positively. In response to “In general, how well did your bachelor’s degree prepare you for your additional degree program?” 94 percent answered positively. It is worth noting that these are consistent with the responses by graduates one-year out.

The undergraduate program at NIU is diverse in its offerings, including a well-developed general education component, a growing University Honors Program, and a comprehensive range of undergraduate majors and minors.
NIU is meeting its goal of providing strong academic programming to its undergraduate students, and will continue to do so in the future. On-going assessment of all of these components occurs through faculty oversight, the implementation of the University Assessment Plan, and regularly scheduled program reviews. Additionally, many programs are accredited through discipline-specific accrediting organizations, which provide external validation of their quality. As indicated through the alumni surveys, former students agree that their undergraduate education prepared them for their careers and continuing education after college. The results of these assessment and accreditation activities confirm that NIU is meeting its goal of providing strong academic programming to its undergraduate students, and will continue to do so in the future.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion One: The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

c. decision-making processes that are appropriate to its stated mission and purposes
d. understanding of the stated purposes by institutional constituencies
e. efforts to keep the public informed of its institutional and educational goals through documents such as the catalog and program brochures
g. institutional commitment to excellence, both in the teaching provided by faculty and the learning expected of students

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

a. educational programs appropriate to an institution of higher education
   • courses of study in academic programs that are clearly defined, coherent, and intellectually rigorous
   • programs that include courses and/or activities whose purpose is to stimulate the examination and understanding of personal, social, and civic values
   • programs that require of the faculty and students (as appropriate to the level of the educational program) the use of scholarship and/or the participation in research as part of the programs
b. assessment of appropriate student academic achievement in all its programs, documenting:
   • proficiency in skills and competencies essential for all college-educated adults;
Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

c. structured assessment processes that are continuous, that involve a variety of institutional constituencies, and that provide meaningful and useful information to the planning processes as well as to students, faculty, and administration
d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution's continuance
e. resources organized and allocated to support its plans for strengthening both the institution and its programs

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
d. institutional publications, statements, and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs
e. relationships with other institutions of higher education conducted ethically and responsibly; appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions
f. appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions
GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

The post-baccalaureate mission of Northern Illinois University is delivered through graduate and professional programs. The discussion that follows outlines the university's standards and procedures for admission to graduate programs, major changes that have occurred in the graduate programming over the review period, non-degree options available to graduate-level students, and an overview of the College of Law. Also included in this chapter is a report of financial aid options and non-financial support for students, as well as an overview of the processes related to achieving graduate faculty status, internal and external oversight of graduate programs, program assessment, and alumni input on their experiences at NIU.

STUDENT STATUS

Individuals pursuing educational opportunities beyond the baccalaureate degree have the option of seeking admission to a graduate degree program or completing selected course work that will provide them with advanced knowledge and skills or a credential for professional advancement. The discussion that follows outlines the university's admission procedures for graduate students, and the status of students-at-large.

Admission to Graduate Study

The Graduate Catalog outlines the requirements for admission to graduate study at NIU, which require that applicants meet both the general requirements for admission to the Graduate School determined by the members of the graduate faculty who comprise the Graduate Council, and the specific requirements set forth by the graduate faculty of the program(s) to which the applicants seek entry. The application materials required by the university are submitted to the Graduate School, an administrative unit that creates and maintains official credential files. The maintenance of centralized credential files facilitates application to multiple programs without the need for multiple submissions of transcripts, test scores, and other relevant material. This centralized system also facilitates specialized support services such as review of international credentials and the processing of visa-related paperwork.

Upon confirmation by the Graduate School that applications are complete, copies of the materials are distributed to the appropriate department(s) for review by the members of the graduate faculty who make the decision on the applicants' acceptance into the program(s). Departmental decisions are transmitted to the Graduate School, which notifies applicants of admission decisions. Occasionally, departments may wish to recommend the admission of applicants who do not meet the university's minimum
standards for graduate study. In such cases, the departments must identify alternative evidence of the likelihood of the applicants’ success in graduate study on which the faculty’s recommendations are based. This evidence may include a strong record of pertinent professional achievement, exceptionally high standardized test scores, or outstanding audition or portfolio. These exceptional cases are then individually reviewed and acted upon by the associate dean of the Graduate School, who has been so designated by the Graduate Council, and the dean of the Graduate School.

**Students-at-Large**

As a public university, NIU assumes responsibilities for providing opportunities for graduate study that do not necessarily culminate in the completion of a graduate degree programs. NIU serves a large population of individuals who enroll in graduate courses for a variety of reasons. Some enroll for personal satisfaction; some are engaged in continuing professional education; some are returning students sampling programs; some are addressing deficiencies in preparation or in undergraduate academic record prior to applying for admission. A large number of these individuals are K-12 teachers, specialists, and administrators seeking certifications or endorsements that do not require the completion of a degree program to earn these credentials.

Eligibility to enroll in graduate courses requires an application for status as a **student-at-large**. Student-at-large status requires only that the individuals possess a baccalaureate or higher degree from an accredited institution (or foreign equivalent). Students-at-large are not admitted to the Graduate School or to any particular graduate degree program, but they earn graduate credit for the course(s) they complete. The students’ interests and objectives govern their selection of courses. The number of persons served by the existence of the student-at-large status is substantial. In fall 2002, for example, of 6,513 students enrolled in graduate-level course work, 1646 (25 percent) were students-at-large.

One of the challenges related to serving a large contingent of students-at-large is that of advisement. In many cases there is no obvious academic home for students whose interests may not be focused in a specific program. Additionally, not all academic departments have adequate staff resources to advise students-at-large on general questions related to graduate study. The office of the associate dean of the Graduate School serves as a general advising office for students-at-large with respect to some non-discipline-specific matters.
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Graduate and professional degree programs provide opportunities for students to earn the degree and/or credentials necessary for specific occupations, to prepare for additional post-graduate study, or to engage in professional development. To fulfill its mission in graduate and professional education, NIU offers 70 academic majors and more than 110 areas of study in master's, specialist, doctoral, and professional degree programs. Included in this number is the Juris Doctor degree, offered through the College of Law, which will be discussed in the chapter. The following discussion highlights the significant changes in the colleges, departments, and graduate and professional degree programs since 1993.

The College of Business

The College of Business offers four master's degree programs in business administration, accounting science, taxation, and management information systems. Major changes that occurred in the degrees offered by the college were the deletion of three degree programs: the Ed.D. in business education in 1993, the M.S.Ed in business education in 1994, and the M.S. in finance in 2001. The M.S. degree program in taxation was added in 1997. These changes were made as part of the strategic planning processes the college undertook to refocus its mission; to offer the highest quality graduate programs in selected fields of business; to respond to the changing demands for graduate preparation in business; and to reallocate resources to the programs that would meet the demands for quality graduate preparation.

While approved for delivery on campus and at regional sites, the college now offers the M.B.A. degree program exclusively at NIU's regional sites in Hoffman Estates, Rockford, and Naperville. The program is offered in two formats: the traditional M.B.A. and an Executive M.B.A., which is more accelerated and targeted to those who have managerial experience. These changes reflect the college's commitment to best serving students, the majority of whom are employed professionals seeking to advance their careers or to pursue new career opportunities. For these professionals, program location and time are important considerations.

The College of Education

The College of Education offers 15 master's, one specialist, and six doctor of education degree programs in adult continuing education, counseling, curriculum and instruction, early childhood education, educational administration, educational psychology, elementary education, foundations of education, instructional technology, physical education, reading, research and evaluation, school business management, special education, and sport management. Curricular changes in graduate programs in the college have
occurred not only in response to the evolution of educational disciplines, but also in response to legislation, such as the Corey H. case, and the restructuring of the college in 1999. In 1994, the Ed.D. degree program in reading was deleted and the specialization in reading was added to the Ed.D. degree program in curriculum and instruction. In 1995, the Ed.D degree program in special education was deleted, as were the Ed.S. degree programs in counseling and in curriculum and instruction in 1996. Two new degree programs were added to the college’s offerings: the M.S. in sport management and the M.S. in educational research and evaluation in 2001. These are the first two Master of Science degrees offered by the college. Several master’s specializations were also deleted, although in most cases these areas have been reconfigured as subunits within existing degree programs or replaced by new specializations that respond better to student needs and/or state certification requirements. Three new specializations were added to existing degree programs: orientation and mobility (in 2000) and learning behavior specialist I (in 2003) within the M.S.Ed. degree in special education, and pedagogy and curriculum development in physical education (in 2002) within the M.S.Ed. degree program in physical education.

Demands for graduate programs in the college have increased due to the growth in K-12 and community college student populations, and retirement incentive plans that have created a large turnover in teaching, counseling, school business, and administrative positions in K-14 education in Illinois. New state requirements for continuing education for teachers to maintain their certifications have also increased demands for the graduate courses and degree programs offered by the college. Many students in these programs are focusing on professional development for position and salary advancement in their districts. In several of the programs, cohorts have been established at regional sites to allow students to complete their programs in a predictable and timely manner at convenient locations. In addition to using NIU’s regional centers, courses and cohort degree programs are offered at Malcolm X College in Chicago, at the College of DuPage, and in Lake, Kane, and northern Will and Cook counties. Locating programs at these sites provides the opportunity to include a significant urban focus in the programs. Use of these sites has also contributed to success in recruiting and providing educational opportunities for African-American students. Of particular note, the college has been singled out for its success in producing African-American doctorates. According to Black Issues in Higher Education, based on 2001-2002 data, the college awarded doctorates to 19 African-Americans, a total that led the nation’s public universities in education doctorates awarded to this minority group.
The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology offers four master’s degree programs in electrical, industrial, and mechanical engineering, and in industrial management. The college has recently begun to promote the longstanding opportunity for last-term seniors to be granted early admission to the Graduate School via an integrated B.S./M.S. sequence in the three engineering programs. This sequence enables academically strong undergraduate students to start their graduate work while they complete the last semester of undergraduate study, and thus complete the master’s degree more expeditiously. The program in industrial management provides courses at regional sites that address the professional development needs of individuals working in the industrial and manufacturing sectors; some courses are offered via videoconferencing. The college is looking at ways in which it can address the needs of working professionals through more programming at regional sites, however, current high demand in the undergraduate programs on campus is limiting the ability to deliver additional off-campus work.

The College of Health and Human Sciences

The College of Health and Human Sciences offers 6 master’s degree programs in applied family and child studies, communicative disorders, nutrition and dietetics, nursing, physical therapy, and public health. The college itself, as well as its graduate programs have undergone some significant changes in the last decade. In 1995, the College of Professional Studies became the College of Health and Human Sciences, and one year later, the name of the Department of Human and Family Resources was changed to the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences. These name changes more accurately reflect the focus of the majors housed with the college and the school.

Significant changes also occurred in the curricular offerings housed in the college. Specializations in health promotion and in health services management were added to the M.P.H. degree program in 2000. In 1998 the bachelor’s degree in physical therapy was replaced with the Master of Physical Therapy (M.P.T.) degree program to meet new licensure requirement for physical therapists. The M.P.T. degree is unique in the university in that students are initially admitted to the baccalaureate degree program in health sciences, and subsequently into the master’s program. In 2003, the university received approval to offer the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree program. This change is in response to a recently revised national standard that calls for all entry-level audiologists to possess a doctorate to practice. The Au.D. is the first clinical doctorate offered by NIU.
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences offers 19 master’s and 10 doctor of philosophy degree programs in anthropology, applied probability and statistics, biological sciences, chemistry, communication studies, computer science, economics, English, foreign languages and literatures, geography, geology, history, mathematics, philosophy, physics, political science, public administration, psychology, and sociology. The most significant change within the college was the 1999 approval for the Ph.D. degree program in physics, which the university has sought since the 1970s. A large impetus for this degree program is the close collaborative relationship NIU shares with the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory. Faculty in the Department of Physics serve as collaborators on Fermi Lab projects and grant programs in high-energy particle physics, and graduate students are afforded the opportunity to work closely with faculty and staff of the national laboratory on cutting edge research projects.

There have been other name changes and curricular modifications that better reflect the evolutions of the disciplines of the college or more efficiently offer programs within the resources available. These changes are noted below:

- In 1995 the Department of Communication was created as a result of the merger of the Department of Communication Studies and the Department of Journalism
- In 1997 the name of the Department of Chemistry was changed to Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
- In 1998 the name of the Department of Geology was changed to Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences
- New specializations were added within the M.S. degree program in biological sciences: the specialization in human anatomical sciences in 1997 and the specialization in bioinformatics in 2000.

There were also several program and specialization deletions, but as was the case in the College of Education, these were generally internal restructurings, and the academic areas remained available to the students as part of a larger program unit.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts

The College of Visual and Performing Arts offers six master’s and master of fine arts degree programs in art, art education, art history, music, studio art, and theatre arts, and a performer’s certificate in music. Among the changes in the college over the review period was the change in the name of the Department of Theatre Arts to the School of Theatre and Dance in 1999. In addition, degree programs in music education and pedagogy were eliminated in 1997 and consolidated into a new master of music degree.
program in the same year. In 1998 the specialization in art therapy within the master of art was eliminated as was the master of arts in theatre arts. These program deletions and consolidations were made to reduce program costs and to increase productivity within the degree programs offered by the college. The changes have been effective in meeting these two goals, and they have also preserved the breadth of offerings in the college to meet needs of students in the visual and performing arts.

The College of Law

The College of Law offers the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree program. Students admitted to the college may pursue the J.D. and the M.B.A. degree programs simultaneously. This arrangement allows students to apply some law credit toward the graduate degree and some graduate credit toward the law degree.

The Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree program follows the national model for legal education: a first year of required courses and the development of legal writing and research skills, and two years of elective course work that meets the students’ interests and career goals. The degree is offered as a limited-admission, full-time, day program of study, or a limited enrollment, part-time study program. In addition to academics, students enrolled in the college have the opportunity to be involved in a wide variety of scholarly activities including Law Review, moot court teams, student organizations, and a foreign study program in France.

The College of Law is administered by a dean and associate and assistant deans, who oversee the fulfillment of the curricular requirements of the degree program, as well as the operations and functions of the college. Faculty in the college approve curricular revisions, and participate in hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions. In keeping with American Bar Association accreditation standards, the college administers the Law Library; its own programs of recruitment, admission, and financial aid; and employs individuals to fulfill these responsibilities. Recruitment strategies include active participation in the national recruiting activities of the Law School Admissions Council, supplemented by more local activities at Midwestern universities and alumni events. These activities support the goal adopted by the faculty of attracting a high-quality, diverse student body for legal studies at NIU. Approximately 100 students are admitted to the college each fall, resulting in a student body of approximately 300 students. Recent statistics indicate the continuing success of the college’s recruitment efforts: more than 50 percent of the current student body is comprised of women, and approximately 30 percent of the students are racial/ethnic minorities.
The academic quality of a class, measured by LSAT and undergraduate GPA, indicates a median of approximately the 67th percentile and a top quartile in the 77th percentile of the LSAT. The median undergraduate GPA of the entering class is now 3.18. New demands for law professionals provide the opportunity for the college to increase the size of the entering class to approximately 125 students without sacrificing quality or diversity. Over the review period, fluctuations in class size from year to year have presented administrative and budget challenges, and changes in admission policies are presently under discussion by the college faculty.

**Other Graduate Studies and Post-Baccalaureate Opportunities**

In addition to pursuing a broad range of graduate degree programs, students have the opportunity to engage in advanced study that provides them with professional expertise through the completion of curricular options in graduate concentrations, certificates of graduate study, and certification programs for K-12 teachers, specialists, and administrators.

A concentration is a specified course of interdisciplinary study linked with pursuit of a graduate degree program. The completion of the requirements for a concentration results in a notation on student’s academic record. Currently, NIU offers four graduate concentrations: Biochemistry or Biophysics, Historical Administration, Latin American Studies, and Southeast Asian Studies.

Another opportunity for graduate education is through the completion of a certificate of graduate study. Whereas completion of a graduate concentration requires enrollment in a graduate degree program, the certificates of graduate study can be completed in conjunction with or independent of the pursuit of a degree. The certificates of graduate study are comprised of a coherent group of courses, usually 12-18 semester hours, approved by the Graduate Council, that address a specific theme. These certificates provide professional development opportunities for working professionals or additional areas of study for students in a degree program. Completing a certificate may also lead students to become interested in a degree program and to continue their graduate education. Currently NIU offers 37 certificates of graduate study housed in the Colleges of Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, and Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Many individuals eligible for graduate study choose to complete teacher, specialist, or administrative certification or endorsement programs independent of or in conjunction with a graduate degree program. In many cases, they begin graduate work, complete the requirements for certification or endorsement, and then complete their graduate degree programs.
According to alumni surveys, since 1999, 18 percent to 21 percent of respondents completed a teacher certification or endorsement program along with their most recent NIU degree. NIU offers students the opportunity to complete initial or advanced certification or endorsement requirements in areas that include early childhood, elementary, health, secondary, and K-12 education; counseling; and administration.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

The discussion below presents information on the breadth of financial aid available to graduate students enrolled at NIU. Students are supported in the pursuit of their graduate and professional degree programs through a combination of assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, and tuition waivers.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistantships are the primary source of university support for graduate students. In fall 2002 there were 1,275 graduate assistants, compared to 1,526 in fall 1992. Students employed as graduate assistants serve in one of three capacities: as teaching assistants, research assistants, and staff assistants. Graduate teaching assistants make up the largest group (n = 599, approximately 47 percent), followed by staff assistants (n = 363, 28 percent) and research assistants (n = 313, 25 percent). Nearly 80 percent of graduate assistants are employed by the academic departments in which they are pursuing their degrees, and about 10 percent of graduate research-assistant positions are supported by external grant or contract funds.

All graduate assistants must be graduate or law students in good academic standing on the effective dates of their appointments; a student-at-large (defined above) may not hold a graduate assistantship. Appointment levels may be full-time, three-quarter-time, or half-time; a full-time graduate assistantship appointment involves service of 20 hours per week. The allowable range of stipend levels for full-time graduate assistants was set by the Graduate Council at $635.00 to $1,270.00 per month for 2002-2003. Within this range each department sets its own stipend level(s). For fall 2002, the mean stipend for a full-time graduate assistant was about $800.00 per month. In special cases, the dean of the Graduate School may approve a stipend higher than the established university maximum. The increases in the stipend amounts over the last ten years have kept pace with inflation over that time. The significant decline in the number of graduate assistantship positions, from 1,526 to 1,275 (16 percent), is the result of multiple rounds of budget reductions, shifting allocations of financial resources over the last 10 years, and some reduction of positions to allow more competitive stipends for the remaining positions within a unit. This
trend needs to be reversed if NIU is to continue to attract significant numbers of high quality students to pursue graduate study at NIU.

Every graduate assistant receives a tuition waiver scholarship for the period of appointment and, if appointed for at least one semester, may also receive a tuition waiver for an adjacent summer session. Since graduate assistantships are intended to assist graduate students to progress expeditiously through their studies, assistants are normally expected to carry a full nine-semester-hour course load in a fall or spring semester, or six hours if appointed during a summer session.

**Rhoten A. Smith Assistantship Program**
The Rhoten A. Smith assistantship program is a financially cooperative venture between departments (and other cost centers) and the Graduate School to support qualified minority graduate students and women in fields in which they are underrepresented. The Graduate School administers these funds. The continued current annual budget for this assistantship program is $233,315, compared to a budget of $182,500 in 1992. All Rhoten A. Smith assistants also receive full tuition-waiver scholarships.

**Graduate School Fellowships**
The Graduate School administers a small number of fellowships for students in non-doctoral programs. Candidates are nominated by their departments and colleges on the basis of academic excellence, and selected by a university-wide committee. Each fellowship carries a stipend of $6,000 for the year (10 months), and a full tuition-waiver scholarship. The student is not obligated to render any service in return for the stipend, but must carry a full course load. As in 1992, there are 10 unrestricted fellowships, and four reserved for outstanding minority students.

**Dissertation Completion Fellowships**
This is a fund through which a limited number of doctoral students who have been admitted to candidacy are awarded one-year fellowships for completing their dissertations. Candidates are nominated by their departments and selected by a Graduate Council committee of representatives from the doctoral-degree-granting departments. Each full-time dissertation completion award carries a stipend of $8,000 for the year, and a full tuition-waiver scholarship, plus up to $500 to help defray research-related expenses. Part-time students receive no stipend, but have been allocated the $500 in research support. An average of approximately 10 full-time and 2 to 3 part-time awards have been granted in recent years.

**Carter G. Woodson Scholars Program**
The Carter G. Woodson program, administered by the Graduate School, is designed to support minority students pursuing a doctoral degree who plan
to seek or return to a teaching or administrative position at an institution of higher education. Woodson scholars are nominated by their departments or colleges, selected by a university committee, and each is given a stipend of $14,300 for 11 months, a full tuition-waiver scholarship, and a relocation allowance of $500. The award is renewable for a second year, upon recommendation of the department. Currently, funding allows support of two Woodson scholars each year.

**Special Tuition Waivers**

In addition to the tuition waivers associated with various graduate assistantships and fellowships, seven specialized types of tuition waivers are available through the office of the dean of the Graduate School or the university.

All departments offering graduate programs are allocated a number of tuition waivers each year by the Graduate School for the recruitment of highly qualified graduate students. The waivers are awarded upon recommendation of the academic department. The number of waivers allocated to each department is between one and five, depending upon the number of program graduates, although an enhanced allotment may be awarded to new graduate programs or programs with other special needs.

Departments may request tuition waivers from the Graduate School to be used for recruitment and retention of U.S. minority students. Each student typically receives the waiver for up to 12 months, with an expectation that the student will subsequently be supported on departmental funds. There is no limit to the number of minority tuition waivers that a department may request.

The Graduate School also awards tuition waivers, scholarships funded by an outside agency, to students enrolled in an internship or formal practicum that is required by their graduate-degree program. The Graduate School also allocates tuition waivers to those external agencies that host or supervise NIU graduate interns, student teachers, or clinical students. These waivers are distributed by those agencies to employees qualified to engage in graduate-level study at the university.

The Graduate School dean may award tuition waivers to international students in cases of extreme, unanticipated financial hardship circumstances and for those enrolled through a formal agreement with a foreign university, upon recommendation by the director of the International Student and Faculty Office. Tuition waivers are also available to faculty of affiliated international institutions who are seeking graduate degrees at NIU. The university also provides tuition waivers to graduate
students and students-at-large who are NIU faculty, staff, retirees, and surviving spouses and children, or who are low-income senior citizens.

**Other Financial Support**
The Graduate School maintains four accounts funded entirely by private contributions and maintained through the NIU Foundation. Two of these, one endowed and one not, are dedicated to the support of graduate students’ scholarly activities. The most common use of these funds is to assist students with the costs of travel and, sometimes, shipment of musical instruments, artwork, and other items to professional meetings or other appropriate scholarly and artistic venues. These accounts may also assist students with extraordinary expenses in connection with their scholarly activities, such as unusually high fieldwork costs, very expensive equipment rental, or hiring of a physician to monitor a project involving human subjects.

Another of these funds supports minority fellowships, and the fourth is available for a broad range of student and faculty activities. NIU also provides several forms of support for students to conduct their studies or develop their artistry. Since the last NCA review, NIU has instituted an award for “Distinguished Master’s Thesis.” In conjunction with the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools’ competition for outstanding thesis projects, the NIU Graduate Council’s Graduate Fellowship Committee selects the NIU Distinguished Master’s Thesis for submission in the association competition. The thesis selected as the institutional association nomination and the runner-up are each recognized on campus with a plaque and a nominal cash award to the student researcher.

Direct financial support for law students is extremely limited. The primary source of this support is tuition waivers allocated to the College of Law and distributed as merit scholarships and faculty research assistantships. There are also limited stipend-bearing scholarships devoted to minority students. Some law students find graduate assistantships in other colleges that provide more financial support. Expansion of financial support for law students by the development of endowed scholarships is one of the challenges for the future. The ability to continue to compete effectively with other regional law schools will require successful development efforts.

Over the last 10 years there has been a concerted effort on the part of the NIU Development Office to acquire private donations from which to establish scholarship funds. Many of these funds have been placed in endowed accounts. Currently, there are 67 of these scholarship funds available to graduate students: of these, 45 are available exclusively to graduate students. Generally, these scholarships have been established to support students studying in particular majors, and they have been
established within each of the colleges in the university. The scholarships range in amount from a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars in annual support to the recipients. It is expected that scholarship fund solicitation will remain a development priority in the future.

As previously indicated in this chapter, graduate students often play a key role in the teaching of NIU undergraduate students. Frequently, however, they are under-prepared to be effective teachers. Consistent with NIU’s commitment to provision of quality educational opportunities for all students, the Office of Teaching Assistant Training and Development was established in 1999. The purpose of the office is to oversee the university-wide training needs of graduate teaching assistants. The office provides training workshops with topics such as planning for the course, preparing a lecture, managing a classroom, dealing with disruptive students, embracing diversity (including disability), motivating students, time management, student evaluation and grading, and teacher evaluation. In addition to these general topics, the office works with departments and colleges to develop discipline-specific training workshops. All departments and programs are encouraged to alert their graduate teaching assistants to the services and availability of support offered through the office.

Just prior to the beginning of fall semester each year, the office delivers an orientation workshop. Response to the establishment and operations of the office has been favorable. Participation in the orientation workshops has been increasing; in fall 2002, more than 200 students, from 26 departments, attended the orientation workshop. A recent addition to the offerings of the office is the awarding of two certificates to graduate students participating in the training. Students may receive a certificate of participation for attending the orientation workshop as well as a Graduate Teaching Certificate for attending the fall orientation session and five additional content workshops. Effective in fall 2003, the office was moved from the Graduate School to the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center.

On-campus graduate students pay a Graduate Colloquium fee. In addition to supporting colloquium speakers, as discussed in the chapter on research and artistry, the colloquium-fee fund supports the Graduate School’s publication of the Graduate Student Newsletter printed once each term to announce forthcoming colloquia and give other news of importance to graduate students. The public nature and wide publicity of events held under the auspices of the Graduate Colloquium program give students access to new ideas from a range of disciplines, not just the latest developments in their own discipline.
Another resource for graduate students is provided by the Graduate School Grants and Fellowships Office, which collects information from a variety of internal and external sources about funding opportunities to support students pursuing post-baccalaureate studies. The resources of the Grants and Fellowships Office are available to all, whether or not they are or intend to be graduate students at NIU.

Support offered through the College of Law can be seen in its sponsorship of the Northern Illinois University Law Review. The Law Review is a nationally distributed periodical that publishes articles by lawyers and academics concerning current legal issues. These articles are edited by students who qualify for the Law Review board of editors who are supervised by a member of the law faculty. They also supplement these professional articles with a limited number of publishable student notes. In addition, the College of Law provides significant support through an extensive program of intra- and extramural student competitions, fully subsidized facilities for computerized research and writing, an active and successful job-placement service, and other traditional law school support activities beyond the library and classroom.

GRADUATE FACULTY

The graduate faculty is composed primarily of qualified, tenured or tenure-track faculty at NIU. However, graduate faculty membership is available to temporary and adjunct faculty, as well as other individuals who meet established graduate-faculty qualifications. The availability of graduate-faculty status to individuals outside the traditional tenure-track system affords greater opportunities for graduate students to work with applied scholars and artists and increases interaction between NIU and external scientific, professional, and private-industry communities.

The Graduate Council has established criteria and procedures for appointment to graduate faculty status in three categories: provisional, full, and senior. The faculty of the College of Law maintain professional standards independent of the processes governing the graduate faculty status in the rest of the university. The criteria and procedures for appointment to the graduate faculty status are governed by the policies articulated in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. Each department or academic unit is responsible for developing, maintaining, and adhering to discipline-specific qualifications for graduate faculty membership. The intent of this policy is to allow individual academic units sufficient flexibility for identifying those discipline-specific qualifications that indicate professional accomplishment in their respective fields, while remaining consistent with the general membership criteria established by the Graduate Council.
All graduate faculty members must have appropriate terminal degrees and programs of research or artistry. To ensure graduate and professional standards, the university differentiates among three categories of graduate faculty membership. The initial appointment of relatively inexperienced faculty, ordinarily, is provisional membership, which is limited to three years. It affords faculty the opportunity to contribute extensively to graduate education while establishing the scholarly record appropriate to full or senior membership. A provisional member has all the privileges of a full member, except that he or she cannot serve on the Graduate Council. Full membership requires the appropriate terminal degree, or equivalent, and demonstration of the initiation of a program of research or artistry that has received positive assessment by external experts in the discipline. A full member may serve on the Graduate Council, vote in council elections and graduate faculty referenda, teach graduate courses in his or her area of expertise, serve on graduate students’ committees, and, with approval of the department chair, college dean, and dean of the Graduate School, may serve as director of a master’s or sixth-year thesis or analogue (e.g., final recital in music, one-person show in art). Senior members have all of the rights of a full member; in addition, they may direct master’s or sixth-year theses or analogues without formal approval, and, with the approval of the department chair, college dean, and dean of the Graduate School, may direct doctoral dissertations. In addition to the qualifications required for full membership, a senior member is expected to have established and maintained an ongoing program of research or artistry that has received positive external review, and, ordinarily, a senior member will also have a record of experience in graduate teaching and advisement of graduate students’ scholarship.

Departmental criteria for graduate faculty membership are reviewed every eight years, concurrent with academic program review. The Graduate Faculty Membership Committee, reporting to the Graduate Council, reviews the criteria to ensure consistency with institutional expectations for the levels of graduate-faculty status. Departments may propose modifications to their graduate-faculty membership criteria at any time, subject to approval by the Graduate Council.

Concurrent with academic program review, all full and senior members of the graduate faculty undergo review by their respective departments. This faculty review may reduce the member’s status to the next lower category, maintain the member’s status already held, or raise the member’s status to a higher membership category. Following the departmental review and recommendation, the college dean and dean of the Graduate School review and make recommendations regarding each member’s graduate-faculty status. These recommendations are forwarded to the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. This committee compares the faculty member’s
record with the requirements of the departmental graduate faculty membership criteria and determines which faculty should remain in their current membership category or be moved to another category. Throughout this process, the affected faculty member is kept apprised of the review recommendations, and an appeal process has been established.

The above review processes have resulted in numerous modifications in departmental criteria for graduate faculty membership since the last accreditation review. These modifications have related to issues such as the number of scholarly products required for a given membership classification, evaluation of external grants and awards, and membership of departmental review committees. Currently, approximately 52 percent of the graduate faculty is at the senior level, 36 percent is at the full level, and 12 percent is at the provisional level.

The faculty of the College of Law is of a size appropriate to the size of the student body. The student-faculty ratio is an attractive 15:1. All members of the faculty have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree and Juris Doctor. Many of the faculty members also have either post-baccalaureate degrees in other disciplines or post-Juris Doctor degrees in law.

**OVERSIGHT**

The following discussion provides a description of the structures and process in place for the internal and/or external oversight of graduate faculty status, graduate programs and curricula, and program assessment.

**Internal Oversight**

Primary responsibility for the establishment and oversight of policies and procedures concerning graduate programs, graduate faculty, graduate students, and students-at-large rests with the Graduate Council, a body of approximately 30 members. The council includes faculty representatives elected by and from the graduate faculty of the six colleges offering graduate programs, in numbers reflecting the relative numbers of graduate faculty and programs in the respective colleges. Each of these six colleges is also entitled to one graduate student representative. There is also faculty representation from the College of Law and the University Libraries.

The responsibilities of the Graduate Council are broad. They include:

- establishing general policies relating to graduate study;
- establishing standards for admission, retention, and the awarding of graduate degrees;
- reviewing and approving graduate curricular proposals forwarded by the departments and colleges;
• approving and recommending all new graduate programs (which also require approval beyond the university level);
• promoting scholarship, research, and creative artistry among faculty and graduate students;
• promoting and encouraging excellence in teaching by graduate faculty and graduate students; and
• approving criteria for graduate faculty status.

The work of the Graduate Council is facilitated through a number of standing committees that regularly review matters within their purview and make recommendations to the full council. Each of these standing committees is chaired by a member of the Graduate Council, but most include additional faculty not on the council, which broadens involvement in the above activities and assures a greater breadth of input.

While many policy issues arise in the Graduate Council or through faculty inquiries or suggestions to the Graduate School, curricular matters typically originate at the departmental level. Course-related changes, additions, and deletions, and modifications in the requirements of existing programs are approved within the university. These items proceed from departments through the appropriate college curriculum committee to the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee and then to the Graduate Council. Proposed additions and deletions of graduate degrees, majors, and specializations also pass through these curricular channels, but may also originate from recommendations of the university’s Academic Planning Council. The approval process for new degree programs also requires the endorsement of the Academic Planning Council. The Board of Trustees must approve program and curricular additions and deletions, new centers, and requests for off-campus degree-granting authority. Requests for new degree programs, new centers, and off-campus degree-granting authority are forwarded to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for approval.

Administratively, the responsibility for implementing the policies and procedures established by the Graduate Council resides in the office of the dean of the Graduate School, who is also the vice president for research. The dean has broad additional oversight responsibilities with respect to many aspects of the university’s research enterprises, including the Office of Sponsored Projects, the Technology Commercialization Office, intellectual property, research integrity, compliance with federal regulations on research, policies regarding external grants and contracts, and the University Press, which is also discussed in the chapter on research and artistry. The associate dean’s responsibilities lie primarily in areas relating to academic policies applicable to students and graduate admissions and records.
A significant change in the Graduate School administration was the elimination of the office of assistant dean of the Graduate School. The responsibilities of this position included management of graduate assistantships and fellowships; these responsibilities were initially shifted to a new staff position reporting to the dean, with the associate dean responsible for academic oversight. Subsequently, the routine processing of assistantship paperwork has been incorporated into the Human Resource Services system, with academic oversight remaining with the associate dean. Other responsibilities of the former assistant dean focused on recruitment, which is now assumed primarily by departments, and minority recruitment, which is the responsibility of the full-time assistant to the dean for recruitment. Additional activities of that position have been assumed by either the dean or the associate dean.

In the last ten years, the university has required each department to develop and implement an assessment plan for graduate degree programs. Guidelines for developing assessment plans were approved by the Graduate Council in December 1994, recognizing that graduate programs can differ widely in objectives, clientele, and structure. Since 1998, assessment of both graduate and undergraduate programs falls under the purview of the University Assessment Panel. Discussion of program assessment is included in the University Assessment Plan.

**External Oversight**

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) requires that all degree programs and research and service units (centers) be assigned a CIP Code at state universities undergo a campus-based, periodic review at least every eight years. The responsibility for conducting the reviews rests in the Office of the Provost and the reviews are carried out by both the provost’s staff and the faculty serving on the Academic Planning Council. At NIU, the review process is the same for graduate and professional programs as for undergraduate programs, which was described earlier in this report. All programs in a department are reviewed concurrently according to a schedule approved by the Council of Deans. The results of the reviews are reported to the NIU Board of Trustees and then forwarded to the IBHE as an addendum to the university’s annual Results Report.

**Professional Accreditation**

An additional indicator of quality and a means for guiding the on-going programmatic improvements are professional accreditations. At NIU, all graduate and professional programs eligible for accreditation are accredited. These external accreditations not only assist faculty in keeping programs current but also assure the university’s constituencies that it maintains quality in its graduate and professional programs.
Alumni Responses
The Office of Assessment Services coordinates the university’s surveys of graduate alumni one year after graduation. The office also invites departments to include a program-specific supplemental survey with the university’s survey. Alumni respondents to the university’s follow-up surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction with their experience and education at NIU. Responses to the following four items provide a sense of this satisfaction; results are from those who completed their graduate degrees between 1994 and 2001, inclusive.

- If I had it to do over again, I would still pursue the same degree or major: Responses are consistent with 85 percent to 89 percent of the respondents indicating “agree” or “strongly agree.”
- I consider this degree a worthwhile investment of my time: Between 90 percent and 95.5 percent of the respondents answered “agree” or “strongly agree.”
- How well did your graduate degree program prepare you for your additional degree program? Throughout the time period, 96 percent of the respondents indicated that their preparation was at least adequate.
- How well did your degree program prepare you for your present job? Between 91 percent and 96 percent of the alumni indicated that their degree prepared them adequately or well for their current position.

These responses indicate that alumni are satisfied with their graduate experience at NIU and their degree programs prepared them for their occupations or further graduate education.

EVALUATION

Graduate and professional education is an integral part of the university’s mission. The rising demand for NIU’s graduate programs attests that the public continues to hold NIU graduate degrees in high regard. The variety of graduate and professional programs is designed to build upon the academic strengths of the institution and to meet the needs of students in its service region.

With respect to the future of graduate and professional education at NIU, the university is poised to judiciously expand its graduate programs, particularly those that reflect the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of advanced study and scholarly inquiry. Coordinated efforts to create degree programs and research centers that prepare students to become professionals for the public and private sectors and as members of the academy, and that foster partnerships between the university and entities in
its service region, will help to ensure that NIU remains an institution of choice in the second century of its existence.

Funding of departmental graduate assistantships was a concern at the time of the last university accreditation review. While the university provides stipends that would be competitive in most disciplines, in practice most departments cannot afford to offer stipends near the upper end of the range. Increases in appropriated funds for departmental graduate assistants have been modest, and instructional needs great; significant increases in departmental graduate assistantship stipends can be achieved only by reduction in positions or reallocation of other funds. But reduction in assistantship numbers, in turn, commonly reduces the number of students in a program, for many cannot afford to attend—or will choose to matriculate elsewhere—without assistantship support. This also reduces the number of graduate students available to assist with departmental teaching and research activities, and thus could have a significant negative impact on undergraduate instruction and scholarly productivity. Much of the increase in assistantship numbers in departments in which there has been an increase, has been possible only as a result of faculty success in obtaining funding from external grants and contracts. Increased efforts to secure external funding is a university priority, and such efforts will aid in increasing funding for academic departments to recruit the high-quality graduate students on whom its graduate and professional mission depends.

The new vice-president for research and dean of the Graduate School is receptive to an examination of the current structure and processes of the Graduate School, and to the clarification of its role in working with colleges and departments and in the support of their efforts for recruiting and admitting students to the university. Some individuals have expressed concerns about the slow pace for gaining approval for curricular changes, and about the perceived mismatch between the time and documentation required by the Graduate Council to secure approval for minor curricular changes. Discussions initiated by the dean will provide an opportunity for constituencies within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs to explore options for streamlining operations within the Graduate School and for expanding the role of the Graduate Council in achieving the university's graduate mission.

Accreditation, program review, and assessment are time, effort, and resource intensive. While the accreditation of programs is widely regarded as highly desirable among all university constituencies, some faculty express concerns about the need for formal program review and assessment mechanisms. Program review is an on-going process, both formal, as implemented by the Office of the Provost and mandated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and informal, as departments and
colleges reassess their goals, strengths, and weaknesses. The primary focus of such reviews historically has been program quality, broadly defined, and quality has been evaluated through a variety of measures: curricular currency, quality and achievements of faculty and students, adequacy of supporting resources, and comparison with recognized “benchmark” programs. Degree programs have been added, deleted, and modified to respond both to changes in individual disciplines and to changing needs of NIU clientele and the larger society, but with program quality always a central concern. Programmatic changes were made and some areas were streamlined, allowing for more efficiency and better service to students. To the extent that these reviews are used primarily for program improvement, the process is valued by the faculty. Faculty become concerned when externally mandated reviews create a climate of perceived threat and competition among units and universities, however, NIU has been well served by its program review process in responding to external constituencies.

The evaluation of program structures, processes, and outcomes has long been part of NIU’s formal program review process, and many of the curricular changes in graduate programs proposed each year reflect further assessment by faculty between the program reviews. Although the nature of the formal program review process continues to be a comprehensive examination of program structures, processes, and outcomes, the program review criteria have increasingly focused on students’ attainment of learning outcomes. In this regard, the assessment in graduate programs has not become as fully integrated into formal department activities as the university desires. While most graduate programs have developed plans to assess students’ attainment of learning outcomes and inventoried their assessment activities, not all assessment plans have been fully implemented, and in some cases, programs have not been able to produce substantive evidence from their assessment activities.

Graduate and professional programs at NIU continue to provide important opportunities for the development of working professionals and preparation for new careers or additional post-graduate education. The programs undergo continuous evaluation in response to changes in the disciplines and changing needs in the service region. These changes are guided not only by discipline-specific accrediting bodies, where applicable, but also through curricular review at the department level, and by the regular program-review process conducted by the university.
Criteria Addressed

Criterion One: The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

b. processes, involving its constituencies, through which the institution evaluates its purposes
d. understanding of the stated purposes by institutional constituencies
e. efforts to keep the public informed of its institutional and educational goals through documents such as the catalog and program brochures
g. institutional commitment to excellence in both the teaching provided by the faculty and the learning expected of the students

Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

b. effective administration through well-defined and understood organizational structures, policies, and procedures
c. qualified and experienced administrative personnel who oversee institutional activities and exercise appropriate responsibility for them.
d. systems of governance that provide dependable information to the institution’s constituencies and, as appropriate, involve them in the decision-making processes.
e. faculty with educational credentials that testify to appropriate preparation for the courses they teach

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

a. educational programs appropriate to an institution of higher education:
   • courses of study in the academic programs that are clearly defined, coherent and intellectually rigorous
   • programs that require of the faculty and students (as appropriate to the level of the educational program) the use of scholarship and/or the participation in research as part of the programs;
   • programs that require intellectual interaction between student and faculty and encourage it between student and student
b. assessment of appropriate student academic achievement in all its programs, documenting:
   • mastery of the level of knowledge appropriate to the degree granted
c. graduate programs that:
   • distinguish clearly graduate from undergraduate offerings;
   • expect students and faculty to value and engage in research;
   • are approved, taught, and evaluated by a graduate faculty that possesses appropriate credentials and experience; and
   • use results of regular internal and external peer review processes to ensure quality

d. transcripts that follow commonly accepted practices and accurately reflect student learning

e. effective teaching that characterizes its courses and academic programs

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

c. structured assessment processes that are continuous, that involve a variety of institutional constituencies, and that provide meaningful and useful information to the planning processes as well as to the students, faculty, and administration

d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution's continuance

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

a. student, faculty, and staff handbooks that describe various institutional relationships with those constituencies, including appropriate grievance procedures

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community

h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations
RESEARCH AND ARTISTRY

The Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University declare that scholarly inquiry, research, and artistic production are an integral component of the university; they are “indispensable in insuring the vitality of the entire instruction, research and artistic programs of the university.” This chapter outlines Northern Illinois University’s success in securing external funding; the university structures and processes to support its research and artistry mission; opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research endeavors; the significant research accomplishments of the faculty, staff, and students; and the university’s challenges and opportunities in advancing its research and artistry mission. The information reported below will provide evidence that NIU is worthy of its inclusion in the Doctoral/Research-Extensive category of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, membership in the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and in the Universities Research Association, a prestigious consortium of public and private universities.

EXTERNAL GRANT FUNDING

In spite of variable levels of general revenue budget allocations to NIU in the last decade, the university has nearly doubled its annual external grant awards since the last review. Table 7 shows that from FY94 to FY02, the total amount of external funding increased 92 percent, and the dollars per faculty increased more than 100 percent. This success in garnering external support is the result of numerous factors, including but not limited to the development of a federal agenda for research and other initiatives, greater expectations for seeking external funding in faculty tenure and promotion decisions, and faculty and staff expertise in cutting-edge research that reflects the funding priorities of federal, state and other agencies.

Several major federal funding awards have made possible the building of a new facility to house the ongoing research projects in the Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault, and the development of the
The data in Table 9 provide a summary of the amounts of external funding garnered by the colleges and other units in FY02. Additional information on college-based initiatives is provided in the discussions presented below.

### SABBATICAL LEAVES

NIU has a long history of providing substantial support of the research and artistry efforts of faculty and professional staff by awarding sabbatical leaves each year. Sabbaticals provide tenured faculty with one semester of leave for scholarly pursuits that can be taken full-time for one semester or half-time for two semesters. Staff sabbaticals can be taken during the academic year, but are frequently taken over two summers.
The total number of sabbaticals that can be awarded each year is formula driven based on the number of faculty and staff; on average the university awards 50 sabbatical leaves annually. Each college is allotted a maximum number of sabbatical requests based on the number of faculty in the college, and the approval of requests is based, in part, on the availability of adequate resources in the colleges and departments to support their instructional missions. The requests for sabbatical leave undergo a comprehensive peer and administrative review at the department, college, and university levels. Those leaves approved by the university are then presented for action to the NIU Board of Trustees. At the completion of the leave, a report on the scholarly outcomes of the sabbatical is filed in the Office of the Provost.

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Graduate School plays a significant role in providing encouragement, resources, and oversight for research and artistic activities in the university. The position of vice provost for graduate studies and research and dean of the Graduate School, which reports directly to the executive vice president and provost, was changed in 2002 to vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School. This change reflects an administrative commitment to increasing both the visibility and the role of research and artistry within the university. The vice president for research sits on the Senior Cabinet to represent the university's research interests in planning initiatives.

The vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School oversees a variety of services that, in collaboration with colleges, departments, and interdisciplinary units, provide support for scholarly, artistic, and professional endeavors. The Graduate School houses several important units to advance the university's research mission: the Office for Research Compliance, the Technology Commercialization Office, the Office of Sponsored Projects, and the Northern Illinois University Press. In addition, the Graduate School administers several programs that support the research endeavors of faculty, staff, and students; and acknowledges outstanding faculty achievements in scholarship, research, and artistry. Among these endeavors are the Graduate Colloquium series, the summer research and artistry program, and the selection of presidential research professors.

The Office of Research Compliance

The Office of Research Compliance coordinates the institutional committees required by federal agencies and university regulations to ensure compliance in three areas of research. The Institutional Review Board provides oversight of faculty, staff, and student research projects involving human subjects. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee provides similar oversight for live vertebrate animal research, and the
Institutional Biosafety Committee oversees recombinant-DNA research. The vice president for research is also the NIU intellectual property officer and chairs the Intellectual Property Committee. A new committee, the Responsible Conduct of Scholarship Committee, was recently developed to serve as an educational body related to scholarship, to assist in developing a climate to foster responsible research and scholarly activities, and to respond to new federal mandates.

The Technology Commercialization Office
The Technology Commercialization Office was established in 1985 “to encourage and nurture the development, disclosure, protection and exploitation of university intellectual property.” This office helps assess the originality and marketability of ideas toward their commercialization. From 1994 to 2002, the office helped to acquire 16 NIU patents, 10 of which are co-owned with other organizations, and two private licenses. There are several other of these efforts in process. The office also helps in the creation of spin-off companies. Two of NIU’s most active spin-off ventures are ChemNova Technologies, Inc., and Metallo-Biotech International, Inc. ChemNova adapts green chemistry principles and nanoscale approaches to develop innovative coating technologies and products. Metallo-Biotech works to advance technology in the area of boron neutron capture therapy, which is an experimental approach to cancer treatment. Another project is related to solving problems in nuclear waste capture. Recently, the office has interacted with the West Suburban Technology Commercialization Office (WesTEC), which is affiliated with NIU Outreach, to increase externally funded research projects, integrate technological innovations into economic development, and provide business assistance to high-tech firms. The Technology Commercialization Office is currently seeking a new director.

The Office of Sponsored Projects
The Office of Sponsored Projects encourages, assists, and supports faculty in obtaining external funding for research, training, public service, and creative activities. The staff disseminate information about funding opportunities and deadlines, while also providing a variety of consulting services. This office fulfills its mission by helping with project and proposal development, proposal preparation and submission, and, along with the Technology Commercialization Office, assistance with intellectual property. The office has an extensive library of funding programs, publishes a newsletter that is available online, sponsors workshops, and is a liaison to the intellectual property officer. The Office of Sponsored Projects is a highly valued office on campus; the assistance provided by this office has contributed to the increase in external grant and contract funding from $23.4 million in FY94 to $45.9 million in FY02.
The Northern Illinois University Press
The Northern Illinois University Press, established in 1965, is one of fewer than 100 scholarly presses in the United States, and one of only three in Illinois. The press exists to serve the scholarly community nationally and internationally by identifying and publishing meritorious manuscripts in fields of study important to intellectual advancement. Since 1994, 158 books have been published by the press.

Graduate Colloquium
Funds are available to support the Graduate Colloquium series, which brings disciplinary experts to campus to share their research and artistry with the university community as another way to support the university's research and artistry mission. The series serves as an important means of providing graduate students the opportunity to interact with individuals who are specialists within their respective fields. During the review period, funds from three different sources were available to bring speakers to campus. The major source of funds to support the colloquia is from fees paid by on-campus graduate students. Because graduate-student fees support this series, guidelines have been established to ensure that there is significant graduate student input into the selection of the colloquium speakers by the academic departments in which the students are enrolled. Funds derived from the fees are apportioned based on a formula that reflects the number of graduate students enrolled in programs in the department. The funding to support the colloquium series has decreased over the last decade. In 1994, colloquium income for invited speakers was $152,356 in comparison to $98,506 in 2002, reflecting a 35 percent decrease in funds that mirrored the decrease in graduate student on-campus enrollments over the period.

During the early part of the review period, two additional ways to fund guest speakers were available through the Graduate School. One was an account in the dean's office to support guest speakers, primarily when a special opportunity arose and there was insufficient time to use the regular colloquium fund application process. This source of funds was eliminated during earlier budget rescissions. Some speakers were also funded through indirect-cost dollars, although funding from this source has also been eliminated. The only funds currently available to fund guest speakers for the Graduate Colloquium series are from on-campus graduate student fees.

The Summer Research and Artistry Grant Program
The Graduate School administers the university's Summer Research and Artistry Grant Program for the faculty in six of the seven colleges; the College of Law operates its own summer program. The summer program is designed to provide seed money for small projects that could serve as the basis for the development of grant proposals to external funding agencies.
Through a request-for-proposals process, faculty are invited to submit an application for university support of their research and artistry programs during the summer months. Following the review of the proposals at the department and college levels, a university-level faculty committee reviews the applications and selects the proposals to be funded for the upcoming year. While both tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to submit proposals, some preference is given to non-tenured faculty.

As shown in Table 10, funding for this program has ranged from a low of $192,036 in 1997 to a high of $343,625 in 2002. In terms of number of individual applicants funded, approximately 50 percent of those who apply received funding. The Office of the President is a major source of funding for the summer program. The funding level is decided upon by the president late in the spring semester, and is based on an estimate of the amount of unspent general revenue funds that will be available at the end of the fiscal year. As a result of cuts in the university’s general revenue funding by the state, the summer research and artistry funds available to the president from this source have been reduced from $200,000 to $100,000 over the last several years. This reduction has primarily impacted the amount of salary support available to faculty, however as the data show, the number of proposals awarded some funding has consistently averaged 50-60 annually. This funding decrease was initially offset by the use of indirect-cost funds from the Graduate School, adding $100,000 for salaries and $150,000 for non-salary components such as travel, equipment, and commodities. The disbursement of indirect-cost funds to other initiatives precludes the Graduate School from committing this amount of indirect-cost money to the summer research and artistry program, with the result of only $100,000 available to support the program in 2003. These unfortunate reductions hamper the attainment of the university’s goal to increase its standing as a university with a major research role consistent with its

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Salary Support</th>
<th>Other Support</th>
<th>Total Amount Awarded</th>
<th>Awards Versus Applications</th>
<th>Percent Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>$178,500</td>
<td>$55,715</td>
<td>$234,215</td>
<td>64/ 123</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>204,000</td>
<td>66,350</td>
<td>270,350</td>
<td>66/ 126</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>83,130</td>
<td>288,350</td>
<td>59/ 141</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
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<td>65,260</td>
<td>192,036</td>
<td>62/ 134</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>160,000</td>
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<td>51/ 106</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
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<td>83,519</td>
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<td>51/ 76</td>
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</tr>
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<td>92,189</td>
<td>256,405</td>
<td>61/ 109</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>143,625</td>
<td>343,625</td>
<td>62/ 105</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Carnegie classification and its membership in the Universities Research Consortium.

**Presidential Research Professorships**
The University's Presidential Research Professorships program, implemented in 1982, is also administered through the Graduate School. Each year the Graduate School solicits nominations of faculty at the rank of professor who have outstanding records of research and artistry for recognition as presidential research professors. A committee comprised of past award recipients, and chaired by the dean of the Graduate School, reviews the nomination materials and selects up to three individuals annually for this recognition. Each recipient receives an annual allowance of $5,000 for research/artistry non-salary support for four years, a one-time $2,000 increase in base salary, and one semester of release time from teaching and university service responsibilities for scholarly pursuits. Since 1994, NIU has recognized 29 individuals from four colleges as presidential research professors.

**Other Support for Research and Artistry**
In addition to its offices and the administration of the initiatives outlined above, the Graduate School supports some graduate research assistantship positions, and contributes to the support of faculty travel for professional presentations at national and international conferences. It also contributes funds to augment those allocated by the colleges for start-up support for new faculty, pilot projects, and unexpected costs for emergency equipment repair.

Graduate assistantships are traditionally assigned in three categories: research, teaching, and staff administration. In 2002, 25 percent of the university's graduate assistantship positions were assigned to support the research efforts of faculty and staff; most of these positions are funded by external grants and contracts. These research assistantships, as a percentage of the assistantship total, have been very stable over the review cycle. In 1994, 22.8 percent of the assistantships were research related, in comparison to 24.5 percent in 2002.

In addition to the funds provided at the department and/or college levels, the Graduate School contributes funds to help defray travel-related costs for presenting the results of research or artistry. Prior to 2002, this support was available from both general revenue sources and indirect-cost dollars. In 2002, general revenue funds were no longer available to fund travel and only indirect cost funds were used for this purpose. Since the Graduate School's contribution is a match of the funds allocated at the department and college levels, recent rescissions have impacted the total funding available to support travel at all levels. The overall result is that travel
support for faculty has decreased, as many departments and colleges have designated travel funds to meet rescission requirements.

**UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES**

While undergraduate students, as well as graduate students, are engaged in class-related research projects, there are two programs at the university level to encourage undergraduate students to become more deeply involved in research projects. One of these programs is Undergraduate Special Opportunities in Artistry and Research (USOAR), in which students design and conduct their own research projects under the guidance of a faculty member. This program, initiated in 2000, is financed by funds generated through an exclusive university contract with PepsiCo, Inc. A total of $50,000 is allocated to this program annually; funds are distributed to students in each of the six colleges with undergraduate degree programs. Each project is supported with up to $2,500.

A second program is available through the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (URAP) provides an opportunity for selected students to work with a faculty member on a research project with which the faculty member is involved. The faculty member devises ways in which the student can be involved in the research project, and then serves as a mentor to the student. The faculty member may receive a small grant for the project from the college, and, with assistance from the Graduate School, the student receives a stipend, in addition to the opportunity to be a research apprentice. The College of Visual and Performing Arts also offered research apprenticeship program opportunities during the review cycle, although the program is not currently being offered. The college is, however, interested in reviving the program should resources become available. Both of these programs provide unique opportunities for students to become actively involved in the research process early in their academic careers.

**GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH**

Students enrolled in the university’s graduate degree programs are expected to develop the research knowledge and skills appropriate to the level of their degree program and to their disciplines. All graduate programs have degree requirements that specify course work in the methods of inquiry or criticism and/or data management appropriate to the discipline. In addition, many graduate students are afforded opportunities to work directly with faculty in the conduct of their research or artistry, which further develops the students’ skills, engages them in collaborative efforts with faculty, and creates mentor-protégé relationships.
The requirements for the completion of theses and dissertations are explicated in the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog. In brief, students enrolled in most master's degree programs are afforded an opportunity to complete a thesis under the direction of a thesis director and a faculty committee. Students electing this option are then expected to defend their work successfully in a public forum in partial fulfillment of degree requirements.

Students enrolled in doctoral programs are expected to make a substantial contribution to knowledge in which they exhibit original scholarship and the ability to conduct independent research. Students work with their dissertation director to define an appropriate topic for investigation, and develop a proposal for conducting the research that must be approved by the dissertation committee. Students must then successfully defend their work in a public forum in partial fulfillment of degree requirements.

At the doctoral level, in particular, students meet expectations or requirements to produce scholarly papers and/or make presentations in professional venues. In many instances students and faculty work on the preparation of these papers or presentations, reinforcing not only collaborative relationships between faculty and students but also the interrelationships between teaching and research. In addition to these scholarly outlets for disseminating new knowledge, all theses and dissertations become part of the collections in Founders Memorial Library.

In addition to the programs’ assessment of students’ scholarly work required for the degree, the Graduate School provides two sources of evidence to assess the quality of dissertations and the oral defense. The dean of the Graduate School assigns a faculty designate to review the dissertation and evaluate the rigor of the dissertation defense. The designate prepares a report on the quality of the dissertation research and oral defense, which is submitted to the dean. The dean also periodically solicits the external reviews of a representative sample of dissertations from each doctoral program, and prepares a report for the programs on the results of these reviews. The evidence from both of these activities is included in the program reviews of all doctoral degree programs.

THE COLLEGES

The following discussion provides an overview of the expectations for and outcomes of the scholarly work of faculty in each of the colleges.

The College of Business
The goals stated in the mission of the College of Business are “to achieve and maintain a national and international reputation for scholarly research in business administration.” To meet these goals the college continues to
update its faculty merit and tenure/promotion guidelines to reflect greater attention to research. These guidelines were revised in 1997 and three of the five departments in the college have raised their expectations for the quality and the quantity of research produced by faculty. The number of “A-level” journal articles written by faculty members in three of the five departments has increased over the last several years, showing progress in the college’s attainment of its stated goals. In support of research in the college, funding for research is provided to new faculty for two years and $125,000 is allocated from the college budget each year for summer research awards. External funding awards for the college have consistently been between $800,000 and $900,000 since 1994.

Perhaps the most important change for the college is its new, state-of-the-art building, Barsema Hall. This high-profile facility should help the college to attract and to retain the most highly qualified faculty and students. The college sees opportunities for greater efforts to obtain state, federal, and private research funds, and is encouraging greater student involvement in research. The greatest concern for the college is maintaining the financial resources to retain adequate faculty and staff.

The College of Education
The College of Education, as part of the revised priorities related to the restructuring in July 1999, re-affirms its dual focus: teaching and research. Research is a key component in the merit review process that flows from the departmental level to the college council. This commitment is articulated in the research-based practice component of the college’s mission statement, which includes connecting educational theory and the application of knowledge to the real world of schools and organizations and to conducting research that will “solve real problems.”

The college’s emphasis on research in the last 10 years is manifested in its recognition and support of faculty, administration, and student research. Many faculty apply for funding through NIU Summer Research and Artistry Grant Program. Since 1994, 53 faculty members have received research and artistry awards. In 2000, a faculty member from the college was selected as a Presidential Research Professor, the highest level of university recognition for scholarship, research and artistry. In 2001, the college established the Exceptional Contribution to Scholarship Award to recognize one tenured and one tenure-track faculty member each year for their outstanding research and scholarship.

External recognition of faculty research can also be observed in their publications, editorships, elected leadership roles in professional organizations, and number and level of external grant awards. Four faculty members have been recognized for receiving six-figure grants each year for
an extended number of years. Grant acquisition has increased from $1 million in 1994 to $4.8 million in 2002. The College of Education ranks second in grant acquisitions among the colleges in the university. Given the elimination of some federal grant programs, the shift of federal grant programs to block-grant competitions for which universities may not be eligible to apply, and the overall reduction in available foundation dollars, the fact that the college’s grants acquisition has increased more than three-fold, while the number of full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty has decreased 20 percent from 1993 to 2002, is an indication of the commitment to and competence in research over this period of time.

In order to assist faculty in acquiring greater grant proposal-writing expertise, the college has redirected its Office of Research and Evaluation Studies from supporting college-level data analysis to assisting individuals in external grant-proposal writing. A library on proposal writing has been started and is housed in the office. Brown-bag lunch meetings have been scheduled periodically on research topics of interest to the faculty. In addition, technology courses have been developed and offered for new faculty, and a mentoring program is being developed to maintain and to strengthen the college’s contributions in scholarship consistent with NIU’s Carnegie classification.

The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
The mission of the NIU College of Engineering and Engineering Technology asserts its commitment to being a significant contributor to research in engineering and technological fields at national and international levels. The college supports research and creativity through staff services, sabbatical leaves, internal grants for faculty support during the summer, travel monies, faculty release time for research, sponsorship of meetings and symposia, and funding assistance for initiatives related to faculty development. From 1994 to 2002, the college produced $20 million in externally funded research projects. Additionally, faculty in the college published 239 research and technical journal articles, and 18 books, and received 33 awards between 1994 and 2002. At present, the college meets or surpasses the average national expectations for scholarly pursuits in colleges of engineering.

The most significant improvement for the college between 1994 and 2002 was the opening of the new Engineering Building in 1996 for the Departments of Electrical, Industrial and Mechanical Engineering. In addition to this $42-million facility for the engineering programs, the Department of Technology, housed in Still Hall and Still Gym, also saw space renovation and equipment improvements. The new facility and other improvements facilitate not only the teaching but also the research missions of the college.
The college is expanding its research efforts in occupational safety and safety standards; manufacturing modernization; microelectronics and nanotechnology; traffic safety; vibration, noise, and acoustics; and digital signal processing. The most important concern for the college is its loss of faculty positions. The college has five fewer (11 percent) faculty positions than in 1998. This decrease in faculty at a time of increased undergraduate enrollments creates a dilemma in balancing resource allocations between research efforts and teaching needs.

The College of Health and Human Sciences

The mission of the College of Health and Human Sciences is “to promote health and well being through teaching, scholarship, service and practice.” In the pursuit of this mission, research is the linchpin that links the teaching, service and practice. The health and human science professions stress the importance of “evidence-based practice;” therefore, the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct research, to assess research findings, and to use those findings in practice are an integral component of the college’s professional curricula. The research-to-practice model also links individual faculty members and the programs to numerous community-based partners. These partnerships foster service and research opportunities for faculty and students, and contribute to the health and well-being of the communities these partners serve.

More traditional academic indicators can also measure the scholarly productivity and stature of the faculty within the college. During the past ten years, the college was awarded more than $19 million in externally funded grants and contracts, representing a 58.3 percent increase over the previous ten years. Peer-reviewed publications and presentations at national and international conferences are important components of the review process for tenure and promotion, as well as annual merit review. In addition, some faculty are members of grant-review committees within the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Education, and some are fellows at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The college and its schools and departments encourage and support research productivity in various ways. For example, they provide financial support for faculty and students making presentations at national and international conferences. The college has worked with the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center to provide systematic research-mentoring opportunities for junior faculty within the college and across the university. The college encourages faculty to support both undergraduate and graduate student research by recognizing faculty participation on thesis committees, capstone honors projects, in the Undergraduate Special Opportunities Artistry and Research Program, and the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program.
In the past ten years, the college has made great strides in supporting the scholarly productivity of its faculty, increasing external funding, and encouraging student-driven research. Nevertheless, the increasing costs of laboratory equipment, rising demands on faculty time to meet the expectations of a variety of stakeholders, and decreasing state financial support for higher education are a cause for concern for the continued growth of research within the college.

**The College of Law**
The College of Law is deeply committed to supporting scholarly research. Most faculty scholarship comes in the form of law reviews, but several faculty members regularly produce books, book chapters, and casebooks. In support of scholarship, the college administers its own summer research program, supports sabbatical requests, computer equipment, a computer specialist to assist faculty, a Law Library, and student research assistantships. The college has tried to build a stronger reward system for faculty research over the last several years. Since 1997, the college faculty have produced 9 books and 113 articles, chapters, legal reviews, or book reviews. External grant awards in the last two years were $516,102 and $410,737, respectively.

The college has several concerns related to its research mission including the escalating costs of acquisitions for the Law Library that support faculty research, and fewer dollars to support research-related travel and summer research awards, which have decreased 19 percent from $78,000 to $63,000. There is also a lack of stipends for research assistants during the summer months.

**The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the largest of NIU’s colleges, comprised of 17 departments, the Divisions of Public Administration and Statistics, the Women’s Studies Program, and a number of research centers and interdisciplinary units: the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, the Center for Biochemical and Biophysical Studies, the Plant Molecular Biology Center, the Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault, and the Northern Illinois Center for Accelerator Detection and Development. The college mission states that “it is the aim of the college... to promote the development of a scholarly climate conducive to the intellectual growth of all members of the university community” and “to foster significant research and scholarly activities” in those “disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of scholarship.” Since 1994, the college has instituted new faculty orientations, as well as workshops for tenure and promotion. Faculty members are required to submit research grant proposals to external funding agencies as a requirement for tenure and promotion. The college has also promoted a selective excellence program to identify departments wherein the hiring of faculty members in associate
professor or professor positions would enhance scholarly visibility and/or develop research clusters that foster interdisciplinary collaboration. The college has encouraged interdisciplinary research, especially in linguistics, cognitive studies, and ethics. In 1996, the college established the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program, described above.

The college has had significant accomplishments related to its research mission that include a 41 percent increase in external grant funding from $9.1 million in FY94 to $12.8 million in FY02, faculty membership on the editorial boards of 100 professional journals, and their publication of 680 scholarly works over the last two years. The faculty engage in internationally renowned research projects: geological drilling in Antarctica, particle physics, deciphering the genetic code of rice, primate and dinosaur paleontology, New World archaeology, boron cancer therapy, the peoples of Southeast Asia, family violence, nanoscience, American writers, and histories of the world. The Department of Geography was recently named an Intergraph Center of Excellence, one of only six in the U.S. The faculty have also been the recipients of the Golden Bell Award and the Heidt Prize, been honored as Fulbright Scholars, and been awarded a Humboldt Fellowship, NEH Fellowships, an American Political Sciences Congressional Fellowship, and American Council of Learned Societies Fellowships, among others.

The college has concerns related to the lack of resources to support fully research initiatives of import to the faculty, and the lack of space for specialized research. The challenges for the college include replacing senior faculty to retain the hard-won reputations of its departments, and achieving a balance in meeting undergraduate demands while promoting research and scholarship with fewer faculty positions.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts

The College of Visual and Performing Arts has a long and enviable history of excellence in research and artistry. Its challenge over the period of review has been to maintain and to increase that level of activity and achievement. Faculty in the college have been very productive and have in a number of instances established reputations of national and international importance as musicians, artists, theatrical directors, technicians, coaches, and scholars. Six faculty members from the college have been designated Presidential Research Professors. Additionally, one faculty member from the School of Theatre and Dance has recently been appointed as the artistic director of the oldest summer professional theatre in the United States, and another faculty member coaches actors for major motion picture productions.

The School of Music is the home of the internationally prominent and Grammy-nominated faculty string ensemble, the Vermeer Quartet. Faculty
of the School of Art have been elected officers in international and national professional organizations. Many regularly write articles that appear in important professional journals, author books that receive national recognition, exhibit artistry in international and national venues, and collaborate with professional design groups and individuals.

The faculty have also been successful in gaining external grants and other research support. The acquisition of external funding has increased 48 percent from 1998 to 2002. Some of these grants have been acquired by the NIU Art Museum. The permanent collection of art objects, including the Burma Collection, housed primarily in and supervised by the NIU Art Museum, is an important research resource for the university. For artists, the exhibitions in the facilities directed by the NIU Art Museum, including the NIU Gallery in Chicago, are important adjuncts to the research and artistry mission of the college. Metropolitan Chicago remains a rich resource for faculty, providing frequent opportunities for collaboration and contact between faculty members and Chicago artists and performers, galleries, institutions, and organizations. Such activities and contacts serve to promote higher levels of faculty artistry and to make NIU more visible as an important cultural institution in its service region, as well as nationally.

Research and artistry in the college has been enhanced by improved personnel processes within the schools as the result of major revisions in the college bylaws. The college has also established an external-funding application requirement for all faculty beyond the third year of service. Quantitative advances include more published articles, books, invitations for scholarly presentations, and participation in national and international conferences, as well as more grant applications resulting in more and larger grants. Qualitative advances include the first-ever Mellon Fellow from the college, and the first major research-journal editorship and associate editorship housed in the college. In sum, the college is highly effective in its scholarly and creative output. That output compares favorably with larger, more adequately funded arts units nationally.

**EVALUATION**

NIU has exemplary faculty who contribute to a broad variety of scholarly and professional endeavors of regional, national, and international significance. The university has made significant achievements since the last site visit and is committed to improving research and artistry across the campus.

On balance, research and artistry have increased with many significant accomplishments since the last review; NIU deserves to be proud of these advances. The university’s strengths are clearly centered in increased...
external grant and contract awards, support for a sabbatical program, significant numbers of scholarly publications, and artistic creativity. Special opportunities for the advancement of its research mission include the university's continuing and expanding connections and collaborative research projects with federal research laboratories like Fermilab and Argonne National Laboratory, and with other entities housed in the region. Other significant opportunities lie in the development of more interdisciplinary work across campus and with other institutions in areas like nanotechnology, paleontology, bioinformatics, treatments for chemical dependency and dementia, and a variety of other areas of special competence among the faculty. With a state and regional emphasis on workforce preparation and issues related to education and health care, the research-to-practice focus of the research in the Colleges of Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, and Health and Human Sciences provide opportunities for increased activity, grant funding, and research partnerships.

On the other hand, the loss of regular faculty positions in some units and the lack of regularly budgeted line items for the internal support of summer research and artistry grants are, perhaps, the greatest concerns. The university has lost approximately 100 tenured or tenure-track positions since 1994 (See Table 7). Fewer faculty and less funding impact on the university's commitment to support faculty and staff requests for sabbatical leaves and other opportunities that enrich the research enterprise. The goal of retaining the university's current complement of faculty is evidenced in the continuation of searches to fill vacant positions, the elimination of or hiring freezes for non-instructional positions in order to fill faculty positions, and the assignment of a higher proportion of budget rescissions to the support units within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs than to the colleges. The replacement of mission-critical faculty continues to remain a high university priority, which is reflected in the budget priority requests submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education annually.

NIU needs to appraise its investment in the infrastructure for research and artistry. Substantial funding supports the infrastructure of the Graduate School, which plays a major role in advancing the university's research mission, among others. An examination of the distribution of resources that support the various functions of the Graduate School would provide the opportunity to streamline, modify, and refocus the functions of its units and operations, placing greater emphasis on its support for research and artistry efforts.

Research and artistry at NIU are funded below that of several other Mid-American Conference (MAC) universities. Table 11 shows the amount of research dollars spent as a fraction of total university expenditures across
MAC peer-group universities. NIU ranks seventh of 13 universities in this comparison; however its total research expenditures and the percent of total research expenditures are comparable to that of the University of Toledo and Western Michigan University, which rank fifth and sixth, respectively.

### Table 11. Comparison of Research Expenditures by MAC Peer-Group Institutions For FY01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAC Institutions</th>
<th>Expenditures for Research</th>
<th>Total Expenditures</th>
<th>Percent Spent on Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio University</td>
<td>$23,852,869</td>
<td>$323,850,116</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Akron</td>
<td>16,182,268</td>
<td>248,371,478</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall University</td>
<td>8,424,073</td>
<td>143,976,103</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent State University</td>
<td>13,219,105</td>
<td>250,752,537</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Toledo</td>
<td>10,930,774</td>
<td>232,065,492</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Michigan University</td>
<td>13,628,127</td>
<td>295,349,265</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Illinois University</td>
<td>11,354,882</td>
<td>279,214,447</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami University</td>
<td>7,011,679</td>
<td>249,855,836</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball State University</td>
<td>6,060,556</td>
<td>266,257,994</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Green State University</td>
<td>4,067,696</td>
<td>214,599,770</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Michigan University</td>
<td>3,730,569</td>
<td>209,923,085</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNY College at Buffalo</td>
<td>2,271,089</td>
<td>149,520,381</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Michigan University</td>
<td>1,744,930</td>
<td>217,082,805</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A related concern is the lack of regularly budgeted or well-funded lines dedicated to the advancement of research and artistry at levels the university would find optimum. These include the budgets for graduate research assistantships, summer research and artistry grants, professional speakers, the replacement of research equipment, faculty travel, library resources, and computer equipment. Increased efforts to expand research partnerships internally and externally, and to secure higher levels of external grant funding awards, with their associated indirect funds, are some of the ways in which several of these challenges could be addressed.

NIU has experienced a recent increase in graduate-student enrollments, which can be attributed in part to the current national and state economies, changes in professional requirements for classroom teachers and accountants, and the university’s addition of new graduate degree programs, among other factors. The funds from student fees that support the Graduate Colloquium series should increase to some extent from these higher enrollments. The increase in demands for the delivery of the university’s graduate degree programs at regional sites, where students do not pay fees related to the colloquium series, however, will continue to limit the funds available for colloquia.

The university indirect-cost redistribution formula shows that approximately 15 percent of indirect costs from external awards are currently appropriated.
to the college (5 percent) and the department (10 percent). While the total amount of indirect funds allocated to the colleges and departments has increased concomitantly with the total amount of grant funding, the percent of indirect costs returned to colleges and departments has been lower over the last four years than in 1994 and 1995 (see Table 12). Much of the infrastructure that supports research and artistry is driven by the faculty through the indirect funds from their grant awards. These indirect funds sustain the units that support faculty’s efforts in developing, securing, and managing their grants. For example, the Office of Sponsored Projects and Grant’s Fiscal Administration are primarily funded by indirect costs, and a proportion of the indirect funds are allocated to the University Libraries and other units that support scholarly and artistic work. Business and operations, and finance and facilities comprise a consistent 27 percent of total indirect costs since 1994.

NIU should strive to support a greater percentage of the summer research and artistry grant applicants as funds permit; during the review period approximately 50 percent of the applications were funded. The total amount of funding available to support the summer research and artistry program is unknown until the spring semester, which makes it difficult for optimal planning to take place. The faculty stipends for the program in the mid-1990s, when salaries were lower, were close to one month of a faculty member’s salary. The current $4,000 stipend is now the maximum amount available and is lower than the monthly salary of most faculty, but the limit on the stipend does permit more applications to be funded. The increased emphasis on seeking external funding in tenure and promotion decisions, and the allocations in some colleges to support faculty research in the summer suggest that the university and the Graduate School may want to take the opportunity to reexamine the goals of the summer research and artistry program. If participation in the program were limited to tenure-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Indirect Costs</th>
<th>College Plus Department Share</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>Business &amp; Operations</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>$1,596,660</td>
<td>$352,508</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>$438,408</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1,687,335</td>
<td>371,481</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>462,104</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1,723,919</td>
<td>375,978</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>469,953</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1,527,464</td>
<td>312,809</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>410,045</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1,772,283</td>
<td>333,614</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>488,527</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1,896,282</td>
<td>300,038</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>525,209</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,092,863</td>
<td>370,276</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>578,863</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2,107,411</td>
<td>418,949</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>583,220</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2,201,544</td>
<td>388,895</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>606,837</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
track faculty, it could provide them with higher levels of support and, perhaps, funding for a larger number of projects, which could thereby increase their success in securing external funds to support their programs of research and artistry.

Some funding for graduate student research and artistry is available from dissertation completion awards and graduate fellowships, but additional funding for these endeavors, more assistantship positions, and more competitive assistantship stipends, would enable the university to attract more students to its graduate programs. Funds for the support of post-doctoral fellowships would be an additional means of advancing the university’s research mission.

In the end, the Graduate School, the primary university unit that oversees and provides resources for scholarly expression on campus, is limited in ways to increase research and artistry at NIU with the funds currently available for these activities. The infrastructure to conduct research and engage in artistry at NIU is generally in place, but the funding levels for these varied endeavors are constrained by existing resources; they must be augmented by the infusion of new externally funded initiatives. In sum, NIU needs to reevaluate its funding priorities for research and artistry; some approaches to this reevaluation process are noted above. It is anticipated that the hiring of a new vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School, who has experience in developing university-wide research enterprises, will greatly assist the university in supporting the outstanding job that individual faculty have been doing in research and artistry, and allow them to express more of their potential.

Criteria Addressed

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

e. effective teaching that characterizes its courses and academic programs
i. if appropriate:
   • evidence of support for the stated commitment to basic and applied research through provision of sufficient human, financial, and physical resources to produce effective research;
   • evidence of support for the stated commitment to the fine and creative arts through provision of sufficient human, financial, and physical resources to produce creative endeavors and activities.
Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution
d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution's continuance
e. resources organized and allocated to support its plans for strengthening both the institution and its programs

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
d. institutional publications, statements, and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs
h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations
SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Service, the third component of the university mission, is integrally related to teaching, research, and artistry, and takes many forms. Northern Illinois University sponsors service and outreach programs that provide lifelong learning opportunities for working professionals, retirees, and place-bound students; supports applied research and policy analysis designed to address or increase understanding of community problems; offers regional access to the artistry and scholarship of the faculty; and provides a forum for the discussion of issues of public concern. Individual members of the faculty and staff also provide service both to the university and to their own professions.

NIU has a long tradition of engagement with the northern Illinois region. The university was established in a region of the country that is becoming ever more complex and cosmopolitan, and it has claimed that region as its own in planning documents, mission statements and presidential speeches for many years. A planning statement from the early 1990s described NIU as “the” university of northern Illinois and indicated that realization of this role would require “a faculty of national and international stature, capable of anticipating change and able to meet the demands of [the region] for applied research, technology transfer, collaborative partnerships, and cultural opportunities.”

The university affirms this history in its current mission statement, which includes the following: “In keeping with its historic mission, the university serves and continually seeks to provide greater educational opportunity for non-traditional students who can pursue courses and degree programs only on a part-time basis and at off-campus locations. It has established professional relationships with many of the scientific laboratories in the high-tech/agribusiness corridor, with many of the corridor’s leading businesses and industries, and with its central service facilities. It also is a major cultural center in the region, drawing audiences to a wide range of exhibits, concerts, and theatre productions.”

The university’s new president, Dr. John G. Peters, told the campus community in fall 2000 that he was tremendously impressed with NIU’s integration of teaching, research and artistry, and public service throughout the curriculum and in its outreach programs. “NIU’s physical presence in the region,” President Peters said, “plays a key part in my vision for the NIU of 2010, 2020 and beyond.” At the president’s request, the deans of the academic colleges met during the spring 2001 semester to reach consensus about what constitutes high impact outreach for the university. They agreed that credit programs, performances, research activities, consulting, clinical placements, and continuing professional development through conferences
and workshops should all be considered outreach activities. Outreach, the deans concluded, connects the university's programs and people with external constituencies in a manner consistent with the mission of the university, and that of the colleges and departments, for mutual benefit. High impact outreach activities achieve political support and enhance NIU's visibility, build influential partnerships and lead to increased funding, affect public policy and professional practice, are valuable to the region, and are of discernible academic benefit for the university.

This chapter provides an analysis of the various service and outreach activities in which the university is engaged. It begins with a discussion of outreach at the university level, including the organizational structure in place to facilitate outreach activities. This is followed by a description of outreach initiatives of the colleges and departments. The chapter concludes with examples of service activities performed by faculty and staff, and an evaluation of the status of outreach and service on campus at this time.

**UNIVERSITY OUTREACH**

NIU has been offering credit courses at sites throughout northern Illinois since the early 1930s, and its initial claim to its role in the region can be traced to that initiative. By 1970, a night school, a community service office, a registration function for non-matriculated students, a conference center, and a statewide office supporting economic education were added to the “extension” program to create a college of continuing education with its own dean charged with the university-wide coordination of public services, the establishment of field service offices, and the creation of extension liaisons for every college. The structure in place during the 1970s and 1980s helped put the university in a strong position to respond to the changing demographics of the northern Illinois area, the new learner populations, and the increasing demand for training and re-training in professional fields.

The College of Continuing Education was dissolved in 1987, and its liaison staff were distributed to the academic colleges with which they were most closely associated. This provided the college deans with an opportunity to focus their outreach programs on specific disciplines with especially strong ties to the region. The task of establishing more visible outposts in the suburban area then fell to the central administration. A planning process designed to build consensus on the optimal location for permanent regional sites ultimately led to the establishment of NIU outreach facilities along the I-90 corridor (NIU Hoffman Estates, opened in 1992), in the city of Rockford (NIU Rockford, opened in 1995), and along the I-88 corridor (NIU Naperville, opened in 2000).
The processes for planning, gaining approval, locating sites, and constructing these facilities consumed significant administrative time during the decade of the 1990s, and some of the programmatic momentum behind the university-wide claim on the region was lost as the colleges pursued discipline-specific initiatives that did not receive as much external attention as might have been warranted. The new president, bolstered by the university’s entrance into National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), called on the campus to build an “institution of national prominence with a significant impact on the Chicago region and the greater northern Illinois area.” Following the NASULGC model, an administrative reorganization brought a number of units with “extended” missions together in a new division, the Division of Administration and University Outreach. Under the leadership of Vice President Anne C. Kaplan, a new NIU Outreach organization was designed to bring cohesiveness and efficiencies to the university’s outreach presence and was charged with helping the university meet its regional obligations, maintain and build its regional role, and increase its regional visibility. A brief description of the NIU Outreach organization follows.

NIU Outreach’s 14 units are grouped into three departments—Regional Centers, Shared Services, and Programs and Services—following a strategic planning process that involved more than 75 percent of staff within the existing units that comprise University Outreach. A management team headed by Associate Vice-President John Lewis has led the transition toward a well-coordinated and effective division. To ensure that all personnel contribute directly to the mission of engagement, University Outreach uses a performance management process that includes 100 percent of staff members in setting performance and personal development goals related to the University Outreach mission, goals, and objectives. Teams drawn from units across the division commonly work on multi-disciplinary projects.

**Regional Centers**

As important regional resources for academic and non-credit program delivery, the regional outreach centers, NIU Hoffman Estates, NIU Rockford, NIU Naperville, and the Lorado Taft Field Campus, are a critical component of the renewed focus on engagement. To fulfill their engagement role, the centers are expected to build upon their regional presence to raise the visibility and enhance the relevance of NIU in northern Illinois. The mission statement for the centers reflects this focus: “NIU Outreach Centers engage the community in partnerships; connect the community to NIU programs, services and research; offer entrepreneurial solutions to community needs; and provide high quality education and conference facilities.” In the newly-developed organization, the three centers are developing common standards and standardized operational procedures.
The centers were designed to enhance teaching and learning. They offer current technology, easy access, and excellent facilities and services for students and faculty. Businesses, associations, and other organizations use the facilities for professional development seminars, meetings, and special programs; two of the centers, NIU Rockford and NIU Naperville, offer permanent homes to tenants with compatible educational and service missions. The Lorado Taft Field Campus provides highly-regarded outdoor education facilities and programs for area school districts and students. Staff in all of the centers provide additional linkages to the community; they have been active within their regions and have established on-going relationships with a variety of constituents.

**Shared Services**

The central operational functions of University Outreach reside in a unit entitled “NIU Outreach Shared Services.” Included under the shared services umbrella are those internal functions of business services, human resources, customer and partnership relations, and operations management, which support NIU outreach units, both in the division and across the campus, in attaining their goals, anticipating constituency needs, and promoting sustained partnerships.

**Programs and Services**

Finally, under the broad title “NIU Outreach Programs and Services,” the university includes a number of long-standing programs that are already well recognized in the region, such as the Center for Governmental Studies, the Illinois Council on Economic Education, and the NIU Motorcycle Safety Project, as well as several new programs that may be expected to take their place among the major contributors to NIU’s role as a regional resource. Chief among these newer programs are the Institute for Work in the Economy, eLearning Services, and the Western Suburban Technology Enterprise Center. Some of these programs are described in the following pages.

The NIU Center for Governmental Studies is a public service, applied research, and public policy development organization. Its mission is to be a leader in providing services that contribute to the economic well-being of the state of Illinois and in advancing the capabilities of government at all levels to develop policies and to manage and evaluate their program services.

The center currently has 24 full-time professional staff with degrees in 11 different substantive fields of study. The number and value of contracts and grants to center staff have grown markedly during the last decade, from an average of 50 awards annually to well over 70 during the last two years. In FY 89, the center had awards of nearly $634,000 in gross value; this award
level climbed to over $3 million in FY02. Center research and service includes work in economic and community development, workforce development, association management, health care research, educational planning and performance, social welfare, and data and mapping. Illustrations of the center’s impact on the region and the state over the last decade include:

- Economic impact analyses and target industry studies with many local governments
- Employment and earnings outcome measures applicable to both the state and the nation
- Economic development and transportation planning and other services for a number of Illinois state agencies
- A system of skill standards being used in schools and companies in 30 states
- A knowledge management system (KMS) platform for use by the workforce development community nationwide.
- Strategic planning efforts for cities (City of Galesburg, fall 2001), suburban towns (Village of Homer Glen, spring 2000), rural villages (Village of Kirkland, spring 1996), park districts, and school districts
- Studies on government efforts to support the transition from welfare to work
- Studies to facilitate decision-making by systems agencies, including the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Community College Board on such issues as the use of part-time faculty in higher education, teacher retention in public schools, and demand for a variety of programs including the Illinois Virtual High School

In an effort to increase capacity within local government and state agency staffs, the center provides support to a number of associations and community groups, and manages a number of websites and databases that benefit a wide audience. Associations that are currently served by the center include the Illinois City/County Management Association and the Illinois Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Association. The center has co-sponsored annual training institutes for the Municipal Clerks of Illinois for many years, and more recently has begun working with the Chicago Metro Area Chapter of the American Public Works Association.

The center also makes available a wide array of data sources and GIS mapping capability that is regularly accessed by local governments, quasi-government agencies, and the not-for-profit sector. The site for the Northern Illinois Business and Industry Data Center, for example, was established in 1994 to serve businesses and individuals in the 24-county northern Illinois region including the Chicago, Kankakee, Rockford, and
Quad Cities metro areas. It is designed to meet the growing need by decision makers for current and historical demographic and economic statistics.

The Illinois Council on Economic Education is devoted to economic literacy. The council provides professional development for K-12 educators, develops curriculum materials, provides consulting services regarding curricula in economics, and sponsors educational competitions and awards programs. Its mission is based on the premise that “all children should be able to benefit fully from and contribute meaningfully to the economic system in which they live.” In keeping with the university’s efforts to work more closely with neighboring community colleges, the council has begun to establish satellite offices on community college campuses. These offices extend access to issues related to economic literacy to part-time adult students who might have limited exposure to economic and financial information.

One new NIU initiative to respond to community needs for higher education is the partnership between NIU and Rock Valley College, in Rockford, Illinois. Signed in January 2002, the RVC/NIU partnership agreement provides students with an opportunity to complete baccalaureate degrees in any of seven programs offered during the late afternoon and evenings on the Rock Valley College campus. Response to the partnership from Rockford-area students has been very encouraging. A total of 189 students enrolled in NIU courses in the Rockford area in fall 2002 compared to fewer than 70 students in fall 2001. Total enrollments, including students taking more than one class, stand at 233 in fall 2003, and the university has received several requests to establish similar models on other area community college campuses. The partnership concept has been furthered by two small grants from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and could be expanded with the development of a permanent funding mechanism. Portions of the two grant awards have been used to meet the needs of non-traditional learners in the RVC/NIU Partnership programs for anytime, anywhere learning through development of online courses. NIU Outreach convened representatives of the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, Information Technology Services, and eLearning Services to build a network of technical support for faculty who worked with instructional designers, graphics artists, and programmers to create highly innovative online courses. The coordinating group also identified policy development needs, such as better online services for students, revenue-sharing agreements for marketable courses, and new models for investment and compensation in the generation of online courses.
A second major outreach initiative, jointly coordinated by University Outreach and the Office of the Provost, is the university’s effort to play a leadership role in statewide P-20 issues. Charged by President Peters in December 2002 to take a more active role in responding to the crisis in the schools, a task force including deans from the colleges involved in teacher preparation developed an NIU P-20 agenda designed to expand P-20 collaboration; bring programs to the challenges of special needs populations; provide models to improve student performance in mathematics, science, and technology; support an enhanced presence for the arts at all levels; and produce research that policymakers can use in decision making and policy development and implementation. To date, NIU’s P-20 initiative has resulted in two regional summits involving educators from all levels of the education system, two summits of public university deans who have focused on the creation of a public university P-20 legislative agenda, promulgation of the Illinois Interactive Report Card, coordination of the Spotlight Schools Awards for the Illinois State Board of Education, development of an online survey to assess professional development needs for teachers of mathematics and science, and the receipt of federal grants totaling $6.4 million to enhance teacher quality and fine arts programs in the Rockford Public Schools.

THE ACADEMIC COLLEGES

As indicated in the discussion of NIU’s graduate and professional programs, the academic colleges in the university, particularly the Colleges of Business and Education, provide extensive course offerings and degree programs at regional sites to meet the needs of non-traditional students and working professionals. In FY03, for example, all of the colleges generated approximately 38,100 credit hours from courses at regional sites. Of these, the College of Business generated 6,677 credit hours, and the College of Education generated 23,415 credit hours. In addition to this extensive delivery of credit course work, the colleges offer a variety of services, applied research initiatives, and community programs that extend the reach of the university well beyond the campus.

The College of Business

As a quality provider of higher education committed to teaching, research, professional and public service, the College of Business provides the foundation for individuals to engage in lifelong learning and achievement in a rapidly changing, increasingly diverse society. In addition to the credit course offerings that are part of its graduate and undergraduate curriculum, the college offers certificate programs as well as test preparation for standard exams for financial analysts (C.F.A.), internal auditors (C.I.A.), management accountants (C.M.A.), and public accountants (C.P.A.). Some of the activities can be completed online.
Outreach for the College of Business is strategically designed to serve post-baccalaureate students, practitioners, and business organizations effectively and efficiently and is comprised of five components:

- Graduate degree programs, that enable traditional and working students to formally master advanced concepts and skills required for success in today's business environment
- Corporate Relations through which are created value-added relationships that leverage resources to create mutual benefit for the college and its corporate stakeholders
- Learning and Business Solutions, which is responsible for the development and facilitation of contract education, business consulting, and executive coaching interventions
- Business Research, which provides business stakeholders an integrated solutions approach focused on the application of proven theory and the translation of research results into business strategies and methods designed to create desired outcomes
- Continuing professional education, which is responsible for the development and delivery of non-credit, open enrollment certificates, workshops, and certification programs focused on immediate knowledge needs of business.

Outreach for the college evolves from its strategic plan. Through market analysis, competitive scanning, and monitoring business trends, programs and interventions are conceptualized to coincide with the college's intellectual capital. Programming activities of the leading service providers, both academic and corporate, are monitored and the “best of class” organizations are benchmarked. From these data, curricula, programs, and other initiatives are designed to contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives. Measurable goals are established to evaluate the outcomes of outreach activities, and modifications are made to ensure the maximum performance possible.

The College of Education

The College of Education is committed to preparing advanced professionals for a wide variety of leadership positions in education, business, industry, and for-profit as well as not-for-profit agencies. This commitment extends beyond the campus to include regional educational needs as well. To that end, the college is currently delivering 11 graduate degree programs in 33 locations in nine community college districts in the region. While the frequency of course delivery varies from program to program, most offer a cycle of courses that allow a degree to be completed in two to three years.

The college promotes a professional development-school relationship with many school districts in the area. In addition to degree programs offered
through the NIU regional centers, co-operative relationships exist with school districts in Elgin, Des Plaines, Gages Lake, Grayslake, Mundelein, Naperville, and Palatine, enabling teachers from those districts to earn advanced degrees on site at a greatly reduced cost through a contractual relationship between their employing district and NIU. Additionally, the college has been sensitive to the current and projected shortages in critical areas of education, such as special education and counseling, and has actively sought to develop cooperative relationships with school districts and agencies to deliver much needed classes and programs on site. Two undergraduate degree completion programs are offered in collaboration with Elgin Community College (elementary education with bilingual approval) and Rock Valley College (elementary education).

Of particular note is the college's School-University Partnership Program, which began as a means of developing exemplary educators. The need to study theory and research as well as putting theory into practice as a reflective practitioner serves as the foundation for the program. The program began in 1994 with a very successful venture with the Harlem Consolidated School District #122. Based on the need to train prospective teachers in the use of technology, in addition to providing a close connection between theory and practice, this program became nationally recognized. Following this success, the college formed partnerships with seven other school districts, reflecting the diversity of urban, suburban, and rural settings, and representing more than 60 ethnic groups. The School-University Partnership Program has reached thousands of NIU candidates, teachers, and administrators in the northern Illinois region. To date, numerous grants have been written as collaborative efforts between college faculty and the respective school districts. These grants include, but are not limited to, Verizon Technology Grant, Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3) Grant, and Project STEP (Staircase to Educating Professionals) Bilingual Grant.

Other outreach activities, primarily operated through the departments in the college, include:

- Athletic Training/ Sports Medicine Project
- Community Dance Program
- Developmental Sport Skills Program
- Fitness Images Today
- Oak Crest Retirement Community Exercise Gerontology Program
- Motor Development Research Laboratory
- Reading Clinic
- Special Physical Education Teaching-Research Clinic
- Science Education Lab
Most of these activities not only provide service but also provide practical learning experiences for NIU students. Other outreach activities include non-credit offerings through the External Programs unit.

The college’s greatest opportunity at this time lies in the demand to train educators in the region. Demand has never been higher, a factor of a poor economy, which encourages people to consider career alternatives, and a projected teacher shortage, which encourages people to view education as a stable employment prospect. Partnerships with school districts, new relationships with agencies and corporate clients in the region, and revised professional development requirements for teachers in Illinois, have all provided the college with bright opportunities for regional service, collaborative activities, and partnerships.

The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

Outreach has always been a focal point of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology’s operation, and the college’s mission statement is reflective of that focus. The college views outreach on a comprehensive basis and as an effort to reach out to communities, industry, community colleges, high schools, other peer institutions, and alumni. The programs offered by the college have a high level of involvement and support by the above entities. The college has five industrial advisory boards and each department in the college has an active network of industrial and alumni partners. The college takes pride in offering practice-based programs that are in demand by industry, and its unprecedented and unparalleled growth within the state of Illinois during the past five years is evidence of the success of its outreach efforts. The college was one of the first at NIU to deliver a complete degree program for an industry using distance learning techniques. This initiative involved linking up to seven nuclear power station sites for simultaneous instruction through interactive video. The college was also one of the first at NIU to teach a course entirely on the Internet.

The college’s comprehensive approach to outreach is focused on the following activities:

- Off-campus delivery of credit courses, some using audio-video technology or the Internet, leading to certificates and degree programs
- Industrial Outreach through modernization projects, advisory boards, consultanships, student projects, job fairs, college tours, facility-sharing, internships, and other workforce development initiatives
- Non-credit training programs through seminars and workshops
- Joint research initiatives with industries and peer institutions
- Dissemination of research and innovative models through national and international conferences and/or professional meetings
• Exhibits and competitions
• Administration of the National Safety Education Center—an OSHA Training Institute Education Center

The nature of the programs offered by the college involves the participation of various public and industrial sectors. Along those lines, the college has active recruitment and industrial partnership models already in place with several initiatives geared toward reaching out to communities, industry, alumni, students from high schools and community colleges, and other units on campus. More than 90 percent of the students enrolled in the college are engaged in multiple semesters of industrial internships, which is a strong reflection of the college’s partnership with industry. Most of the capstone course projects are based on topics suggested and/or supported by industry. Departments and the college have advisory boards that provide information on the activities and scope of industrial needs, and the members participate in external assessment of the college’s programs.

Partnerships with high schools are fostered through the college’s Adopt-A-High-School project, in which more than 85 high schools are adopted by more than 45 faculty and staff in the college. This project has resulted in working partnerships with more than 150 high school counselors and teachers. The college is in the process of developing web-based modules for high school students that would be taken by students not only to enhance their awareness of engineering and technology careers but also to earn college-level credit while in high school. This program should assist the college in its recruitment efforts, and in attracting more women and minorities to its engineering and technology programs.

Relationships with community colleges are fostered through 2+2 articulation agreements and by hosting a “Community College Day” when deans and science teachers from more than 35 community colleges engage in dialogue with NIU faculty and chairs to facilitate working partnerships and curricular articulation. In addition, the college offers the baccalaureate degree in technology at regional sites via videoconferencing.

The College of Health and Human Sciences
The College of Health and Human Sciences’ regional activities and services fall into five general categories: internship, clinical, and work experiences; clinical laboratories for service and student instruction; distance, off-site, and online course delivery; regional education programs; and collaboration with community colleges and community-based agencies.

The university’s location and large population base provide many opportunities for internship, clinical, and work placements that enhance students’ learning experiences, support the university’s outreach goals, and
generate support for NIU from within the community. The sites for these placements include social services agencies, child care facilities, counseling centers, public and private family therapy organizations, food services, corporate wellness sites, hospitals, clinics, and private practice offices.

Clinical laboratories are an unequivocal strength of the college’s regional outreach while enriching and supporting the professional students’ program of study. The Speech and Hearing Clinic, operated by the Department of Communicative Disorders, provides clinical services for clients in a seven county region, prepares graduate students for practice, and provides a site and population for clinical research. Each year the clinic provides approximately 600 hearing tests, dispenses almost 200 assistive devices, provides 150 diagnostic evaluations, and provides therapy services to approximately 400 clients. The clinic has also developed an extensive outreach program, providing services to an area nursing home, two area hospitals, and a local elementary school. The clinic has also provided one of the first universal newborn screening programs outside Chicago.

The Speech and Hearing Impaired provides assistance for hearing-impaired young adults who live on campus, experiences for individuals from a number of fields learning to work with individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and works with medical, dental, and other allied health professionals in providing diagnostic services to children and adults with facial birth defects at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Rockford. Faculty also provide assessment and treatment at Kishwaukee Community Hospital and Rockford Memorial Hospital. Faculty and staff, to further research and student education at the clinic, have garnered extensive financial support at a level of approximately $1 million annually.

Tri-County Community Health Center, established in 1993, is a collaborative venture between the NIU School of Nursing and Kishwaukee Community College. The center provides primary health care at three community sites: the main clinic on the campus of Kishwaukee College, a walk-in clinic at Rochelle Community Hospital, and a clinic at the DeKalb County Health Department. The center serves community uninsured and low-income residents who lack access to health care. Nurses have provided care for more than 14,000 clients since the inception of the clinic. The clinic provides work or school physicals, annual check-ups, treatment of common illnesses, services for the management of chronic diseases, and outreach services at a variety of community agencies for assessment services, physical examinations, health education, and disease screening programs. These agencies include the Ogle County Family Planning Clinic, a homeless shelter and shelter for battered women and families in DeKalb, the Head Start Program, migrant workers in Ogle and Lee counties, and children at local day care centers. The center also serves as a clinical site for
nursing and other health professions students from NIU and Kishwaukee College. Additionally, a faculty member from the NIU clinical laboratory sciences program serves as the clinic's laboratory director.

Additional outreach programs of the college include those listed below.

- The Family Center is a public service outreach activity operated by the School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences. Clients are referred from the NIU Counseling and Student Development Center, area social service agencies, the courts, and other sources. Second-year marriage and family therapy interns under faculty supervision provide marriage and family therapy services. The family center serves approximately 200 cases (400 clients) annually.

- The Child Development Laboratory is a research and training facility for childcare professionals, and provides superior quality programs for young children from the university and the community. All child development majors complete a one-semester practicum in the laboratory.

- The Chandelier Room is a public dining room that also serves as a laboratory operated within the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences for students majoring in nutrition, dietetics, and hospitality administration. As part of the required curriculum, students complete a two-semester series of foodservice laboratory experiences in the dining room.

Several programs in the college are offered at a variety of regional sites. Baccalaureate degree-completion programs in child development, community health, and nursing are offered in Rockford as part of the RVC/NIU Partnership. The School of Nursing also offers the baccalaureate degree-completion program for registered nurses at six regional sites and the master's degree program in nursing at NIU Hoffman Estates. Courses in both programs and those needed to complete the Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate of Graduate Study are offered in formats that include face-to-face, videoconferencing, and online. The Master of Public Health degree program is offered at NIU Naperville to serve the needs of working professionals in the western suburbs of Chicago.

Regional educational programs are aimed primarily at the continuing development of practicing professionals in the health and human sciences fields. The following examples demonstrate the breadth of these programs offered by the college:

- Graduate-level course work in applied family and child studies is offered at NIU Naperville to assist participants in preparing for certification in child life.
In collaboration with the American Physical Therapy Association, faculty in the physical therapy program have offered credentialing courses for clinical instructors.

Through the federally funded Institute on Deafness, the Department of Communicative Disorders provides specialized training and professional development through on-campus credit workshops to approximately 40 practicing rehabilitation counselors each year.

The School of Nursing offers workshops for advanced practice nurses including those focused on suturing, orthopedic injuries, interpretation of electrocardiograms and X-rays, and differential diagnosis of the acute abdomen.

Faculty in the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences offer graduate-level courses at NIU Hoffman Estates on a regular basis to serve the continuing education needs of practicing dietitians and non-traditional graduate students.

The School of Family, Consumer, and Nutrition Sciences offers course work in the Certificate of Graduate Study in Eating Disorders and Obesity at NIU Naperville. These courses serve counselors, therapists, dietitians, and teachers who work with clients and students presenting with these issues.

The college has developed partnerships with the DeKalb County Housing Authority to provide programming and services for senior citizens who reside in public housing. Some examples of the partnership’s activities include hearing screening, senior friends, and plans for a mobile clinic with a focus on wellness promotion. The college has also contracted with the Northwestern Illinois Area Agency for Aging to offer workshops for caregivers of aging family members, and this relationship may extend to a needs assessment of their nine-county service region. The School of Allied Health Professions has partnered with various regional agencies, including Rosecrance Health Network, DeKalb Health Department, DuPage Health Department, the Bradford Institute, and the Harlem School District, for collaborative clinical, educational, and research projects.

The College of Law

The College of Law’s regional programs and services fall into five general categories: off-campus courses, clinics and internships, international programs, continuing education for the practicing bar, and on-campus programs for minority undergraduate students. The primary objective of these programs is the expansion of educational opportunities for college students. Their secondary purpose is providing service to the northern Illinois region by facilitating legal services to the indigent, educating lawyers and other professionals, and providing educational opportunities to minority undergraduates aimed at diversifying the legal profession.
The regular curricular offerings of the college are almost exclusively limited to the campus, corresponding to the normal model of legal education, which is dictated by American Bar Association accreditation standards (A.B.A. Accreditation Standards, §§ 304, 305). However, since 2000, the college has offered three courses each summer in the late afternoon or evening at NIU Naperville to provide summer educational opportunities while permitting students to engage in full- or part-time summer employment. These courses provide the opportunity to create greater visibility for the college in the Chicago suburbs, and total enrollment for the summer sessions were 106 students.

The college has a substantial off-campus presence with internships and clinic offerings, having long offered students internship opportunities in northern Illinois with three types of field placements: state’s attorney offices, public defender offices, and legal services offices serving the indigent. Students work 20 hours per week in these offices under the supervision of attorneys, with oversight and weekly class meetings with a college professor. Over the past ten years, approximately 200 students have enrolled in an internship experience.

In addition to internships, in 2001 the college established a legal aid clinic, the Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic, in Rockford, where students work directly with clients under the supervision of a paid clinic attorney and a college professor. The clinic serves two basic purposes: to provide a hands-on educational experience to students and to provide needed legal services to indigent clients. The clinic focuses on three areas of client need: domestic violence, elder law, and mediation. In the first two years of the clinic’s operation, 30 students participated in serving approximately 340 clients.

The college offers a third off-campus educational opportunity to students: a summer overseas program in Agen, France. This program, begun in 1996, involves six weeks of classes in June and July taught by two NIU college faculty who also direct the program. It includes lectures from a number of French law faculty, and involves visits to institutions integral to the French legal system. During the seven years of its existence, 102 students have been enrolled in the program. Student evaluations have consistently given the program very high marks, and a 2003 ABA reaccreditation visit for the program was very impressed with the overall academic quality of the program.

In addition to off-campus curricular offerings, the college has offered two basic types of special prelaw programs for both high school and college students as a means of stimulating an interest in pursuing a legal career. The high school camps were held for three consecutive summers, 1992-1994. However, the college decided to discontinue the camps when the
responsibility for marketing was shifted from the university to the college, a task which the college, at that time, was not prepared to undertake. The college has also run several distinct summer programs targeting minority undergraduates with the goal of stimulating interest in legal careers and ultimately increasing minority representation in the legal profession. In the summer of 2001, the college hosted a special six-weeks program under the auspices of the Council on Legal Education Opportunities for minority students admitted, but not yet enrolled in a law school. In the summer of 2002, the college and the council also sponsored a four-week program for sophomore- and junior-level minority college students, to stimulate interest in legal careers.

The second area of outreach has been various continuing legal education programs the college has sponsored for attorneys and related professions. The centerpiece for this has been an annual day-long symposium held in conjunction with the Law Review. These symposia focus on topics related to land use, environmental and agricultural law, the death penalty, mediation, technology, and domestic violence. Attendance at the symposia has typically ranged between 75 and 125 participants depending on the topic.

Regional programming has demonstrated that the college has successfully synthesized excellent hands-on learning for students with providing important legal services for indigent clients, the limited number of summer courses has ensured the same level of instructional quality as on-campus courses; and the limited number of programs offered for the practicing bar and undergraduates have helped ensure a high quality product, as measured by participant response. The summer programs in Naperville and Agen, France, are self-supporting, and there appears to be sufficient student interest in both initiatives to continue them. Internships are supported by partnerships with public legal offices, while the legal aid clinic is financed by a permanent allocation to the college's operating budget. Continuing professional programs are supported by registration fees. On the other hand, the occasional programs designed to increase minority representation in the legal field, have been funded by special grants, the receipt of which has been sporadic.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has a long-standing commitment to outreach, to extending its resources to the region, and to making educational benefits accessible to the general public. The college's outreach efforts have two major components: credit courses and degree programs offered at regional sites, and non-credit activities such as conferences, academic camps, “travel with a professor” activities, and programming for senior citizens.
The college offers four degree programs at regional sites: the Bachelor of General Studies, the Master of Public Administration, and the Master of Science and baccalaureate degree-completion programs in computer science. The Bachelor of General Studies, in its regional iteration, is a flexible program that serves as a capstone degree, with NIU offering upper-division courses that complement the associate of arts or associate of science degrees of Illinois community colleges. The degree program is offered at NIU’s three regional centers; advising services are provided and classes are taught by NIU faculty at convenient times for working adults who are part-time students.

The Master of Public Administration degree program is offered at regional sites in the western suburbs of Chicago and in Rockford. This nationally ranked program offers students valuable applied experiences through internship placements in local government and not-for-profit agencies. A significant number of the professional city managers and employees of local, county, and state governmental agencies in northern Illinois are graduates of the program. These individuals provide a variety of internship opportunities for students enrolled in the program.

The Department of Computer Science offers a baccalaureate degree-completion program in Rockford in conjunction with the RVC/NIU partnership, and has offered the master’s program at NIU Hoffman Estates and the Multi-University Center in Oak Brook since 1990. The programs focus on large systems programming and software development, which limits the number of locations where they can be offered. However, computer laboratories are available to students at all current sites. There is a high level of interest in the programs, and classes are taught by NIU faculty in the evenings and on Saturday to accommodate learners’ needs.

In addition to the delivery of degree programs at regional sites, the college offers selected courses to meet the specific needs of citizens in the northern Illinois region. For example, the Department of English in 1993 forged a partnership with the Society for Technical Communication that resulted in courses being offered in innovative formats in the western suburbs of Chicago. These courses include presentations by practicing professionals on subjects such as designing web pages, editing technical manuals and publications, training, and ethics. Students have the opportunity to work with a professional mentor from the society on a “real world” project. This partnership has enabled the Department of English to recruit new students to its graduate programs as well as to enrich the pre-professional experiences of all students in these classes.

The professional development needs of K-12 teachers are met by the college in a variety of ways. Some teachers enroll in undergraduate courses that also
meet the needs of students pursuing the Bachelor of General Studies degree program to update themselves in their field or to develop a new subject area certification or endorsement. The college will respond to requests from the College of Education to provide undergraduate mathematics courses to its cohorts of students preparing for elementary education certification, and will be able to offer more graduate-level courses for teachers' professional development.

There is a significant untapped market for the college's courses and degree programs in the northern Illinois region. Evidence of this can be seen in the energy and resources that several out-of-state colleges and Illinois private and public universities are devoting to recruitment of students in NIU's region. The major limitation NIU faces regarding the development of this market is funding to pay instructors for classes taught at regional sites. A further financial limitation has been the lack of resources for publicizing and marketing the programs. Relief from these financial limitations has to some extent been achieved with the levy of a regional course delivery fee approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2002. For the first time, funds to publicize the college's regional offerings are now available. In this first year, the fees have been devoted both to publicizing the availability of these courses and to developing innovative delivery formats for students at regional sites. To help students enrolling in the regional B.S. or M.S. degree programs in Computer Science, the college committed significant funds to developing an online prerequisite statistics course. Revenue from the course fees will also enable the college to increase its offerings for the Bachelor of General Studies at NIU Naperville and NIU Hoffman Estates.

Non-credit activities are delivered to many segments of the region's population including pre-collegiate, pre-professional, adult travelers, seniors (age 55 and older), scholars in the liberal arts and science disciplines, and professionals seeking updates in their fields or new skills and competencies. Pre-collegiate activities are often discipline- or department-focused and sponsored. They extend college resources to pre-collegiate segments of the region, and also give young people an opportunity to sample aspects of the college's curricula. These programs often have a secondary audience of adults associated with the student participants. Sometimes there is a "spillover" because a program designed for pre-collegiate young people may provide a professional development opportunity for teachers, who may be invited to experience academic camps as laboratories for developing curricula for their own classrooms. The following are some of the pre-collegiate activities sponsored by the college:

- The Northern Illinois Regional History Fair has been sponsored by the Department of History for many years. Each spring, hundreds of middle and high school students come to NIU to compete in this
portion of the Illinois State History Fair. Teachers working with the students receive Continuing Professional Development Units for their participation in the fair.

- The NIU Conference for Young Women has been sponsored by the Women’s Studies Program for the last seven years. The conference invites 20-40 high school students to attend a one-day event designed to showcase career opportunities and college life.

- Academic camps sponsored by the departments are week-long summer opportunities for pre-collegiate students to work with the college's faculty, live in a university residence hall, and preview college life at NIU. The oldest camp is Speech Camp, which has been held each summer since 1987. In most recent years, the college has sponsored camps each summer in fields such as mathematics, physics, journalism and media, speech, French, Japanese, and Southeast Asian studies. Students come primarily from the northern Illinois region, although out-of-state students also attend.

- The college offers test preparation workshops for college bound high school students, in which the college’s graduate student instructors serve as facilitators for 12-16 hour review workshops for students preparing for the ACT or the SAT. These workshops are conducted at the high schools. Demand for ACT workshops has increased in response to the Prairie State Achievement Examination, now required of all Illinois high school juniors. In recent years, External Programming has also offered the ACT review course on the NIU campus as well as online.

Pre-professional preparation activities include seminars, workshops, and short courses designed to assist undergraduates and others in the region preparing for graduate and postgraduate study. Four times each year, test preparation workshops are provided for individuals preparing to take the GMAT, GRE, and LSAT. Review sessions for the MCAT have occasionally been offered.

The Department of English has sponsored an annual graduate students’ conference for ten years. These conferences attract approximately 100 student scholars from the Midwest and beyond, and provide a first professional opportunity for the university’s master’s and doctoral students in English to present their research at a scholarly conference. English faculty from NIU and other universities provide professional reviews of the presentations.

“Travel with a Professor” experiences began with the Department of Anthropology when NIU faculty, alumni, students, and friends of the college visited Copan, Honduras, for a week to see first-hand the research of Mayan antiquities. A typical program includes a pre-trip seminar, several
lectures and informed commentary during the trip, and a follow-up “sharing pictures” reunion. Groups have ranged from 12 to 50 travelers. These activities have expanded, keeping the original objective of helping adults realize their personal learning goals, while enhancing the image of the college to the public. Faculty from history, anthropology, political science, geography, geology, physics, and English have led these expanded “Travel with a Professor” experiences. Countries visited include Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma, Spain, Portugal, South Africa, Morocco, Italy, Peru, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, Belize, Canada, and Costa Rica. In the United States, college faculty have shared expertise with groups visiting the American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin, the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater in Pennsylvania and Taliesien in Wisconsin. This programming has been perhaps the most significant development in the “non-credit” arena over the past ten years, with the college now sponsoring three to five such trips a year.

The college’s programming for seniors began in 1979 with NIU’s first Elderhostel. These week-long Elderhostel activities are designed for people over 55 years of age and focus on educational activities in the liberal arts and sciences. Typically, three faculty from the college teach short courses around an interdisciplinary theme. During the past ten years, this outreach effort has expanded significantly. Beginning with a typical year’s offering of one or two Elderhostels attracting 15 to 20 participants each, the college now offers four to seven per year, which attract 25 to 50 participants each.

The college’s newest programming for seniors, the Institute for Learning in Retirement, began at NIU in 2000, with an exploratory meeting of interested people from the region. Similar to Elderhostel programming, the institute is a response to demographic shifts and trends of active lifelong learning. This membership organization selects, organizes, and conducts four sessions of learning activities each year for people over 55 years of age; the institute currently has 115 members from DeKalb and neighboring counties. Selected faculty members from the college provide a weekly lecture/discussion to the members of the institute. Two to three special events are held each term, and have included field trips to Chicago, Kansas City, and Milwaukee. As a new program, the institute still depends on significant financial support from the college. However, with two grants from the DeKalb Community Foundation and an increase in member fees, the institute should be self-supporting within the next few years.

Scholarly conferences spotlight the research achievements of college faculty, and have included the Midwest Conference on Language, Literature, and Media; the Midwest Computer Conference; Regional Science Association International Conference; International Indian Statistical Association.
Conference; the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs; and the D-Zero Conference. These academic conferences provide professional development opportunities for NIU faculty and graduate students, and many include plenary sessions delivered by keynote speakers that are open to the general public. The college usually hosts two to three such conferences a year.

Professional development activities are designed to extend university-level expertise and knowledge to various professional groups. Most notable among these efforts are the college’s professional development conferences for teachers, the “New Ideas...” series. The college has provided teachers in the region with an opportunity for professional development through events as “New Ideas in History,” “New Ideas in English,” “New Ideas in Science,” and “New Ideas in Language and Literature.” These “New Ideas” conferences are typically one-day events that draw 30 to 200 teachers to campus to hear college faculty present updates in their disciplines and their latest research findings. The emphasis of the series is always on new knowledge and fresh perspectives on intellectual problems, rather than on pedagogy. The number of “New Ideas” conferences has increased to three or four each year, and over the review period virtually every department and interdisciplinary unit in the college has participated in the series.

Members of the business community in the region are served by the NIU sponsored “Lessons in Leadership” series through which the college has hosted visiting experts such as Tom Peters, Stephen Covey, Ken Blanchard, and others. These one-day programs, which attract registrants from not-for-profit, social services, and government agencies, as well as from large corporations and small private businesses, are conducted in Chicago or in the Rosemont area and are participant fee supported. From 1995 to 2002, 6,094 individuals have attended “Lessons in Leadership” programs. Business and Industry Services, a unit in the Division of Administration and University Outreach, and the College of Business co-sponsored these professional development events with the college.

One of the most important corporate training projects in the college was the three-year contract with IBM through which faculty from the Department of Computer Science engaged in a curriculum transfer effort for approximately 60 computer science instructors from China, India, South Africa, Poland, Russia, and the United States. IBM was interested in replicating the large systems programming segments of NIU’s computer science undergraduate degree programs. The visiting instructors worked with NIU faculty in intensive eight-week training sessions over three summers, and then NIU faculty supported their efforts to implement curricular enhancements electronically during the following academic years. The department was able to address one of its most significant challenges: the shortage of qualified instructors in its discipline. The contracts from
IBM not only supported all costs of the project but also included the gift of the university mainframe computer currently in use.

The college has also had contracts with businesses and local government agencies for on-site training in a number of other fields: technical writing, communicating with clients and customers, writing for public relations, and enhancing written and spoken communication of technical employees for whom English is a second language. These corporate training opportunities have become less frequent with the economic downturn.

Participants in most non-credit programming events complete evaluations that guide further programming and planning. Emphases and refinements in programming are based on feedback as well as shifting markets. For example, baby boomer demographics underpin the college’s Elderhostel, Institute for Learning in Retirement, and travel programming. Changes in recertification requirements for secondary education teachers inspired more New Ideas conferences and some restructuring of the History Fair so that teachers might obtain professional development units. The down-turn in the economy led the college away from onsite corporate training, and toward helping people prepare to return to school.

Credit and non-credit activities are developed and conducted in response to externally articulated demands. The college’s regional programming is possible only with a concomitant generation of funding. Most off-campus credit courses must generate a certain enrollment in order for the faculty to qualify for one of the limited overload stipends allocated through University Outreach; similarly, activities such as conferences, camps, and Elderhostel must generate sufficient fees to cover costs. Fortunately during the economic boom times of the 1990s, the college developed a critical mass of financially successful non-credit projects to amass a revolving development fund for non-credit programming. However, with the economic slowdown of the last two years, the college has not found as ready or as profitable a market for corporate training and other non-credit programming.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts

The College of Visual and Performing Arts uses its focus statement to guide its outreach activities. The college is a major provider of artistic services to the region in ways that strengthen learning and scholarship, and as a result, most of the college’s outreach activities meet several of the benchmarks for high impact outreach. Because the college’s academic programs are professional in nature and selective in admission, its outreach activities place a special priority on attracting learners who can most benefit from those programs, including the outreach activities themselves.
In 1992, the college established an office devoted to promoting regional programming for its three schools. Many activities sponsored by the schools are administered through the External Programs office. These activities include credit courses, summer residential high school arts camps, music events for high school ensembles, regional credit programming, and the NIU Community School of the Arts. In addition, the schools and the NIU Art Museum offer regional programming directly to a variety of public audiences. The office provides a wide array of administrative support for programs, including publicity, budget, development, and evaluation.

The college offers selected credit classes at regional sites to extend the resources of the college to the Chicago suburbs and to Rockford. These courses are upper-division undergraduate and graduate-level classes, offered during evenings and on weekends to accommodate the schedules of working professionals, many of whom are classroom teachers. The majority of courses are provided by the School of Art in studio art, art history, and art education. Periodic needs assessments are conducted to set priorities in meeting the needs and interests of the constituencies served by these courses.

The Summer Residential High School Art Camps unite faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and NIU alumni as teachers and counselors with high school students in a stimulating intellectual environment that encourages focus on an arts discipline. The goal of the camps is to bring interested students to NIU to expose them to the faculty and facilities in the arts that are available at the university. There are camps in dance, jazz, theatre, and visual arts. Rigorous written evaluations are conducted at the end of the week of all campers and staff and detailed statistics are pulled from the camper evaluations. Changes in the camp curricula are implemented in the following year as a direct result of camper evaluations. Each camp ends with a formal performance or exhibit for family and friends. Since 1992, NIU has seen 3,259 campers at its summer camps.

The School of Music invites high school concert and marching bands, choirs, and jazz bands to perform on campus each year. These events attract approximately 70 public and private school ensembles with an estimated 4,000 students from the northern Illinois region annually. School ensembles are critiqued by NIU faculty and, for some events, by an outside clinician. Evaluation forms are provided to directors at registration; completed evaluations are shared with faculty organizers. Changes in subsequent events are often made because of comments made by directors.

The NIU Community School of the Arts is a college-sponsored initiative that includes private music and art lessons; music, art, and theatre classes; and several music ensembles. The goals of the community school are to
provide outreach opportunities for those who might otherwise not come to the NIU campus and to showcase the college. Teachers in the community school are graduate and undergraduate students, college faculty, and community artists. Current statistics show that approximately 75 teachers provide instruction to more than 1,000 community members each year. Scholarships are available to help those who are not otherwise in a financial position to afford arts opportunities. Participants in the community school complete evaluations of events, and the teachers are observed and evaluated by peers.

The community school offers its students and teachers a number of performance and exhibit opportunities. Generally scheduled at the end of each semester, almost all the recitals and exhibits are free and open to the public. Overall, the community school sponsors as many as 20 recitals each semester, the youth orchestra performs three times a year, and other ensembles perform twice a year. Art students enrolled in the Saturday Art Class see their work exhibited at the end of a class, and theatre classes generally end with a performance for family and friends.

In addition to the four broad areas listed above that are administered by the External Programs office, numerous outreach efforts are administered directly by the schools or by other offices within the college. These activities underscore the degree to which the college has become a major cultural resource for the region and the state.

Each year, the School of Theatre and Dance produces seven main stage productions in O’Connell and Players Theatres and six studio productions in Corner Theatre. Additionally there is a major dance production, Art For Life, held each year in the Concert Hall in the Music Building. Approximately 10,000 people attend school productions each year. Occasionally, the school takes shows on the road where they can be viewed by 100 or more people per showing. The school also sponsors two high school events on campus each year. Students choose from many workshops and may see a scene from an NIU production. In addition, the school invites students from area public and private schools to attend performances of plays on campus.

The School of Art hosts one show per month during the academic year and one in the summer in the Olson Memorial Gallery in the Art Building. These events attract approximately 300 – 500 visitors at each show. The Graduate Gallery hosts up to 15 graduate student shows per year, with approximately 100 – 200 visitors per show. The school also sponsors a number of visiting artists and scholars to the campus throughout the year. In addition, the school offers a variety of programming directly to the community in the form of a portfolio review program, an annual high
school art exhibit, and an alumni magazine. Since 1997, the school has sponsored a fall art exhibit for high school students, in which approximately 50 schools participate.

The School of Music presents approximately 255 performances on campus each year. Most performances take place in the Music Building, but several are presented in other venues on campus such as the Holmes Student Center Duke Ellington Ballroom. Most of these events are free and open to the public. The total annual attendance at these on-campus performances is estimated at 31,000 people. The student ensembles annually present 30 - 40 performances in the region and state, as well as nationally, and abroad. School faculty present more than 100 additional professional performances regionally, nationally, and internationally. Several ensembles, including the Jazz Ensemble, the Steel Band, and the Philharmonic travel more widely and are seen by high school students and teachers and in public venues.

The university's Chicago Gallery currently presents five exhibitions per year, which attract 1,700 - 2,200 visitors. In DeKalb, the main gallery has been undergoing reconstruction, so the NIU Art Museum has been involved with a series of public art projects, including the DeKalb Community Mural, the Millennium Labyrinth, and the DeKalb County Community Farm Project. These projects, part of the Museum Without Walls, have reached thousands of community members who might otherwise not have opted to view contemporary art. The Art Museum initiated its Get-On-The-Bus Program in 1994 with one trip to an arts venue; at present, the program hosts about one trip per month. The program has a loyal following of DeKalb community members, NIU Art Museum members, and NIU students; has been a major recruitment tool for museum membership; and created a general community awareness of the visual arts.

FACULTY AND STAFF SERVICE

In addition to their involvement in the activities presented above, university faculty and staff provide service in at least two more significant ways: service to the university and service in the professions and community organizations. As previously discussed, NIU has an extensive shared governance system. The system operates at the department, college, and university levels as well as in administrative units. Departments design committees to meet their needs, which typically include personnel and curriculum committees, among others. College curriculum committees and college councils, which serve as personnel committees, are comprised of faculty, while chairs and directors constitute the membership of the college senates. At the university level there are approximately 60 committees comprised of various administrative, faculty, staff, and student
constituencies; many of these committees also have subcommittees that require additional commitment of time and effort. The university's shared governance system can only function effectively if faculty and staff are willing to serve in these capacities, and the time and effort they give to this process are important elements of their service.

Faculty and staff also provide extensive service through involvement with their professions, and in the state, national, and international professional organizations of which they are members. Faculty and staff from throughout the university serve on editorial boards, and as officers and committee members of professional organizations and societies; site team visitors for accrediting agencies; members of advisory boards; professional, research, artistry, and educational consultants; and reviewers for professional conference papers, journal manuscripts, and granting agencies, among others. As part of the university's mission of engagement with diverse constituencies across the region, faculty and staff also serve as elected and appointed officials and members of the boards of a variety of social service agencies and other community organizations. Through their service involvement, faculty and staff provide leadership in their professions, help shape the dialogue on matters of policy, inform campus discussions, maintain the currency of the curricula, and serve as role models for students. This high level of professional and community involvement also provides a public relations benefit to NIU through the active participation of its constituents in service activities beyond the campus.

**EVALUATION**

The breadth and range of influence of NIU's service and outreach efforts are significant and serve the region well. Services are provided for professional development and quality-of-life improvement across all ages. Programs are available to many who would not generally be able to access them because of geographic or economic limitations. Often, these programs provide a combination of recruitment opportunities for the university, practical experiences for students, and research and artistry activities for faculty and staff. As such, they fit the deans' definition of "high impact outreach."

The strength of NIU's outreach and service mission stems not only from the diversity of the programs being offered, but also from the commitment to outreach and engagement embedded in the history of the university, its mission statement, the public statements of the president, and the stated goals of the colleges and many academic departments. The recent reorganization of the central outreach units should re-establish an effective support infrastructure for credit courses, non-credit programming, registration and logistical services. Consolidation of the three regional
centers under one director is moving these facilities toward consistent policies and a uniform focus on customer service. As the new unit develops, it should be able to respond to the challenge of the deans’ call for a formal needs assessment process, an integrated strategy for marketing outreach activities, a centrally-maintained web site, and a central data base. These steps would be immensely helpful in increasing the visibility and maximizing the impact of the many outreach activities offered annually by the colleges as well as by units in NIU Outreach. By adding the Office of Public Affairs and the university’s radio stations to a division that already includes NIU Outreach and Information Technology Services, the president has indicated his intention to link the university’s strategic institutional communications efforts – print, broadcast, and Web – in a unified focus on high-impact messages that will enhance the university’s ability to reach further into the region and tell its story to a broader range of external audiences.

The opportunities in NIU’s service region are, essentially, limitless. Financial resources of course are not. On the other hand, many of the university’s outreach activities are supported through fees, grants, and contracts. The general economic climate will certainly impact the number of individuals and businesses willing to pay for services, but that same climate compels students to return to school to seek additional credentials, to upgrade skills, or to change careers. Technology can also help the university and its programming units expand offerings more efficiently to distant parts of the region and to scattered audiences. In addition, opportunities exist for the initiation of creative and collaborative outreach projects between and among the colleges and with University Outreach. In this climate, funding models that reward faculty and staff for their efforts to develop and to deliver marketable and self-sustaining programs represent mission-critical goals for the university.

The greatest threats to NIU’s outreach mission are likely to come from competing institutions for which the northern Illinois region, with its large and diverse population, extensive business and industry sites, and extensive range of educational services, is also a desirable location, both for instruction and for research and public service partnerships. The Illinois Board of Higher Education has few mechanisms to deny outside institutions access to the education market, and it has been lenient in granting authority for many private colleges and universities to offer both undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the region, often in disciplines that directly compete with some of NIU’s programs. Given NIU’s entrepreneurial history, it seems clear that the university has no fear of competition. The university does, however, seek a level playing field – one in which personnel can be hired quickly, degree programs can be mounted in response to changing market conditions, tuition rates can be
negotiated by discipline, and revenues can be retained for reinvestment in new initiatives. Key to the university’s regional role in the future will be its ability to make its contributions, as the premier public institution in one of the great American developing spaces, widely known and the impediments to full realization of its public mission better understood. It will take continued vigilance and a concerted effort to match the public’s interests with the institution’s strengths to deliver the expanded outreach and service mission of the institution. The institutional structure, history, and reputation are in place to enable this to happen.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

h. staff and faculty service that effectively support the institution’s purposes.

i. if appropriate:
   • evidence of support for the stated commitment to the fine and creative arts through provision of sufficient human, financial, and physical resources to produce creative endeavors and activities;
   • evidence of effective delivery of educational and other services to its community;
   • evidence of development and offering of effective courses and programs to meet the needs of its sponsoring organization and other special constituencies

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution

d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution’s continuance

e. resources organized and allocated to support its plans for strengthening both the institution and its programs

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

d. institutional publications, statements, and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs
e. relationships with other institutions of higher education conducted ethically and responsibly; appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions
f. appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions
h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations
ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND STUDENT LIFE

This chapter describes some of the major services, activities, and programs that Northern Illinois University makes available to students outside of the classroom. Following a brief discussion of several major organizational and operational changes, the chapter is divided into four major sections. The first section speaks to academic advisement services; the second section describes programs that primarily serve the academic mission of the institution, including the area of academic support services and some other programs that also contribute to the academic support of students. The third section provides information on Intercollegiate Athletics and its programs, standards, and academic support services for student-athletes. The fourth section speaks to programs that serve to enhance student life outside the classroom, creating a seamless support system for student learning. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of these services and programs.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL CHANGES

Since the last site visit, several organizational changes have occurred within the areas of academic and student affairs that have improved communication with and support for students. In 1996, the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Academic Affairs were merged, strengthening the partnerships between programs that enhance student learning through academic and social experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. With the merger, the Student Financial Aid Office reporting line was moved from the vice provost for student affairs to the vice provost, and most recently to the executive director of enrollment services and registrar.

In order to offer stronger leadership to programs for special populations, in late 1995, the director of educational services and programs position was phased out and replaced with a new assistant (now associate vice) provost for academic support services position. The associate vice provost oversees the programs within Educational Services and Programs (ESP), including the CHANCE Program, ACCESS, and two TRIO programs: Student Support Services and Upward Bound. Also reporting to the associate vice provost are University Resources for Latinos, University Resources for Women, and the Center for Black Studies. In spring 2003, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center was created and added into this reporting line.

In 1998, the Office of the Provost created the Advising Information and Referral Services Office to help students gain access to appropriate advising information across the campus. By 2002, that office no longer functioned...
as a separate entity, although some of its functions, including the mentoring programs and online resource guides continue in other areas.

In 1999, the Office of Retention Programs was created to help improve student retention by identifying and intervening with students who may be at risk. Through an Early Alert program, faculty identify students who may be in academic difficulty or otherwise at risk, early in the semester. Such students are contacted for intervention, and are offered assistance, resources, and referrals for academic, financial, advising, and other concerns.

With the creation of the University Assessment Panel, which includes representatives from the academic- and student-services support units, a five-year cycle for the review of the assessment plans and activities of the support units was developed. Initial results indicate more comprehensive and effective assessment practices within the units, and the uses of assessment findings to strengthen the services of the units.

**ADVICEMENT AND RELATED SERVICES**

Technology has created fundamental changes in registration methods at NIU. In turn, this has affected the ways in which advising services function as well. Until 1996, NIU used mail registration to process schedule requests. With the advent of telephone and web-based registration, NIU changed to a dynamic registration system that begins in April and continues through August for a fall term. The system created the ability to mandate an advising requirement for students’ initial registration, which assists students in securing a full schedule of classes.

Advising at NIU is decentralized, and no single model exists for college-based advisement services. The following discussion provides examples of the ways in which advisement services are delivered, and some of the special advisement-related programs that have been developed in each college. This discussion focuses primarily on those services provided to undergraduate students, although graduate students do benefit from some of them. Additional information about graduate students can be found in the chapter on graduate and professional programs.

**The College of Business**

The College of Business has a centralized advising model, through the Undergraduate Studies office, for all freshmen, sophomores, and other students not admitted to the majors offered in the college. Students enrolled in the college’s programs receive advisement services through the departments, but all services are coordinated through Undergraduate
Studies. Three advisors staff the office and each department is staffed by at least one professional advisor.

Among the changes and new initiatives in the college over the review period are mandatory advisement sessions for students on academic probation; the distribution of orientation materials to newly admitted students prior to their enrollment in their majors; student workshops for advising, scheduling, computer training, and career guidance; and the elimination of graduate-assistant advisor positions. The college also initiated the College of Business Bulletin, a newsletter for students that provides information on a wide range of topics. Advisement services are provided on the college's designated floors in the residence halls, and a Student Steering Committee provides the college with advice on issues that impact students. Advisors have increased communications with prospective students, and visit community colleges with high transfer rates to the college for advisement sessions each semester.

The College of Education
The College of Education has moved to a decentralized advising model, although the college coordinator works with issues related to retention, dismissals, appeals, and matters that cut across the departments. The college has increased its use of group advisement sessions for undergraduate students, and provides advisement services to the undergraduate students enrolled in its off-campus programs. Because of the high interest in the college's elementary education program, an additional full-time advisor was hired in this area. Students seeking the certificates of graduate study offered by the college now have full-time professional advisors available to them.

The college established the Office of Instructional Assistance, with services aimed at improving students' academic success and retention, including tutorial assistance, study skills and reading support, focused assistance for academically challenged students, workshops for educational entrance exams, and individual and group training in instructional technologies. During the 2001-2002 academic year, approximately 500 students took advantage of the services provided by the office.

The Counseling Lab offers opportunities for master's and doctoral students in the counseling programs to provide counseling and academic support skills under the supervision of counseling faculty. Informal assessments of client satisfaction and increasing numbers of students using the services suggest that students enjoy and benefit from their contact with these counselors. The Counseling and Career Resource Center provides support services for career development. The center houses a library of career resources and supports the instruction of CAHC 211, an undergraduate
career development course, with annual enrollments of approximately 420 undergraduate students.

**The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology**

In the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, faculty are responsible for nearly 100 percent of the academic advising at the department level. The faculty, along with the dean and the associate dean, are also actively involved with the college's 16 engineering and technology professional societies.

Three new major advisement initiatives have been implemented in the college. The Peer Advising, Tutoring and Learning (PATAL) initiative serves to foster the retention of freshmen and sophomore students who have not yet taken engineering and technology courses. The project uses peer tutors from the college's professional student associations to provide tutorial assistance in science and mathematics. The college's Adopt-A-High School initiative is a recruitment/awareness strategy used to promote careers and programs related to engineering and technology. The college also advises interested high schools on appropriate academic preparation for students pursuing engineering or technology degrees. The Student Advisory Committee, chaired by the associate dean, provides information to students regarding services, programs, initiatives, and projects in the college.

**The College of Health and Human Sciences**

The director of academic advising in the College of Health and Human Sciences provides academic advisement services to the undecided students and those denied admission to a major in the college. In three of the four departments/schools in the college, faculty are wholly responsible for advisement services. The School of Nursing has two full-time advisors who work with undergraduate, registered nurse, and graduate students. The members of the graduate faculty provide advisement services about degree requirements to their assigned students.

In 1998 the college established an award for Excellence in Academic Advising. College faculty or staff with responsibilities for academic advising are eligible for the award. The individual selected for the college award is also nominated for a National Award Program for Academic Advising sponsored by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). To date, three individuals from the college have received Certificates of Merit from NACADA.

In the fall 2001, the college expanded its health interest floor in a collaborative project with Student Housing and Dining Services by opening the Health Professions House in Lincoln Hall. The director of academic advising serves as the coordinator of the house, thereby providing an
advising presence. House activities include a college major/career fair each year as well as Dine-and-Discuss sessions with department academic advisors.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the departments have continued the pattern of predominantly faculty-based academic advisement services for their majors, with the addition of supportive professional staff in some departments, to meet the needs of new students who are required to meet with an advisor for their initial registration in orientation.

The college also maintains a complement of professional staff advisors who provide a variety of important services such as working with students who have not declared their majors or whose GPAs are below 2.0; creating a web-based College Advising Handbook and distributing paper copies of the handbook to faculty, staff, and students; and establishing a college-based advisors group, which links departmental and college-wide advisors in meetings and an email list for the dissemination and exchange of information. The staff advisors also facilitate the scheduling of initiatives of Focused Interest Group (FIGS) by assembling and disseminating information on FIG compatibility with mathematics and laboratory science courses; implement the college’s “Just-In-Time” scheduling strategy to provide new students with full course-load schedules; and provide extended services to transfer students and to undergraduates at the outreach center, particularly for those students enrolled in the college’s Bachelor of General Studies degree program.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts

Each of the schools in the College of Visual and Performing Arts has an undergraduate advisor who works with students in their respective programs. The Schools of Art and Music have established peer advisor programs overseen by their respective undergraduate advisors. The college has identified the following goals for advising over the next ten years: a more interactive online system for planning student schedules, more clearly defined avenues of electronic and other lines of communication with Registration and Records, increased faculty involvement in advisement services, and the creation and maintenance of a student database for majors. The college also hopes to increase the availability of tutoring, mentoring, group support for its majors, and to allocate additional resources to increase its peer advising initiatives.

General Issues Regarding Advisement Services

Technology, new programs, and staffing have changed the issues and functions of advising across the university. Web-based registration has enabled colleges to mandate contact with students who are on academic
probation. As a result, campus-wide, advisors have more contact with this
group of students and can provide them with better services and referrals.
Academic advisors have incorporated the Degree Audit Reporting System
(DARS) into their services for all students since the last review. The DARS
reports are important advising tools, but require more advisement support
to help students interpret and use them in planning schedules. Advisement
offices have adjusted their services by incorporating both the technological
resources to access and print the DARS reports and the human resources to
provide the additional academic advising.

The advent of college- and/ or university-wide first-year courses and the
creation of clustered courses for Focused Interest Groups with linked
registrants have added additional variables in creating students' schedules.
Dual admission agreements with Illinois community colleges provide
students with an overview of their entire baccalaureate program while they
complete their associate degree. Using DARS, students can now see how
transfer course work applies to their specific major. The agreement also
offers joint academic counseling/ advising from the community colleges and
NIU.

Academic advising has been an ongoing topic of discussion at NIU over the
past ten years. As reported above, there is no central advisement unit or a
university-wide consensus on staffing models and approaches to offering
advisement services. Colleges and departments have adopted advisement
models to best meet the needs of their majors, but students who have not
declared a major, are undecided, or want to change a major are sometimes
confused about how and where to seek advisement services. Questions
remain regarding timely access to sound academic advice.

In times of increased enrollments and changing professional requirements,
more programs turn to limited admissions to manage enrollments.
However, limited admission programs provide challenges for advisors,
particularly with regard to those students who are displaced from a program
because they did not meet admission criteria. These students need accurate
information about their academic options, particularly how well their
record fits with the requirements of other programs or majors. Along with
DARS reports, students need to discuss potential new program possibilities
with knowledgeable advisors. The university faces special challenges to
provide services to more students who need timely access to advisement
services.

**ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES AND RELATED PROGRAMS**

Academic support programs are those that provide instructional,
counseling, and specialized services to students to facilitate and to enhance
their retention and graduation. These programs contribute to the university's academic mission as well as to its commitment to serve a diverse student community. Some academic support services aid in building students' academic skills including tutoring, and writing enhancement. Some address specific needs of certain populations, including support for specially admitted students. Still others respond to the needs of specific segments of the student population, such as University Resources for Women, the Center for Black Studies, and University Resources for Latinos. These minority centers play a potentially key role as NIU's student population becomes increasingly diverse.

Though partially decentralized, these programs are clustered within the Office of the Provost, offering sound leadership and strong representation on the campus. Several mechanisms have been developed to enhance communication among the service units to provide students with the best possible services.

Counseling Help and Assistance Necessary for College Education (CHANCE)

The Counseling Help and Assistance Necessary for College Education (CHANCE) program has as its mission the provision of comprehensive services to specially admitted students. These services include the identification and screening of eligible students, a process enabling selected students to be admitted to NIU. CHANCE also features an orientation and retention program that includes counseling services and is designed to enhance academic success in, and the attainment of, the baccalaureate degree.

The CHANCE program meets the university mission by helping to serve the needs of a diverse citizenry, targeting students from low-income high schools for admission. After admission, CHANCE offers a vast array of programs to help students achieve their academic goals and to graduate. The program is staffed by a director, an associate director, two assistant directors, ten counselors, a records officer, three secretaries, and one graduate assistant for the mentoring program.

Each year, the CHANCE program admits 500 new freshmen. Including upper-class students, the program serves approximately 1,200 to 1,500 students each year. The first-year retention rate for students in the program has risen from 70 percent to an average of 76 percent since 1998. This is comparable to the retention rates of traditionally admitted students. The second year retention rate has increased from approximately 44 percent to 50 percent in the past several years. The eight-year graduation rate for CHANCE students has remained stable at 28 to 30 percent for two
decades. If the retention gains remain constant, by 2006, the graduation rate should increase by 5 to 10 percent.

In the last 10 years, CHANCE has experienced a number of programmatic changes designed to improve the retention of the students it serves. Among the changes is the integration of the freshmen seminar course taught by the program into UNIV 101, the university-wide freshman seminar component, in 1998; the development of a faculty advisory board and a peer mentoring program; and the addition of a full-time financial aid advisor and a permanent, professional database manager to the staff. The founding of Chi Alpha Epsilon, a national honor society for specially admitted students, has provided opportunities for students to aspire to academic excellence.

The strengths of the CHANCE program include a compassionate, caring staff of counselors and faculty who are personally committed to this population of students and their academic success. The unit has a comprehensive data collection and reporting system that has helped to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of the program and to inform program changes.

In fall 2002 the program took advantage of an opportunity to facilitate the transition of students from developmental to traditional mathematics courses. A pilot program was developed for two sections of college algebra exclusively for CHANCE students, which showed a pass rate that exceeded the traditional course by 200 percent. Based on those outstanding results, the program is currently in its second year.

In spite of the broad institutional support, some evidence of a negative image about CHANCE exists within the university. The advisory committee increased public exposure of the program and improved the program’s image. In addition, the program provides a large amount of data to the university that demonstrates its success, and in combination with ACCESS and other academic support programs has the potential for becoming a national best practice. In 2002, with funding from the University Assessment Panel, CHANCE conducted an alumni telephone survey of over 500 alumni representing all four decades of graduates assisted by the program. Data revealed that alumni have a strong positive attachment to the program and found it to be a life-changing experience.

**Access to Courses and Careers through Educational Support Services (ACCESS)**

The Access to Courses and Careers through Educational Support Services (ACCESS) program has as its guiding mission the provision of opportunities for students to build academic skills and promote academic adjustment, thereby improving academic success, retention, and graduation
rates. ACCESS provides walk-in tutoring services and one-on-one tutoring services through the Peer Assisted Learning program (PAL), collaborative group tutoring through supplemental instruction, and other support services for students who require academic assistance. Staffing includes a director; two assistant directors; an instructional technology coordinator and data analyst, both of whom serve all of the programs within Educational Services and Programs; and two secretaries. In addition, the program employs over 100 undergraduate and graduate students as tutors, laboratory attendants, and supplemental instruction leaders each year.

Initially serving only CHANCE students, ACCESS became a campus-wide tutoring program in 1997, and the number of students served by ACCESS has grown each year. In 2001-2002, the program served over 2,000 students, about 800 through peer-assisted learning and 1,200 through supplemental instruction. In tutoring, the program supports more than 80 courses in 27 different departments. Supplemental instruction provides support in all of the developmental mathematics courses for CHANCE-admitted students, as well as three introductory chemistry courses and two accountancy courses.

Since 1994, ACCESS has changed and grown considerably, making great strides in helping support the academic needs of NIU students. The College Reading and Learning Association accredited the ACCESS/PAL tutor-training program in 1997, based on a national standard of acceptable tutor training. In the same year, in partnership with Student Housing and Dining Services, and subsidized by a grant from the O’Brien-Vrba Foundation, ACCESS became a campus-wide tutoring program with its first permanent tutoring center in Lincoln Residence Hall. In 1998, Student Housing and Dining Services provided space for a second tutoring center in Grant South Residence Hall to target CHANCE courses. In 2000, with the support of the Office of the Provost, ACCESS proposed and received additional state funding of $150,000 to expand tutoring services, adding two more tutoring centers and several new supplemental instruction initiatives.

ACCESS developed a website and created marketing tools to advertise its services to CHANCE and traditional students, and assumed responsibility for updating and disseminating the Tutoring Referral Guide. ACCESS also developed a database that links information with the Department of Mathematical Sciences’ developmental mathematics program, the CHANCE program, and the supplemental instruction program to monitor student participation in developmental mathematics and supplemental instruction sessions. The existence of the database enables the department and CHANCE counselors to intervene with students in a timely manner and support them more effectively.
The greatest strength for ACCESS has been its staff's capacity for flexibility and adaptation in response to the needs of students and the interests of faculty and administrators. The result has been numerous partnerships and support programs for the campus. The program has adapted well to meeting changing student needs and faculty interests, and continues to develop its services. The greatest challenge for the program has been to ensure the wide dissemination of information about the program to the campus.

The Communication Skills Program
The Communication Skills (ComSkills) program was developed in 1968 as the academic component of the CHANCE program, and the model has not changed significantly since that time. The communication skills faculty teach 90 to 95 percent of the 500 CHANCE admitted first-year students.

Developmental and traditional course work with special support and structures are offered in four areas: developmental and college algebra, rhetoric and composition, reading and learning skills, and the fundamentals of communication. The program uses a decentralized model with a coordinator who oversees each of the academic areas, and reports to a faculty member or administrator in each department. In 1995, faculty came together to develop Focused Interest Groups (FIGs) for CHANCE first semester students, coordinating curriculum and readings in English, reading, and communication. The program has greatly improved communication in the courses, and the linked courses have offered strong connections among the students. In addition, through the Educational Service Program Advisory Committee, founded in 1997, faculty members representing each program area, often accompanied by course coordinators, come together on a regular basis to share concerns and ideas about the various programs.

In 1995, after years of using a two-semester college algebra curriculum, two developmental mathematics series were developed. The change was a direct response to course success and subsequent course transitional problems for CHANCE students in mathematics. Extensive placement testing places students appropriately, and for additional support, ACCESS provides supplemental instruction leaders in all sections of the developmental mathematics courses. The leaders hold study sessions outside of class time to work on both content and study skills. Participation in the new developmental mathematics series has led to increased success in subsequent mathematics courses by the CHANCE students.

In 1994, CHANCE students were placed in a two-semester version of English 103, based on writing samples collected during summer orientation. ENGL 103P has now become ENGL 102P and 103P, with enrollment caps of 15 students, taught by instructor-rank faculty with an
average of 15 years teaching experience. The English course includes The Writer’s Workshop, a support laboratory for the course to provide students with one-on-one assistance in writing, which is discussed below.

There are two reading courses in the developmental curriculum. LTRE 100 is a basic reading course designed to help students develop general reading skills, and LTRE 190 is a study and reading skills course designed to help students learn to more effectively read college textbooks. Placement testing is required to determine which course, if any, students need.

The communication program assesses students to determine if they should be placed in COMS 100, the traditional core requirements courses, or in COMS 100P, a special version of COMS 100 with added support. In COMS 100P, students are provided with a required laboratory, which is staffed by tutors who help them become more comfortable and effective in speech writing and public speaking.

**The Writers’ Workshop**
Since 1975 and earlier, the Writers’ Workshop has served students who were specially admitted through the CHANCE program and placed in developmental English courses. Students in these courses attend mandated, weekly workshop sessions where peer and instructor-level tutors provide supplemental writing instruction. Tutors meet regularly with their assigned instructors to discuss assignments, students, and strategies. Limiting each tutor to working with one instructor’s classes has resulted in a focused community of writers.

The Writers’ Workshop shares information about its functions not only on the NIU campus, but off campus as well. Staff sponsor on-campus brown-bag meetings and symposia to discuss aspects of developmental writing. Faculty from other college campuses visit regularly, often after attending professional conferences at which Writers’ Workshop staff have presented. Staff inform students about writing contests and encourage them to submit manuscripts. The workshop also serves as the site for student internships, primarily for students from English, Journalism, and Communication Studies who seek experience in teacher training. The award-winning Writers’ Workshop website offers information for students, tutors, faculty and visitors.

**Student Support Services**
Student Support Services, a federally funded, U.S. Department of Education, TRIO program, has been on the NIU campus since 1971. The program serves 300 low-income, first generation, physically or learning disabled students annually from the university’s general student population. The program is funded on four-year cycles, and provides students with
comprehensive academic and career counseling services and cultural enrichment activities designed to enhance the participants’ persistence and graduation from the university. Student Support Services counselors collectively log more than 1,200 hours of counseling and contact during that year.

One of the primary program goals is to facilitate admission into and graduation from limited admissions and limited access majors, where students must meet a pre-established minimum GPA and other prerequisite requirements, or those majors where students from disadvantaged backgrounds have historically been underrepresented and have traditionally encountered academic difficulty, respectively. The program has partnered with academic departments as well as academic support units to provide necessary services and programs to enable students to gain access to their majors and to graduate.

In addition, four student organizations aid the program in accomplishing its goals. The Parent Group, which consists of students who have children, comes together to share and develop resources that aid other students who are parents. The Trio Association is an NIU Student Association-recognized organization that serves in an advisory capacity, and plans most of the program’s social and cultural events. The Peer Advising Program allows junior- and senior-level students to serve as mentors for students who are new to the campus. The program receives university funding for the continuing development of its mentor activities. CHAMP (Career Help from the Alumni Mentoring Program) allows current students to meet and work with NIU alumni in similar careers, who, for the most part, were also affiliated with the CHAMP program.

**Upward Bound**
The Upward Bound program is a federally funded, U.S. Department of Education TRIO grant program. It is designed to expose potential first-generation college students from low-income families in Rockford and Aurora high schools to college life and study, and to promote in its participants the skills and motivation necessary to complete high school, gain admission to, and complete a post-secondary education program. The main focus of the program is to provide counseling, academic skill development, general preparation, and placement services for high school students who want to attend college but, because of inadequate preparation, would be unlikely to pursue post-secondary education successfully without special guidance and academic support. The program staff includes three full-time professionals and approximately 25 part-time staff, including graduate assistants, instructors, and tutors.
During the academic year, the program offers weekly classes and tutoring for participants, as well as special seminars, workshops, field trips and other activities designed to meet their assessed needs. Finally, a six-week summer residential component to the program gives participants an opportunity to take advantage of a variety of experiences that expose them to college life and strengthen basic skills. The program provides services to 100 students per year both on site at their resident high schools and in the summer residential program on the NIU campus. Of the high school senior participants who completed the program and graduated from high school, 95 percent were assisted in applying for financial aid and matriculating into a post-secondary educational program in the fall semester following their graduation.

The Center for Black Studies

The Center for Black Studies combines both academic programs and support services within one unit. The mission of the center is four-fold: to offer academic programs related to the life and history of people of African descent; to provide cultural programs featuring national and international scholar-activists from diverse disciplines and backgrounds; to support student organizations; and to engage in scholarly research with an African-centered focus. During an average week, approximately 200-300 students interact with the staff, use the center’s services, or take classes offered for the Minor in Black Studies.

Presently, the center offers six courses per semester with approximately 30-40 students in each class. This constitutes a 100 percent increase in course offerings. The number of students in the minor has also increased by 20 percent, reflecting students’ increased interest in Black Studies and in the history and culture of people of African descent. Examples of class topics at the center include African-American leadership; Malcolm and Martin; Black nationalism; and African philosophy.

The interwoven strengths of the center are its cultural and social programs, its support of student organizations, and its willingness to meet students’ requests for new course offerings. For example, the Center co-sponsors the African American Leadership Conference with several student organizations. Students have an opportunity to plan the conference and to interact with scholars who are nationally and internationally recognized. From their interaction with these scholars, students gain knowledge about a particular aspect of the life and history of people of African descent. These interactions sometimes lead to requests for new courses.

The center has collaborated with other units and universities to create study-abroad programs in Ghana, Kenya, and Egypt. Successful in their own right, these programs have also served as community-service projects for
some students. For example, student participants in the Kenya program donated medical supplies to several hospitals and did volunteer work at one of the orphanages in the country.

In the last five years, the center has become more involved in the retention of regularly admitted freshmen and transfer students through its Survive and Success program (S-Program). In the S-Program, new students are mentored by junior- and senior-level students who assist them with their classes, introduce them to campus resources and support them through their first year. Two undergraduate students have been hired as tutors in mathematics and science. Participants attend various workshops, conferences, and social activities. Based on feedback from students, a course, Issues Facing African American Students, was developed to provide them with a more formalized way of discussing issues and challenges they face as university students.

The center looks to create an advisory board that can assist the staff in course development, develop an adjunct faculty contingent, change the Black Studies minor to a major, and enhance the image of the center. The center also strives to seek grants and fellowships to support it. In the last few years, the number of graduate students interested in doing research from an African-centered perspective has increased by 50 percent. There is interest in finding a way for graduate students to take courses within the minor.

Other strengths of the center include the expertise and research interests of the center's staff, and the increased number of students taking Black Studies courses, participating in programs and activities, and seeking advice from the staff. The staff of the center is aware of the importance of assessment and data collection and is working to improve in these areas.

**The Office of University Resources for Latinos**

In 1987, the Office of University Resources for Latinos was established to recruit and retain Latino and Latina students. Today, its mission is threefold: to raise the retention rate of Latino and Latina students, to develop programs, and to increase the number of Latino and Latina students admitted to NIU. The percentage of Latino and Latina students at NIU has grown from 1.8 percent in the fall of 1985 to approximately six percent in 2001. As its services have increased to meet student needs, the full-time staff in the office has grown from one to four. The staff includes a director, assistant director, program coordinator, and secretary. Graduate assistants and work-study students assist the staff.

The office has several programs and initiatives that reflect its mission. Exitó! Latino/a Success! is a peer mentoring program that has been in existence
since 1998. Students with a grade point average of 2.75 or higher are invited to become mentors for incoming freshman students. Mentors are matched to protégés based on their field of study and, if possible, their gender. The Latina Assistance Program is a new initiative whose goal is to increase the Latina retention rate by providing a host of academic and social activities to enhance academic success at NIU. In addition, the office hosts visiting student groups from area elementary, junior high school, high school, and community colleges; and provides Latino families with bilingual seminars during orientation. The office also nominates students for awards and honors within the campus and Dekalb communities; provides assistance to students with academic difficulties, including those dismissed or placed on probation; and offers a leadership and retention course and a variety of workshops on topics related to the success of the Latino and Latina student body.

**The Office of University Resources for Women**

The mission of the Office of *University Resources for Women* is stated as “working for the improvement of the campus climate for women.” The office provides a centrally located facility for student gatherings, which is especially important to part-time women students who experience little sense of community. Each year the office provides individual service to approximately 200 women with individual counseling, consultation, coaching, and case management services to enable them to remain in school while meeting competing role demands. An additional 70 to 100 women are served on a group basis, and 200 students are served in orientation sessions for non-traditional students. Approximately 400 students annually contact the office in person or telephone to request advice; an increasing numbers of these contacts require crisis intervention. The office has a full-time staff of three: a director, assistant director and secretary/office manager. A graduate staff assistant and some student workers also support the work of the office.

The office also supports efforts to recruit and to retain women students, particularly in fields in which they are underrepresented, through workshops, seminars, networking and support groups. Strong linkages are maintained to other service providers, both on and off campus, and assistance is provided to students in accessing and using those services so that academic progress can be maintained.

Programming needs are assessed by periodic, written needs assessments, and workshop evaluations are routinely implemented. The office sees opportunities arising through public sensitivity to the inequities traditionally suffered by women and the broad range of programs available to deal with them. There is also great potential for increased collaborative efforts with other university units.
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center

The new Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center serves as a resource for the university community to increase awareness and understanding of concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Created and funded by the Office of the Provost in 2003, the center supports the educational mission of NIU by providing educational materials and programs on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender life and culture. Center staff offer confidential information, support, and referrals for students, faculty, and staff whose lives are impacted by issues related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Approximately 8 percent of NIU’s students self-identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, making them the second largest minority population on the campus. Contacts for programs on sexual orientation and/or gender identity have increased 42 percent from a total of 4,730 in 2000-2001 to 6,710 in 2001-2002.

The center offers a wide variety of services, including student-support services and referrals, educational programming, advocacy programs, and consulting. All services are designed to help the campus meet the unique needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, faculty, and staff. A university-wide Safe Zone Program to increase visible support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals on campus has been very successful. In the past year, more than 200 faculty, staff, graduate assistants, and residence hall staff participated in the program. The center is currently exploring the development of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies concentration and minor. A certificate program has been proposed and is under review by appropriate curriculum committees.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students are particularly at-risk on the campus due to the unique cultural and personal issues that they face. As the services of the center have become more widely known, demands for new programming and other initiatives have increased. The new center faces the challenge of allocating its resources to best meet the needs of those it serves.

The Cooperative Education/Internship Program

The Cooperative Education/Internship Program at NIU provides students with the opportunity to integrate classroom theory with practical work experience with participating employers through four options for students and employers. The traditional cooperative education experience involves the student working for the employer for at least two semesters, while in the alternating option the student rotates semesters of work and full-time study. The parallel option permits the student to work part-time while attending class, and internships give students the opportunity to work for one semester or on a particular project for an employer.
Currently 4,500 employers have listed more than 6,000 positions with the program. In terms of the number of students served and placed each year, NIU ranks 14th in the nation. The program maintains an up-to-date website, has an employer/faculty advisory board, hosts two annual Career/Internship Fairs, supports FUTURE: the Student Cooperative Education/Internship Association, and participates in the Illinois Board of Higher Education’s Cooperative Work Study Grant program.

Lack of internship and cooperative education experiences in some majors limits students’ access to these experiences. The availability of experiences is largely influenced by geography. Students interested in business, industry, and health fields will find many sources in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs, but students interested in specialized experiences in other disciplines or geographical locations will find fewer positions readily available through the program. Students in some colleges are less aware of the program and its services; this poses opportunities to reach students through new marketing efforts, and by making contacts with faculty in underrepresented areas. With additional resources the program could expand and improve its services and place more students in experiential education settings.

The First-Year Connections Program

Housed within the Orientation Office, the First-Year Connections program is designed to help first-year students make a successful transition to college life. The three component programs of First-Year Connections are UNIV 101, Student-Faculty Links, and the Passport to Success. In 2003, the Passport to Success was phased out. A pilot program called REACH was established in fall 2003 as a potential replacement.

UNIV 101, University Experience, is one-credit-hour elective course designed to help first-year students make a successful transition to college life at NIU. The course content includes understanding the challenges and expectations of college, designing strategies for academic success, developing relationships, adjusting to and becoming involved in the university community, communicating with faculty, and other college-transition-based topics. The course has its origins in a small academic seminar offered to students in the College of Health and Human Sciences in 1986. In 1995, the course was expanded to a campus-wide program and eventually moved to the Orientation Office as a part of an extended orientation program. In 1995, the course had 15 sections for 297 students with a faculty that included professors and professional staff from all areas of the campus. The program has continued to grow, and in fall 2003 had a record of 89 sections and over 1,700 students, more than half of the freshman class.
The course has many different looks, including special sections for CHANCE-admitted students, transfer students, honors sections, and several that are linked as part of FIGs, such as women in math, and health and human sciences. Peer instructors are successful students who have been added to course sections to provide peer support and mentoring. Current statistics indicate that UNIV 101 students have significantly higher GPAs and higher retention rates for their second, third and fourth semesters than those who did not enroll in the course.

The Student-Faculty Link program matches incoming students with faculty or staff in a one-on-one mentoring relationship. Students and mentors meet informally to talk about adjusting to the university, campus resources, getting involved on campus, and effective strategies for academic success. In 2002, 22 mentors worked with 26 students.

Passport to Success was an incentive program designed to help students connect with the university and identify resources and services on the campus. Run like a scavenger hunt, students collected information and participated in campus activities as a means to enter drawings for prizes. In fall 2002, 2,412 entries were made. Unfortunately, the program was determined not to create as significant and meaningful connections on the campus as had hoped, and has been discontinued.

REACH (Retention Effort for All Incoming Huskies) is a pilot initiative in fall 2003 in which trained junior- and senior-level students call new students to welcome them to NIU and help them get connected with resources on campus and in the community. REACH calls are made twice a semester. The target for the pilot program was those first-year students not enrolled in UNIV 101. In the first round of the pilot project, the callers were well received by students. The program has identified issues of concern on topics related to advising, relationships, campus involvement, and academic preparation and services.

The English as Second Language Center
Established in 1983, the English as Second Language Center maintained 30 hours of service per week in the early 1990s. It has increased its hours of operation, and currently offers approximately 70 weekly tutoring hours. The center works with an average of 150 clients per semester, many on a weekly basis, about half of whom visit the center two to three times per week. Clients of the center include not only undergraduate and graduate students, but also international visiting faculty and researchers. While the center focuses primarily on the academic communication needs of the international population, staff also assist clients with interviewing skills, economic transactions, and interpersonal communications.
The center helps students prepare for TOEFL, SPEAK, and other standardized tests necessary for professional development, and administers the SPEAK test to graduate teaching assistants. The center coordinates its services with the University Writing Center. Good communication between the staff members of the two units results in constant cross-referral of students. While some of the two centers’ writing services may be seen to overlap, the distinct linguistic needs of international clients require training specific to all literacy skills in English, not just writing. As demographics of the student and faculty population change at NIU, pressure to provide support will increase dramatically, especially for Hispanic and Asian students.

The International Student and Faculty Office
The International Student and Faculty Office serves NIU’s international students, scholars, and faculty members. In 2001-2002, a total of 842 non-immigrant and 683 immigrant students were at NIU, representing 114 different countries, mostly in Asia. The office provides four basic services: immigration, admissions, advising and referral, and NIU and community relations. The office serves as the official audit link with the U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization Service; and processes documentation for application of visas, employment, visa extensions, and certification, not only for the students, faculty, and scholars, but also for their families. The office provides assistance on immigration procedures to all units at NIU. The gradual increase in the international student population and major changes in the demographics of that population have necessitated a number of changes in the office’s operations, including establishment of the volunteer network to assist in a variety of areas.

The office provides information about NIU programs to prospective international students through mailings, recruitment at community colleges, and via the World Wide Web. It serves as the university’s admission agent for international undergraduates, advises the university’s admissions office on permanent residents, evaluates credentials for international and permanent residents, and collaborates with the Graduate School in the admission of international graduate students. In the past year, it processed an estimated 2,000 requests for applications and catalogs. The office provides a one-week formal orientation program for all incoming international students twice yearly, and also provides assistance with various aspects of housing. Through the “Friends of International Students” program, the office introduces international students to DeKalb and the university community, and is the liaison between the university and American families/individuals and community organizations, providing them with international students who can share information about their culture and country, and act as interpreters.
The office displays three areas of strength: immigration expertise and access to officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service; foreign academic and cultural expertise; and a positive networking system including university and community service. With additional resources the office could help international students become better integrated within the NIU community, serve the special needs of spouses and children, and assist the increasing number of resident immigrant students, who share the same needs as international students. Generally, however, the office is meeting its objectives and actively contributing to the mission of the university.

The Study Abroad Office
For more than 20 years, the NIU Study Abroad Office has been working with faculty, academic advisors, and chairs to incorporate study abroad into students’ educational experiences. The office has five full time staff members: two assistant directors, two program specialists, and a registrar. Support staff consists of two student workers. The staff advises approximately 800 students per semester, and maintains a central source of information about opportunities for educational activities abroad for students and faculty.

The office sponsors a wide range of study abroad options of varying length for both undergraduate and graduate students, which allow them to choose a program that complements their academic and career goals, while fitting within their budgets. At present, more than 40 semester or academic year programs are sponsored by NIU; over 15 different faculty-directed programs are also offered during the winter break and summer session or the spring and fall semesters. Programs represent many disciplines, including intensive language study, business, art, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and developmental studies. A unique challenge to the office is the limited opportunity for electives in many of the undergraduate majors. In programs that are tightly sequenced, students may have little opportunity to take advantage of a study abroad program without delaying their degree completion.

The Student Financial Aid Office
Many students at NIU would be unable to access the above programs if it were not for the services provided by the financial aid programs. The Student Financial Aid Office administers a wide range of financial aid programs and services, including Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Perkins Loans, the State of Illinois Monetary Award Program, private scholarships, subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford Loans, Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students, and student employment through Federal Work Study.
Data provided by the Student Financial Aid Office indicate that NIU alumni act responsibly in fulfilling their obligations to repay their educational debt. The three most recent years for which data are available are 1999, 2000, and 2001, and for each of these years the default rate on loan payments is well below 5 percent. Of the 3,516 alumni in repayment for 1999, 123 alumni or 3.4 percent defaulted on loan payments. In 2000, 3,770 alumni were in repayment, and 141 or 3.7 percent of the alumni defaulted on payments. In 2001, 153 (4.1 percent) of 3,664 alumni in repayment defaulted on payments. NIU financial aid staff members are currently working with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) to identify approaches for reducing further the default rates on student loan payments.

The University Writing Center/Writing Across the Curriculum Program

In November 2000, a team from the National Council of Writing Program Administrators made multiple recommendations for improvements in the University Writing Center. Following the external review, the Office of the Provost oversaw the drafting of a program priority request, which was approved by the state in 2001. In fall 2002, the center moved to Stevenson Towers South in space that was remodeled with the new funding and other monies allocated by the provost's office. The new facility, approximately ten times larger than its previous location, epitomizes the university's commitment to a living-learning connection in student residence halls. The center offers ample space for a variety of needs, including a smart classroom equipped with state-of-the-art technology for writing instruction and a laboratory with 37 computers, a server, and other equipment. The area is hard-wired for expanding technological needs, and Information Technology Services supports a workstation with software for students with learning disabilities.

With new space and additional resources the center expanded its mission to include making connections with all lower- and upper-division, and graduate courses vis-à-vis the Writing Across the Curriculum Program. Other mission-driven initiatives include conducting workshops; playing an increasing role in programmatic, departmental, and campus-wide writing assessment; providing instruction in effective uses of writing technologies; and offering online support for on- and off-campus students. In addition, the center engages with local high schools regarding cross-disciplinary writing instruction, provides writing assistance to members of the local community, and consults with area businesses and organizations to improve employees' writing skills. In 2002, the center staff consisted of 16 undergraduate peer tutors, three graduate assistants, three part-time English instructors, a full-time professional staff senior tutor and associate director, and an acting faculty director. The staff offers approximately 300 hours of
assistance per week, but will need to increase assistance by at least 100 hours per week as demand for services has grown.

In 2001, an annual assessment project, funded by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Provost, was initiated to calibrate the impact of writing assistance on the drafting skills of students who regularly visit the center. Findings suggest that those who visit at least three times per semester and produce multiple drafts of at least two papers demonstrate measurable improvement in their drafting skills. The staff is also collecting data to calibrate the impact of tutoring on students' skills in producing their final paper. The center has the potential to become a flagship facility for the state, and is unique nationwide with its smart classroom, a place where not only undergraduate writing instruction, but also graduate assistant and faculty training, is possible.

**INTERCOLLEGiate ATHLETICS**

*Intercollegiate Athletics* is an integral part of university life for students. The athletics program at NIU continues to contribute to the development of student life for its participants, and provides social activities for the campus community, the alumni, and the neighboring communities. In addition, it provides academic support services for student-athletes, and therefore is best understood when all of these elements are discussed as a coherent whole.

Intercollegiate Athletics supports the institutional mission of NIU through establishing a shared understanding of and adherence to NIU, Mid-American Conference, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules and regulations. NIU is a member of Division I-A of the NCAA. The athletics program supports 16 intercollegiate sports: seven for men and nine for women. As part of its membership in this division, institutions must be certified by the NCAA through a process that involves a self-study and documentation that the institution meets the standards for governance and rules compliance; academic integrity; fiscal integrity; and equity, welfare, and sportsmanship. NIU was NCAA certified in 1995 and re-certified in 2001. Maintaining financial stability is a difficult but mandatory process for athletics. This stability is achieved by balancing the budget while controlling escalating operating costs, increasing spending efficiency, and generating external dollars for operational and capital expenditures.

Substantial strides have been made in Intercollegiate Athletics over the past ten years. From a facilities standpoint, athletics has benefited from the construction of the $36.8 million multi-purpose Convocation Center. The center houses most of the athletics offices and provides an outstanding
venue for hosting many of NIU’s athletics events. Other facility upgrades include improvements to Huskie Stadium, the soccer complex, the baseball stadium, and the softball field. Rejoining the Mid-American Conference (MAC) has provided stability, national exposure, and opportunities to participate in NCAA championships. The NIU brand has been enhanced with the development of a new logo. There have also been improvements to several of the support units for the student-athletes including Student-Athlete Support Services, Athletic Training, and Strength and Conditioning. A technology team provides computer assistance and web design capabilities.

Challenges that must be addressed in order to remain competitive are specifically related to the financial status of NIU’s athletics program. While most competitors in the Mid-American Conference continue to receive state-appropriated resources for operational and facility needs, NIU does not. Addressing facility enhancements in a timely manner has also been a challenge for NIU, as state funding and external fundraising have not been able to sufficiently provide the necessary resources. Faculty and staff apathy toward athletics at NIU, although decreasing, is another area that is a challenge. Intercollegiate Athletics persists in expanding efforts through its Athletic Board and its direct marketing campaigns to improve faculty and staff attitudes toward athletic programming.

One of the most significant threats to the success of NIU Athletics and its student-athletes is currently linked to changes in academic standards. The NCAA is implementing a stricter rule called the “40/60/80” rule. The current rule requires that by the sophomore year, a student-athlete must have completed 25 percent of his or her degree-relevant hours, a junior must have completed 50 percent of his or her degree-relevant hours, and a senior must have completed 75 percent of those hours in order to compete. The change to “40/60/80” will make it much more difficult for less academically-prepared student-athletes to retain their eligibility, and it will hinder student-athletes from changing their major, should they desire to do so. A confounding factor to this is a concern that many academic departments are increasing their minimum GPA requirements for admission or retention in their programs. This means that students, including student-athletes, in good academic standing according to university standards may not be able to enter into or continue in their degree program of choice. For student-athletes, this could also cause them to become ineligible, and could lead to their choosing a major other than one in which they have a true interest. A change in minimum GPA requirements for some academic programs would not only affect eligibility for current student-athletes but could also negatively impact future recruiting opportunities. These issues will also confound the overall enrollment management strategies the university has undertaken.
There are also opportunities for Intercollegiate Athletics to meet the requirements for fiscal integrity. Approximately 90 percent of NIU graduates take their first job in the northern Illinois region. The retention of NIU alumni in its service region provides a large opportunity for NIU Athletics to fundraise, sell event tickets, and bring alumni back to campus, all of which help athletics in reaching its goals. The future of Intercollegiate Athletics rests on its ability to generate the resources necessary to provide quality programming and maintain competitiveness.

**The Student-Athlete Support Services Program**
The Student-Athlete Support Services Program has undergone many changes since 1994, including a name change and a change in the reporting line to the associate athletics director in Intercollegiate Athletics. The program partners with campus academic and support service programs to facilitate the university's mission for students participating in intercollegiate athletics.

The goal of the program is assisting student-athletes to achieve in three specific areas: academics, athletics, and life skills. Services are based on the developmental needs of student-athletes and address transitional issues from high school to college, learning autonomy and responsibility, accepting the academic challenge, developing time management and decision making skills, career development, and preparation for life after college. The academic services offered include a study skills course for freshmen, tutoring, a reading skills pre-test, academic and eligibility monitoring, academic and eligibility advisement, major and career choice information, athletic orientation, outreach, CHAMPS/Life Skills, supervised study, and testing for learning disabilities and referral services. The major colleges and academic departments provide all academic advising. The program participates in the academic process by informing student-athletes of the availability of support services and by aiding them in their concentration on academic progress as outlined by the NCAA.

The program has four full-time staff members and support staff including a full-time secretary; a part-time CHAMPS/Life Skills staff assistant; a graduate assistant, five supervised study monitors, and two academic mentors; and approximately 50 peer academic subject tutors. The staff includes two new positions: the associate athletics director responsible for oversight of the program and the development of new initiatives, and the assistant athletics director responsible for daily activities. The operating budget is sufficient to address the needs of the approximately 430 student-athletes it serves.

Reviews of the program recommended a number of changes. The adopted recommendations include: expansion of staff, study space, and supervised...
study hours; additional computers; a comprehensive student-athlete handbook; and consolidated life skill workshops. The assessment of academic achievement indicates positive improvements both in the graduation rate of all student-athletes (67 percent versus 51 percent for all students), and the highest cumulative all team grade point average in seven years (2.99 on a 4-point scale). Pre-tests for reading comprehension have been conducted for one year, and the results should be helpful when assessed longitudinally. The program also participates in the NCAA’s CHAMPS/Life Skills program that promotes excellence in academic achievement, athletic achievement, personal development, career development and community service. In fall 2003, this program was recognized as an NCAA program of merit.

In addition, two new programs have been initiated for student-athletes. The “Athletes in Motion” program supports African-American and Hispanic/Latino male student-athletes. “Huskie Interns” targets student-athletes who have exhausted their athletic eligibility or who are on a medical hardship, and allows them to gain valuable resume-building experience that supports the students through a difficult transition.

The program is working to address low retention and graduation rates for African-American male student-athletes (33 percent), the inability to address “life after sports” for some student-athletes, and a limited centralized database of student-athlete information, which restricts the ability to provide longitudinal assessments. The addition of a full-time (versus part-time) CHAMPS/Life Skills program staff assistant would aid in the enhancement of services offered. Intercollegiate Athletics is seeking additional funding options and assistance to allow for the enhancement of all services and identified priorities.

STUDENT LIFE

The nine units that address student life programming and issues are housed in the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, and are overseen by the vice provost for student affairs and the associate vice provost for student affairs. All of the student affairs units share a mission to “collectively provide a variety of student services supporting the academic mission of the University.” They also identify three foci in their mission statement: to provide essential institutional support services, enabling students to accomplish their educational objectives; to facilitate opportunities for student academic, personal, and social development; and to coordinate intentional links between formal classroom learning and student-life experiences.
Student affairs established a five-year review process to ensure the quality of the services its units provide to students; this process includes both internal and external reviews. The Campus Child Care Center, the Counseling and Student Development Center, and the University Health Service are accredited by professional organizations. Student Housing and Dining Services participates in an external benchmarking program, and the remaining units complete both a periodic internal and external review. In addition, student affairs has worked with Information Technology Services to establish a seven-person professional team that supports the computer applications of administrative computer systems for the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and the nine reporting units. They have also developed and implemented a plan to upgrade and replace desktop computers within the office and the units on a routine basis.

Student affairs has had a long history of addressing the professional and personal development of its staff. The Student Affairs Staff Development Committee includes representation from all nine units and from staff at all position levels: supportive professional staff, civil service staff, graduate assistant, and administrative. The committee plans staff development activities to enhance the professional development that occurs at the unit level, and to create a student-affairs identity and culture. Staff development includes, but is not limited to orientation for new staff; professional development seminars, and workshops on topics of import to staff; and annual awards programs and recognition of the staff who have made significant contributions within their areas of responsibility.

The Campus Life Building was completed in 1994 and provides a well-designed environment for several student services departments including the Career Planning and Placement Center, Counseling and Student Development Center, and University Programming and Activities Office. In 2002, the University Judicial Office was relocated to the Campus Life Building. The new facility placed the Career Planning and Placement Center, the Cooperative Education/Internship Program, and Counseling and Student Development Center in adjacent office suites and enabled the three units to share a Career Resource Center. These units provide sequential career development services: the Counseling and Student Development Center focuses on career decision making, the Cooperative Education/Internship Program focuses on providing opportunities for students to gain practical work experience prior to degree completion, and the Career Planning and Placement Center focuses on assisting students in preparing for professional employment upon graduation and job placement. In addition, the new facility placed the University Programming and Activities Office in a suite adjacent to the Student Association, student organizations, and Northern Star offices. Locating the University
Programming and Activities Office in close proximity to offices assigned to student groups facilitates interactions and services to students.

The student service units indicate concern about the difficulty in achieving and maintaining ethnic diversity among the staff due to the high national demand for experienced personnel from diverse backgrounds. Fundraising efforts and attention to federal, state, and private grants are seen as potential opportunities to enhance funding for important student programs and support services. One example of success in securing external funding is found in the collaborative efforts of units within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, other university offices and departments, and external community agencies to obtain a $400,000, two-year U.S. Department of Justice grant to address issues of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking. Grant funding ended in fall 2002, and new resources will need to be identified to continue and to expand the efforts initiated through the grant.

In 1994, the NCA Site Team noted that the “student affairs staff is enthusiastic, informed, and concerned for the well being of NIU students; units within student affairs are well managed, student-oriented, and well-integrated into the life of the campus.” The same is true today. Each of the units strives to maintain a rich and varied environment for students outside of the classroom in order to strengthen their performance within the classroom. Substantial gains are noted in all areas. Student affairs has dealt with growth, increasing racial and ethnic diversity, loss of revenue, and developing technology in many estimable ways. While recognizing gains, each of these units persists in confronting existing weaknesses, seizing potential opportunities, and addressing future threats. The goal of collectively providing a variety of student services in support of the academic mission of the university is currently being met and will continue to be creditably addressed in future years.

Over the last 10 years, fluctuating student enrollments and difficult economic times have challenged the Division of Academic and Student Affairs to provide needed programs and services to NIU students. In addition, NIU, as many other colleges and universities, has experienced more students from troubled backgrounds, and with diagnosable mental illnesses and learning and/or physical disabilities; more students who are unsure about their majors; more older, part-time, working students; and more minority students who desire an education but who continue to experience discrimination in society. While student affairs has had much to celebrate during this time period, there have been challenges to be faced, opportunities to be seized, and barriers to be overcome. The remainder of this section will elaborate how the various units within student affairs have responded to this changing environment.
The Career Planning and Placement Center
The Career Planning and Placement Center is a centralized student services unit responsible for providing counseling and educational programs to assist students and alumni in developing, confirming, and implementing career and employment plans. The center also provides recruiting services that offer students, new graduates, and alumni exposure to employers and employment opportunities, and facilitate the employment application process; and serves as a communications link between university, community, employers, and job candidates. The center maintains an excellent reputation with students, alumni, and employers; and effectively markets NIU’s reputation for strong academic programs and NIU students’ reputation of a strong work ethic to employers.

In collaboration with the Counseling and Student Development Center and Cooperative Education/Internship Program, the center contributes to and shares resources of the Career Resources Center. In addition to assisting with career guidance and employment opportunities upon graduation, the center also provides three important services for employment during their university experience. First, the center has the responsibility for identifying and facilitating off-campus, usually part-time, employment opportunities for students while they are in school. Second, the center is developing service learning opportunities for faculty and students. Third, the center was recently assigned responsibility for coordinating volunteer opportunities for students. It has developed a resource bank of such opportunities.

Technology facilitates student access to career services, allowing the center to reach students with greater ease, less expense, and greater timeliness. Students have access to electronic resume critiques, email consulting, web links to career and job information, and online workshop handouts. An information technology coordinator position was added to the staff in 2000, allowing for the development of web pages and an electronic career management system known as “Victor eRecruiting,” named for Victor E. Huskie, the NIU mascot.

The job fairs sponsored by the center have an excellent reputation among area employers, and online employer registration has streamlined that process, reduced staff time, and enhanced students’ access to information prior to the job fairs. NIU is geographically located in an area with a solid job market and an extensive employer base, and employers depend upon the center to link them to new college graduates. The opening of the new Convocation Center in 2002 has provided a new, more spacious venue for the three large job fairs the center conducts each year.
The center faces some challenges with the fluctuations in the economy and job market, making program planning difficult and income from job fairs less reliable. Job fair registrations offset operating budget deficits and may affect reliable service delivery as they fluctuate. The increasing number of commuting students makes it more difficult to provide in-office services, such as counseling and campus recruiting, to this sector of the student body. Students may be confused by the university’s three-pronged approach to career services depending on their stage of career development: selecting a major, seeking an experiential learning opportunity, or seeking employment. Students may be referred to three different, but albeit adjacent units, so greater coordination of services among the units is needed.

There are also some significant opportunities for the center. NIU’s geographic proximity to many companies and organizations offers a breadth of employment opportunities for students and alumni. New technology greatly enhances communication abilities, allowing the center to serve more clients in a targeted and timely manner. Strong relationships with regional companies potentially result in corporate donations to help fund the center’s projects, and the ability to provide greater alumni services exists via the three outreach centers. Increasing enrollments and the university’s ability to attract academically stronger students makes NIU students very attractive to area employers.

**The Counseling and Student Development Center**

The mission of the Counseling and Student Development Center is to support the intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural development of students by offering a wide range of services. These services include psychological counseling, group therapy, crisis intervention, career services, services related to interpersonal violence, drug and alcohol assessment and treatment, and learning disability assessment. The center also provides a learning assistance and study skills laboratory, outreach programs, diversity programs, training programs, and consultation services. In addition, the center has added programs and services responsive to emerging student needs including sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking workshops for all incoming residential students; specialized services for students with eating disorders; and anger management assessment.

The demand for counseling services by students with serious and often chronic psychological problems has increased dramatically in the last ten years. At least 50 percent more students report histories of suicide attempts and hospitalizations, the number of students requesting emergency sessions at the center has increased by 40 percent, and three times as many clients as in the past are taking psychotropic medication. Students report substantially more concern with depression, anxiety, stress, family and romantic relationships, self-confidence and esteem issues, and fears of
failure. There has also been increased demand for career-related and other services. Increasing enrollments suggest that the number of students requiring all of these services will continue to increase.

The center continues to offer a pre-doctoral internship program in professional psychology that has full accreditation by the American Psychological Association. Each year, three or four pre-doctoral interns are selected and employed. During their one-year employment, the interns receive the training and supervision required for their academic program degree completion and licensure. In turn, the pre-doctoral interns augment the professional staff in providing counseling services for students. The training program invigorates and challenges staff to expand its knowledge base, while the current employment market increases student interest in career exploration.

A primary issue for the center is the chronicity and severity of students’ mental health problems. These factors have increased the center’s emphasis on intervention and clinical services, often at the expense of other center services. In addition, two other factors may complicate matters: the poor representation of mental health workers in the media may decrease student willingness to seek services, and the movement to involve parents may exacerbate difficulties rather than enhance the climate for students. These concerns are paired, however, with some opportunities. Increased media attention results in less stigmatization of mental health problems. The increased awareness of sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking provide access to resources not previously available, and the increased diversity in the student population provides the opportunity to serve populations not previously reached. As with many other services that the university provides, technology and the Internet enhance the ability to reach students and to train practitioners.

The Center for Access-Ability Resources
Services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing have been offered at NIU since 1978, and services to students with other disabilities began shortly thereafter. In September 1993, two offices, Services for Hearing-Impaired and Services for Students with Disabilities, were merged into one unit and renamed the Center for Access-Ability Resources. The center sees that qualified individuals who request services are provided with appropriate accommodations in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The center works toward achieving its mission, “to create a universally accessible environment where individuals are viewed on the basis of their ABILITY not disability,” by providing direct support services to students with disabilities, and serving as a resource to other offices in the university,
enabling them to more effectively meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The center cooperates with a network of other NIU offices and community agencies to enhance services and to enable those with disabilities to reach their optimum level of performance at NIU. A wide range of direct services is offered to these individuals including admissions assistance; orientation to the university; priority registration; adapted testing arrangements; auxiliary aides who serve as interpreters, note-takers, and readers; advising and counseling services; adapted equipment and computers; books on tape; and special residence hall arrangements.

The number of students with disabilities using support services has risen dramatically over the past ten years. The previous accreditation report indicated the two offices had served 162 students with disabilities during one year. In FY02, approximately 361 students with disabilities requiring some level of support identified themselves to the center. A review of the demographics shows that a significant increase has been among students who have learning disabilities or attention deficit disorder.

The center is staffed by a director, five coordinators, six staff interpreters, interpreters, a secretary, graduate assistants, and student employees. Of the six full-time professional staff, three of the coordinators have disabilities themselves. They serve as excellent role models for the students using services of the center, as well as examples of successful professionals with disabilities for the NIU staff and faculty. In addition to working with NIU students, the staff of the center provide information and consultations to high school teachers and counselors and the parents of high school students regarding post-secondary opportunities and transition issues. This is a crucial function because the transition from high school to college for a student with disability is often difficult. Moreover, the laws under which post-secondary institutions operate are different than those in secondary institutions, and misinformation or lack of information can add to transition issues.

The center has worked closely with offices on campus to provide pertinent technology to support students' learning needs. Although improvements have been made in this area, adaptive software and hardware is expensive and still evolving, and as technology is used more in daily classroom activities, additional barriers to accessibility also arise. These factors require more research into ways to provide adequate accessibility, as well as expertise in their use, and financial support to purchase and upgrade the technologies. Cutting-edge technology, such as the provision of e-text rather than books on tape to students, should be acquired; however current resources preclude the center from moving quickly in this direction.
The University Health Service provides high-quality primary health care and preventive services at reasonable cost to eligible students; some limited services to faculty, staff and campus visitors; additional support services for students with disabilities; and advocacy of positive health values to the university community. In so doing, it seeks to maintain the highest quality standards in professional care and ethics and to produce and implement services that meet the demonstrated and continuing needs of NIU’s diverse student population.

The goals of the University Health Service are to provide quality ambulatory health care to eligible users; pertinent, health-related preventive interventions that address the documented health needs of NIU students; professional and/or administrative support for selected university and community procedures and programs; and support services to students with disabilities. In addition, it employs targeted communications to enhance the awareness and use of its programs and services, and maintains applicable standards within cost-effective operations as well as the availability of an affordable accident and illness insurance plan for eligible NIU students.

Since 1992, the health service has benefited from an asbestos abatement/building renovation project, making greater use of space to increase operational efficiency, ease of access, and privacy; and implemented measures to improve its services. The health services reorganized its administrative structure; undertook a comprehensive review of its appointment system; purchased, installed, and implemented a comprehensive health information management system; improved the computer knowledge of staff; and created an information technology position.

The University Health Service is accredited by the American Association of Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). The health service maintains appropriate staffing and facilities to provide student services. Its personnel keep abreast of student needs and developments in public and college health and monitor and assess patient/client satisfaction. In the past ten years, the University Health Service diversified its staff and provided diversity training; improved its assessment, disaster-response, and risk-management procedures; enhanced its laboratory technology; and implemented a nurse triage system and the OSHA Blood Borne Pathogen and Hazardous Communication Standards. It also increased collaboration with academic and other campus units, expanded health education programming and activities, and established an assessment committee to integrate and improve various assessment activities.
The increasing costs of delivering services in static or shrinking revenue environments, coupled with any new federal or state regulations on health care, represent potential threats to health services operations. More costly specialized staffing, a different student health insurance benefit, or other arrangements for the delivery of services may be required to meet student needs. The health service does have the potential to have a greater impact on student health knowledge and self-help skills through expanded activities, communications, programming, and health promotion services. Underrepresented groups on campus also represent an opportunity for increased use of services and client satisfaction. The opportunity also exists to conduct assessment activities that are more convenient in college populations than in other populations.

The Office of Student Housing and Dining Services
The Office of Student Housing and Dining Services have changed dramatically since 1992. One of the most significant changes was the merger of the Office of Student Housing Services and the Office of Residence Hall Food Service to become the Office of Student Housing and Dining Services in 1996. The thrust of the merger is to provide a more seamless residential experience for students and to consolidate operations, resulting in greater efficiencies. The newly created office refined its mission statement, which was approved in 1997: “Student Housing and Dining Services provide innovative residential and dining programs, services, and facilities which foster academic success and personal growth.”

While there has been an overall decrease in the total number of residents in student housing from 7,533 in fall 1993 to 6,148 in fall 2002, renovations, occupancy modifications, and the conversion of Gilbert Hall to an office building have resulted in a steadily increasing occupancy rate from 85 percent in 1993 to 100 percent in 2002. The university believes the on-campus residential living experience is important to the educational process and facilitates new student acclimation, retention, and academic success. Significant increases in demand are projected over the next decade due to Illinois demographics and the desire of current residents to remain in campus housing. Additional housing will be necessary if the university is to meet the increasing demand.

In 2000, the office underwent an external review based on the Association of College and University Housing Officers–International (ACUHO-I) professional standards. The results of the review were favorable with some recommendations for improvement. Most of the recommendations have been implemented while others are pending implementation due to limited fiscal and human resources.
The last several years have seen a geometric increase in the number of students involved in academic residential programs and services. As of fall 2003, the office offers several academic houses in partnership with colleges and academic units. Preliminary data indicate that house participants have higher GPAs and greater retention rates than non-participants because students with like interests are brought together in a supportive environment. Approximately 1,800 residents live in an academic house, including the Fine Arts House, the Health Professions House, the SET (Science-Engineering-Technology) House, the International House, Language Houses, the Honors House, the Business Careers House, and TEACH House.

In addition to the academic houses, the office has partnered with other university programs, such as ACCESS and the Department of English, to open four tutorial labs and a writing center. In collaboration with Retention Services, the office provides a program called “The Right Track,” geared toward supporting students who are not in an academic house and/or who are undecided about a major. In the past three years, three smart classrooms and four residentially based Focused Interest Groups (FIGs) have also been introduced. It is the intention of the office to continue its partnerships and to develop new ones that will support the academic success of residential students.

The office offers a dining program that is evaluated highly by residents, provides a residential program that is ranked one of the highest in the nation, evidences a committed and enthusiastic staff, and enjoys strong institutional recognition of the importance of the residential experience. In surveys of residents, students consistently rate services as above average and the staff as very knowledgeable.

The office boasts a well-developed ten-year capital and equipment plan and a well-developed financial plan that not only is self-supporting, but also is making planned and additional contributions to reserves. In addition, the office has a clearly articulated vision for the expansion of both facilities and programs.

Current housing facilities are aging and lack the amenities desired by many incoming students. Major renovation of Stevenson Towers, one of four university residence hall complexes, was completed in 1999. The renovations provide student residents with various sleeping room configuration options (suites, enlarged doubles, and singles), remodeled public areas including meeting rooms and a smart classroom, and a food court dining facility. It is anticipated that renovations such as these will continue over the next ten years. Housing options desired by graduate and
professional students, married or partnered students, students with dependents, and advanced undergraduates are not available.

The office identifies a number of opportunities for growth. These include the opportunity to expand student housing onto the Far West Campus; the ability to raise room and board rates while still remaining 50 percent below other Illinois and Mid-American Conference institutions; and the opportunity to provide leadership development and service learning for students. Other opportunities are those that would leverage existing academic partnerships into new programs and services to enhance the academic success of residents, and the expansion of off-campus housing services to assist both students and local housing providers.

The Campus Child Care Center
The Campus Child Care Center was established in 1978 with the primary purpose of providing quality childcare for student families so they could achieve their educational goals at the university. The goals of the center are to provide high quality care for children of NIU students, faculty, and staff; to provide affordable child care for low-income, student families; to provide support services and resources to parents and children enrolled in the program; to continue to hire staff and expand the child care program; and to provide employment and educational opportunities for students to enhance their knowledge and skills in areas related to early childhood education.

For over 20 years, the Shirley W. Nelson Campus Child Care Center was housed in Gabel Hall, an academic building on campus. The center served the full-time equivalent of 37 children, ages two through six years, within two classrooms. In May 1999, the university began the construction of a $3.3 million, 16,000 square foot facility to expand campus childcare services. The expanded program opened in fall 2000, and the center now has a full-time capacity of 138 children within ten classrooms. The center is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and has been accredited through the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs since 1992. It provides full-time and part-time childcare for children ages two months to five years during the school year, and also children six to nine years during the summer.

The center provides a structured program within a play-based setting designed to meet the children’s developmental needs. Children experience a well-rounded, developmentally appropriate curriculum including activities in art, music, creative movement, language, math, science, and large motor skills. A balance of active, quiet, individual, and group activities assist the children’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. The
center is staffed by teachers with baccalaureate or master’s degrees in child development or related fields, graduate assistants, and student workers.

The center accepts state childcare subsidies through the Illinois Department of Human Services, making childcare affordable for low-income families enrolled in the program. The center received a four-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education ensuring its ability to provide care for low-income student families through fiscal year 2005. The grant provides scholarships to low-income student families who are Pell Grant-eligible, but who do not qualify for other forms of funding. Subsidizing low-income student families allows the students in those families to concentrate on their studies knowing their children are well cared for. The center has secured several avenues to provide affordable childcare for all student families enrolled in the program by working closely with local agencies such as Community Coordinated Child Care, and NIU units such as the Speech and Hearing Clinic.

One of the challenges the center will face will be a need to replace the lost income incurred from the state subsidy program once the current federal grant expires in 2005. The ability to attract and retain qualified staff to fully expand the program and open all classrooms also remains a challenge. The center annually assesses the satisfaction of parents; findings indicate high levels of satisfaction. One hundred percent of respondents indicate the availability of on-campus child care enhanced their ability to attend class and/or go to work. The center also assesses the satisfaction of student employees with their learning experience on an annual basis; findings indicate high levels of satisfaction with their learning experiences.

**University Programming and Activities**

University Programming and Activities supports the university’s commitment to enhancing student retention and academic success. The program is a comprehensive student activities office that provides advisement and assistance to student leaders and student organizations to promote quality student involvement. Its goals are to enhance the baccalaureate experience by supporting the academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular endeavors of students; to strengthen students’ leadership abilities by creating opportunities for leadership development; and to develop partnerships with academic departments, other student affairs offices, and off-campus agencies to promote connections in student life in and out of the classroom. The program employs 11 professional staff members, works with approximately 250 student organizations, and provides direct advisement and/or services for the Student Association, the Campus Activities Board, the Asian-American programs, the Unity in Diversity Committee, the Northern Star, and fraternities and sororities.
The program staff have a wide range of expertise covering a broad array of student activities areas and maintain a high level of daily contact with students and student organizations. Achievements during the past ten years include the development of a Greek Life Standards Board and an accreditation process for Greek organizations; and an increase in the breadth and diversity of programming provided by an all-volunteer student organization, the Campus Activities Board, for the enrichment of the NIU and DeKalb communities. The program was also involved in the creation of a Unity in Diversity forum for students, faculty, and staff for the collaborative planning of and funding for multicultural and diversity programs. Staff coordinate the educational, cultural, spiritual, recreational, and social programs for Asian and Asian-American students. The establishment of an NIU Parents Association has been a significant addition in facilitating the involvement of students’ family members in the educational process.

A number of trends and changes in students’ expectations for entertainment and recreational programming have implications for the role of University Programming and Activities in student life. Consistent with national trends, NIU students’ interest and participation in fraternal organizations has declined in the last ten years. The Campus Activities Board’s programming has had to compete with entertainment options such as videos, DVDs, and MTV for attendance at campus events. The NIU Leadership Institute serves a foundation for advancing students’ leadership development, and the increasing diversity of the student population provides the opportunity for increased diversity in university programming on campus. Increased involvement in student organizations, the Campus Activities Board, and student government would provide the means for developing planning skills that can lead to career opportunities for students from all backgrounds.

Among the challenges identified by University Programming and Activities are the expenses of the entertainment programming desired by students as well as the costs for providing event security. Students who commute to campus and/or work to fund their education have less time for participation in student events and are less connected to campus life. Faculty have less time to become involved in student organizations as advisors and are not consistently rewarded for these efforts in merit, promotion and tenure processes. Asian-American programming currently lacks adequate staff, space, and resources to function effectively; however the eventual formation of an Asian American Resource Center on campus is anticipated.
The Office of Campus Recreation

The Office of Campus Recreation focuses on providing programs and facilities to the university community with an emphasis on student needs. These services offer life-enhancing opportunities for the physical, mental, emotional, and creative development of the individual. The office is housed in the Student Recreation Center, a comprehensive, multi-purpose recreation facility that is approximately 150,000 square feet and serves an average of 2,000 participants per day. The center is open approximately 100 hours per week and is staffed by eight full-time professionals, six graduate assistants, and more than 150 part-time students.

The office offers a variety of programs to students and the campus community that have enjoyed growth and expansion during the past decade. The center operates both quality indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. A large addition to the Student Recreation Center was completed in 1995, and the completion of the university's Convocation Center in 2002 has made it possible to renovate the Chick Evans Field House for recreational use. This renovation should be completed during spring 2004. Outdoor recreational areas were expanded and improved with completion of the West Campus Master Plan in 1998.

In order to improve the offerings of the center, there are recreational needs for a swimming pool to complement existing facility services, storage space for indoor and outdoor areas, and more practice play space for intramural sports and sport clubs. Lighted fields for intramural leagues/tournaments and sport club practices and games are also needed, as is additional parking for staff and users near the center. Limited use of NIU vehicles for outdoor programs and sport club teams restricts the ability to serve the interests and needs of many students.

The office identifies the following improvements over the last decade: the addition to the Student Recreation Center in 1995 has been a tremendous boost to the center; the upcoming renovation of the Field House will help keep up with the facility demands; the West Campus Project improved the outdoor fields, and basketball and hockey courts. With increasing enrollments, there will be more students to serve and greater demands on existing facilities. Income has been enhanced through an increase in facility rentals; this helps maintain and/or slow down increases in student fees. Sponsorships have increased through local and national organizations.

The University Judicial Office

The University Judicial Office offers an internal method of handling student disciplinary matters and guarantees due process in all student disciplinary cases. The office coordinates the university's judicial system,
which provides opportunities to confront and resolve academic, residential, student conduct, and disciplinary conflicts.

Services of the office include counseling, information, and referral for students; assistance to faculty and staff members with judicial and disciplinary issues; and leadership training for student judicial advocates. The goals of the office are to provide a fair and efficient due process system for all NIU students and the university community; to encourage compliance with the university judicial system by faculty, staff, and students; and to enhance the knowledge of university administrators in the student disciplinary process and advise them on their use. The office is proactive in resolving town-gown issues and concerns in order to enable students to pursue their academic objectives, and encourages an appreciation of diversity and tolerance throughout the NIU community.

The office staff has trained numerous faculty, staff, and students in due process procedures, and developed strong partnerships and working relationships with teaching faculty, department chairs, and college deans. The staff has an excellent relationship with the NIU Department of Public Safety and the DeKalb Police and County Sheriff Departments. The office has also established a model mediation program in conjunction with the NIU College of Law. It also works in cooperation with other student affairs departments to encourage a safe, quiet, drug- and crime-free environment across campus, where civility and respect for others are the norms for community living.

The results of an internal evaluation in 2000 indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the NIU judicial system. Recent investigations conducted by the Office of Civil Rights strongly support similar findings. Historically, state and federal court decisions regarding the NIU judicial system have always been positive. The University Judicial Office sees an opportunity to revise and update the NIU judicial system, to review the Student Judicial Code, and to promote diversity throughout the university community, particularly within the Greek organizations.

The Students’ Legal Assistance Office
The Students’ Legal Assistance Office opened in the fall of 1972. The office was borne of the idea that it is vitally important to make legal information and advice available to the thousands of NIU students who, because of economic incapacity, would otherwise be unable to participate in the due process system. The mission of the office is to provide the best legal assistance for fee-paying students at NIU within the parameters set by the NIU Student Association and the university. The Student Association
allocates funds to support the staff of the office, and no fees are charged for the lawyers’ services, although students are responsible for any and all court fees, fines, and judgments. The office handles a variety of cases including those that involve landlord/tenant disputes, criminal misdemeanors, ordinance and traffic violations, consumer, tort, domestic relations, discrimination, public benefits, and employment issues.

In addition to its direct services, the office has an extensive preventive law program based on a community education approach. The office also advises student organizations concerning legal issues of interest to them. It provides ancillary services such as notary, voter registration, and mediation services, as well as referrals to private counsel, government, and other appropriate agencies.

A major strength of the office is its ability to provide high quality legal services to students; another is its successful resolution of cases on behalf of student clients both in and out of court. The office makes a continuous effort to provide preventive legal education to students via its web site, newspaper columns, brochures, presentations, and other media. Experienced attorneys handle a high volume of cases with a small full-time staff reaching out to students during and after hours and in various locations.

**EVALUATION**

Northern Illinois University has made a substantial investment to provide an extensive set of programs and services that nourish students’ academic achievement and provide them with a broad array of services and activities that enrich their lives. Northern Illinois University has made a substantial investment of human, physical, and fiscal resources to provide an extensive set of programs and services that nourish students’ academic achievement and provide them with a broad array of developmental, support, health, recreational, and entertainment services and activities that enrich their lives. This investment exemplifies the university’s commitment to serving the wide ranging needs of its students and contributes to NIU’s success in recruiting a diverse student body. The superiority of the university’s support services is manifested in the accreditation of its tutoring and athletics programs and its counseling and development, child care, and health service units; the participation of its housing and dining unit in a national benchmarking program; and the internal and external reviews of its units and programs.

Challenges, threats, and opportunities for NIU are outlined in the discussions of its advisement services, academic-support services, Intercollegiate Athletics program, and student affairs support units presented above. Planning initiatives to meet the challenges, minimize the threats, and take advantage of the opportunities presented to the university are ongoing, have been effective in the past, and are expected to continue to be successful in the future. Plans are currently underway to facilitate the
transfer of the academic-support units to the vice provost upon the retirement of the associate vice provost for academic support services in 2004, and to initiate a search for a vice president for student affairs upon the retirement of the current vice provost for student affairs. The university has every reason to believe that the progress it has made in providing responsive, high-quality services for students under these current administrative leaders will continue in the future.

The merger of the former academic affairs and student affairs divisions into the Division of Academic and Student Affairs has facilitated extensive collaboration between and among its units, perhaps even surpassing the expectations of the NIU Board of Trustees and the president in its creation. A creative and dedicated staff, whose concerns for students and the quality of their university experiences, has in only seven short years contributed to a major transformation that will serve NIU well in remaining an institution of choice in Illinois higher education.

Criteria Addressed

Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes:

- g. provision of services that afford all admitted students the opportunity to succeed
- i. conscientious efforts to provide students with a safe and healthy environment
- j. academic resources and equipment (e.g., libraries, electronic services and products, learning resource centers, laboratories and studios, computers) adequate to support the institution's purposes

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes:

- f. ongoing support for professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators
- g. student services that effectively support the institution's purposes

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships:

- a. student, faculty, and staff handbooks that describe various institutional relationships with those constituencies, including appropriate grievance procedures
- b. policies and practices for the resolution of internal disputes within the institution's constituencies
c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
g. policies and procedures regarding institutional relationships with and responsibility for intercollegiate athletics, student associations, and subsidiary or related business enterprises
The intellectual and cultural life of the Northern Illinois University community is enriched by its libraries, museums, and galleries. These entities also play an important role in the university's engagement with its service region by providing access to collections, services, and initiatives that would otherwise not be available to the residents of the region.

The libraries of Northern Illinois University consist of the University Libraries and the David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library. The former includes Founders Memorial Library and several branch libraries: Faraday, Maps, Music, and the libraries at the regional centers in Hoffman Estates, Naperville, and Rockford. The David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library is a principal resource for teaching and research in the College of Law. The University Libraries and the Law Library function independently of one another in administration, faculty, and staff, budget, and facilities; each, in turn, is discussed below.

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

The University Libraries support the mission of the university by serving as a repository of knowledge, maintaining currency in expanding fields, and providing the facilities, services, and effective access to the materials needed for teaching, research, and service. Through their collections and services the University Libraries are committed to serving NIU's diverse community of faculty, staff, and students, as well as the citizens of the region and the state.

Staffing, Organizational Structure, and Governance

The University Libraries depends on highly qualified leaders, faculty, and staff to achieve its goals. The dean of the University Libraries reports directly to the provost and is a member of the Council of Deans. The University Libraries also has an associate dean for collection and technical services, an associate dean for public services, and an assistant dean for automated library systems.

The University Libraries has a tenure-track and tenured faculty constituency of 30 individuals, and 10 supportive professional staff (faculty no-rank). Among the current faculty, 22 are tenured and 8 are in tenure-track positions. Four regular faculty hold Ph.D. degrees; all have a master's degree in library science, and most have a second master's in another discipline. Library faculty are engaged in conducting and reporting scholarly research; they are also involved in service activities related to the profession, thereby fulfilling both aspects of NIU's mission. The University Libraries has a
strong liaison program to the academic colleges through 14 subject specialists and other specialized faculty who maintain contact with the academic and research units of the university. This current staffing level represents a decrease of 5.0 FTE regular faculty from FY94, and an increase of 6.0 FTE supportive professional staff from FY94. In FY02 there were 74 civil service positions compared to 87 positions in FY94. The number of student assistants in FY02 was 47; in FY94 it was 55. These figures are above the mean as stipulated by the FY00 Association of College and Research Libraries personnel data for doctoral-granting institutions.

Over the last decade, several organizational changes have occurred within the University Libraries. The Division of Collection Development was changed to the Division of Collections and Technical Services, and the Access Services Division is now the Division of Public Services. The Science and Engineering Department is now the Science, Engineering and Business Department; the Social Sciences and the Humanities departments are now consolidated into one unit. These changes were made primarily to manage available resources more efficiently.

During this period there has also been a substantial expansion in the Automated and Library Systems unit. The University Libraries also created a digital laboratory that supports electronic publishing projects; the electronic resources librarian position has been created in order to improve the management of electronic/web-based resources.

Since 1993, the NIU library faculty have been accorded full voting representation on the University Council and its constituent committees. There was also a title change from director of University Libraries to dean of University Libraries, with voting privileges on the University Council and other appropriate committees. The full integration of the dean of University Libraries and the library faculty into the university’s governance structure is a valuable enhancement for the University Libraries and the university community. This arrangement enables library staff to learn about evolving campus issues, particularly curricular proposals and changes, and thus to make more informed collection development and service decisions.

University Libraries faculty have a similar process to other academic units of the university for the purposes of annual evaluations, promotion, and tenure. The Library Council is an advising body to the dean on issues pertaining to the faculty. The Library Operating Staff Council represents the interests of civil service personnel. The Library Advisory Committee, with campus-wide representation, is an advisory body that provides input to the dean. In addition, library faculty and staff represent the University Libraries on many university committees.
Facilities
The prime function of the library facilities is to support the instructional and research mission of faculty and students. The University Libraries offers excellent access to its materials. Founders Memorial Library operates 114.5 hours per week, and is open 356 days per year. Branch libraries vary in their hours, but on the whole keep comparable hours. Opportunity for use of library resources is enhanced by the availability of assigned carrels for faculty and graduate students to facilitate research. With recent budgetary reductions at the university, it may be necessary to reduce library hours; this will be done during low usage times, such as between semesters.

Founders Memorial Library, opened in 1976, has a capacity of 327,000 gross square feet and is in excellent condition. All of the facilities are in compliance with ADA regulations, and a study room for persons with disabilities is provided with state-of-the-art equipment. The seating capacity changed from 1,767 seats in 1994 to 1,441 in 2000, a reduction of 18 percent. Some seating space will be regained with the relocation of materials to the newly rebuilt basement facility.

In order to improve space and services, several physical modifications were introduced. For example, the Rare Books and Special Collections room has more than doubled its space; the University Archives and the Regional History Center were brought from Swen Parson Hall into the Founders Memorial Library building, and the reference collections located on three floors were consolidated into two reference points. Allocation of space given to technology is exemplified with the expansion of the Systems unit and the creation of the Digitization Laboratory. In addition, three state-of-the-art wired classrooms have been added for instruction, and a computer laboratory is also housed in the building.

The renovation project of the basement of Founders Memorial Library, at a cost of $5.4 million, began in 1996 and was completed in summer 2002. This project has added 36,000 gross square feet to the building, including compact shelving with a capacity for 600,000 volumes. It has an anticipated capacity for growth in the library collection for 15 years. As part of this project, several other improvements were made: computer controlled humidifiers and high efficiency air filters were installed, the original cooling towers were replaced, and a new 500-ton chiller was installed. The energy efficient design will reduce energy costs for the entire building. The basement houses materials of the Regional History Center and journals and books of low usage. The Maps and Music Libraries will also be able to use the basement to store some of their materials.

The Music Library is housed in a self-contained facility encompassing two floors within the Music Building complex. It has approximately 7,100
square feet of space, which should accommodate the growth of the collection for at least the next five years. It has a wide range of accessible equipment, including turntables, cassette players, reel-to-reel players, and compact disc players. Nine small listening rooms are available, along with a conference room for group listening. Audio equipment has been upgraded or replaced on a continuing basis.

Faraday Library contains collections primarily for chemistry and physics. This library gained 3,600 square feet with the completion of Faraday West. It also added compact shelving, which allowed the return of some bound journals that had been in closed storage in Founders Memorial Library. The branch libraries at NIU Rockford, NIU Hoffman Estates, and NIU Naperville are small (1,300 to 2,300 square feet) in keeping with their mission, which is to provide electronic access, support, and document delivery services to the students attending classes at those locations.

Financial Resources
The University Libraries total budget increased by 28 percent in the last 11 years: the FY04 budget is $1,853,905 larger than in FY94 (see Table 13). The budget remained constant at approximately 4 percent of the total university budget. The relative percentage of budget spent on salaries and materials has changed slightly since the last self-study. Table 13 shows a relative reduction in personnel costs of 4 percent and a relative increase of 8 percent in the library materials budget. The detailed breakdown of total library materials, consisting of serials, monographs, and replacements, is shown in Table 14.

Table 13. Total University Libraries Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>FY94</th>
<th>FY04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Library Materials</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Expenditures</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1See Table 14, below, for detail of total library materials.

Table 14. Detail of Total Library Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>FY94 (36 Percent)</th>
<th>FY04 (44 Percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serials</td>
<td>$1,545,584</td>
<td>$2,692,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>$746,682</td>
<td>$831,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binding/ Replacement</td>
<td>$65,418</td>
<td>$186,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Library Materials</td>
<td>$2,357,684</td>
<td>$3,711,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

206
The relative percentage of the libraries' materials budget for serials and monographs varies for each year: Table 14 shows a 66 percent and 32 percent distribution for FY94, while for FY04, the distribution is 73 percent and 22 percent. These ratios are within the range of the widely-accepted 70/30 rule for library budgetary control. In addition, as indicated in the American Libraries' Serials Price Report, the increased serials cost went from a price index of 165.9 in FY94 to 253.2 in FY02, which is the latest reported price index. The serials budget increased 67 percent from FY94 to FY04.

External support to the libraries' collections and services has shown a strong increase during the last nine years. According to data provided by the Office of Sponsored Projects, state, federal, and private gifts and grants received since 1994 reached nearly 2.2 million dollars. Among them, the libraries has received the following external contributions:

- Lincoln Digitization Project ($45,000 in 1997; $90,000 in 1998)
- Illinois Periodicals Online ($47,580 in 1997)
- Educate and Automate ($36,741 in 1999)
- Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program ($250,000 in 1999, 2000, 2001)
- Abraham Lincoln Historical Digitization Project ($207,500 in 1999)
- The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau ($76,000 in 2000)
- Getting the Message Out! National Political Campaign Materials 1840-1860 ($130,078 in 2002)
- Illinois Historical Digitization Project ($45,000 in 2002)
- The American Archives Digitization Project ($165,541 in 2002).

Collections
The University Libraries acquires and organizes materials in all formats to the level required to support the mission of the university in teaching, research, and service. A collection development policy is the basis for the development of collections and the allocation of resources. Priorities are established with the cooperation of each academic unit and the corresponding subject specialists.

The holdings of the University Libraries have steadily increased since the last site visit. In 1992 the total number of volumes was 1,327,965; in 2003 the total number of volumes was 1,782,005, or a 34 percent increase. The current number of volumes is about twice the mean value for collections of Association of College and Research Libraries institutions granting doctoral degrees. Serials purchased in FY94 totaled 6,706 compared to 4,721 in FY02, a 29 percent decrease. The total number of serials in the libraries,
including those no longer being purchased, those received as gifts, and
electronic journals was 13,000 in FY94; in FY02 it was 15,750. The libraries
also have more than 2.9 million government documents, approximately 1.2
million microforms, 11,708 items of non-print media (videos, films), 38,474
sound recordings, 1,279 graphic materials, 968 machine readable materials,
and 228,759 cartographic materials. Using the Interactive Collection
Analysis System (ICAS) and then comparing the collection’s size by subject
divisions against collections at the University of Illinois at Chicago and
Illinois State University, the NIU University Libraries collections are the
largest in 16 of the 25 divisions, and second largest in another 6 divisions.

However, loss in purchasing power has been especially felt in the
acquisition and retention of serials. Cuts in subscriptions were made in
response to costs that increased much faster than budget increases were
made in 1995 and 1998. Altogether, $530,000 in serials subscriptions were
canceled, which corresponds to a total of 1,398 titles. This loss in
subscriptions was not due to net reductions in the budget; in fact, the
overall budget for library materials increased over the period from
$2,499,041 in FY94 to $3,762,771, in FY02, a 50.1 percent increase. Cuts
were made in response to the escalating cost of serials, which rose nationally
far more than inflation. This situation has been stabilized over the last 4
years, primarily because of reliance on online journals. Moreover, a
significant increase in full-text online journals has occurred: in FY99, there
were 2,000 titles available online, in FY02, the number was 5,378.

The University Libraries has responded to the limitations imposed on
acquiring materials in very effective ways. Membership in the Illinois
Library Computer Systems Organization consortium and active
participation in the Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program
(ICCMP) group has allowed for access to a large number of databases at
discounted prices. The current number of databases is 156; many of the
databases available through Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization
or ICCMP have also given access to hundreds of aggregated online journals.
Since 1994, the University Libraries has developed new document delivery
services. Using the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) interlibrary
loan system and commercial vendors, the Document Express service has
allowed students, staff, and faculty (including those at the regional centers)
to receive, at no cost to the users, copies of articles when they are needed.
The response time for this service can be 24 hours. Through ICCMP the
University Libraries has entered into agreements for building cooperative
collections with other institutions in Illinois and resource sharing with
libraries through the Illinet system, providing NIU users with an immense
pool of resources.
The University Libraries’ collections continue to adequately support the university’s mission of teaching, research, and service. The collection is both broadly based and specialized, and, as would be expected in a large institution, there is variation in the comprehensiveness of holdings across disciplines. Collections range from satisfactory to outstanding. As an example of the latter, the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asian collection is one of only four in the U.S., and the only collection of its type in Illinois.

Another significant special collection is found in the Music Library, which holds large sets of musical sources and complete editions of the works of major composers. This part of the collection (about 2,200 volumes) serves as the primary material for a wide range of music study.

Impact of Technology
The World Wide Web has dramatically changed the nature of access to the Libraries’ collection, both in the means by which patrons locate materials and the format of those materials. The Libraries’ web site was launched in November 1996. At that time, there were no web-based databases, and two CD-ROM local area networks running 75 indices, few of which could be accessed outside of the library. Since 1997, the number of hits on the Libraries’ web site has increased from 34,650 per month in September 1997 to an average of 730,020 per month in 2002. There are 156 research databases, providing access to 5,378 journal titles, of which only a few cannot be searched from on or off campus locations. Use of the databases routinely trends upward each year, as can be seen if one compares the database usage information for FY00 and FY01. For example, the World Cat database logged 51,097 searches in FY00, as compared to 94,369 searches in FY01. Searching the web is possible at all library terminals, which are free for any patron to use, regardless of affiliation with NIU. The Internet Use Policy and the Computer Use policy guide the use of these resources.

In December 2000, remote access to the databases was provided with a login and password; in fall 2001, EZ Proxy was put into use to enable patrons affiliated with NIU to login once as an NIU user, and remain authenticated until the end of the session. In FY99, free printing at all terminals was discontinued as a cost and resource conservation strategy, and a centralized printing network was initiated.

All library faculty and 98 percent of the staff have computers on their desktops. In the last seven years, the sheer number of terminals in the building has increased from 196 to 368, in seven locations, and all are upgraded on a rotating schedule. The Libraries provide support for the software packages supported by Academic Computing, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Netscape and Internet Explorer.
The NIU Libraries remain a part of the Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization system. The mission of the Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization is to enhance and expand access to and effectively utilize information resources through collaborative partnerships among the organization’s members and with the Illinois Library community. Through organization, NIU contributes to and benefits from Illinet Online, one of the largest and oldest academic consortial-resource sharing catalogs in the United States. The Illinet Online database contains more than seven million bibliographic records and more than 21 million item records. Through Illinet Online, patrons of 44 academic libraries in Illinois may search the combined catalog or the holdings of each separate institution, place holds and requests, create a user profile, and email lists of results to themselves. Through the organization, NIU patrons may also use several research databases. The consortial model of resource access proves beneficial for all patrons, from logistical and fiscal perspectives. Through Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization, NIU has access to myriad resources it would not otherwise have been able to provide to its patrons.

Instruction and Reference
The University Libraries continue to provide reference assistance at several service desks throughout the libraries. In 1996, one subject desk, with its accompanying reference materials, was re-deployed and absorbed into the three remaining reference collection areas. Statistics on the number of queries received at the service desks indicate a steady downward turn in the number of questions asked over time, consistent with the experience of most academic libraries in the United States. In FY95, 223,593 queries were received at 18 service points. In FY99, 165,943 queries were received at 19 service points. Nearly all aggregated library statistics collected on services, collections, and resources in the Libraries can be found online. Anecdotally, it has been noted throughout the Libraries that the decrease in reference questions in-house has paralleled a steep rise in questions coming as email and phone calls.

Ask-A-Librarian, an email based reference service, was launched in fall 1999. NIU faculty, staff, students, and alumni with email access are the priority users of this service, whereby the patron may ask any question he or she would ask a librarian in a face-to-face setting. A response is guaranteed within 48 hours, Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and holidays. In FY02, 673 questions were logged through the Ask-A-Librarian service. In 2002, 167 users of the service responded to a web-based survey evaluating their experience with the service: 92 percent rated the help they received as excellent or good, and 93 percent found it prompt.
Library Instruction
The University Libraries instruction program provides a number of library orientation, library instruction, and information literacy opportunities that support all academic programs. The General Reference Department makes available overview classes open to the public at the beginning of each semester. These are one-hour classes that provide information about searching Illinet Online, searching the World Wide Web, and using the library homepage. In fall 2002, 25 classes were offered. The General Reference Department also typically sees each COMS 100 class for a library orientation exercise; this class is a general education requirement for undergraduate students.

The library instruction program also offers direct support by making available, upon request by faculty, staff, or representatives of campus groups, bibliographic instruction sessions related to a particular course or discipline. These sessions are developed and taught by librarians who possess subject expertise in the field and are familiar with the specialized reference materials and research methodologies of the discipline. The numbers of classes taught in the library have declined slightly over the years: 482 classes in FY07, 392 classes in FY01, and 402 classes in FY02. The average number of classes taught in a given year for the last six years is 447 classes, in an average of 20 departments. The music librarian also provides instruction on an on-demand basis and is developing a plan for compulsory bibliographic instruction for all undergraduate music majors.

Classes have been held in Founders Memorial Library’s two traditional classrooms and in several classrooms outside the library. In fall 2001, Founders Memorial Library opened a new smart classroom suite, where the majority of instruction now takes place. There are three smart classrooms, two of which use the classroom management program SynchronEyes. These rooms are also available to the NIU community for teaching and research purposes.

Other Services
Free interlibrary loan of books, microfilms, videos, and articles is available to all students currently enrolled at NIU, current and retired NIU faculty and staff, and members of the Northern Illinois University Friends of the Library. Books may be requested through Illinet Online and through the interlibrary loan icon in WorldCat; articles may be requested through the interlibrary loan icon in all FirstSearch databases. Patrons may also request books and articles using online request forms or by using hardcopy request forms located at service desks throughout the library.

The University Libraries is a “net lender;” that is, it sends out more materials than it requests from outside sources. In FY01, requests for
materials loaned to NIU from other libraries totaled 53,234 requests for non-serials materials such as books, and 28,759 requests for articles. In 2001-2002, the Libraries’ “fill rate,” or the percentage of successful transactions, for materials lent to other libraries was 75 percent for books and other returnable items. During that same time, it had a 54 percent fill rate for journal articles, or non-returnable items. This rate is well above the 58 percent standard set by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in 1998.

The average turnaround time for requests was 2.5 days. The fill rate of items the Libraries borrow for its patrons is nearly as impressive, with such requests proving successful in 93 percent of all requests for returnable items, and 96 percent of non-returnable items, as compared to benchmarks of 83 percent and 86 percent, respectively. Loans to the Libraries from other institutions “turned around” in half the time given as a benchmark, an average of 8.5 days as compared to the ACRL benchmark of 15.9 days.

Most (80 percent to 85 percent) of the articles the Libraries borrows are sent via Ariel software, an Internet-based delivery system used widely by academic libraries and commercial vendors. Currently those articles are automatically printed out on the network printer and sent to students and faculty through campus mail. The Libraries currently send all articles to students enrolled at regional sites as PDF email attachments. Increasingly, interlibrary loan articles, usually provided as photocopies, can be digitized and sent to the patrons as email attachments, faxes, or mail to the patron’s home address. Patrons can also request an expedited loan process; the Libraries use commercial vendors to fill the request, in a service the Libraries call Document Express.

**Campus Document Delivery**
Current and retired Northern Illinois University faculty and staff can request that articles from journals held at the University Libraries be photocopied and delivered through campus mail, or scanned by library staff and sent electronically as an email. There is no cost to the recipient for this service. In FY01, 2,905 items were photocopied for faculty and staff. In FY01, 1,193 articles were delivered electronically to faculty and staff, the majority of whom were located at branch campuses.

**Course Reserves**
Both traditional paper files and books on reserve and electronic reserves are supported at NIU. Faculty and students are increasingly using Electronic Reserves, a service whereby the reserves staff scan up to 25 documents per class and convert them to PDF files, accessible using Adobe Acrobat Reader software. Each semester, each class with electronic reserves readings is assigned a unique URL through which the materials may be accessed. The
link is broken at the end of the semester. The Music Library is in the early stages of a pilot project to make audio class reserves available online.

While traditional paper reserves are still made available, the number of items on reserve has decreased over time, corresponding to the increase in E-Reserve use. For example, in fall 1996, 248 reserve lists consisting of 2,042 items were on reserve. In fall 2002, 128 paper reserve lists were submitted by faculty, with a total of 984 items. In contrast is the short and dramatic expansion of electronic reserves. In spring 1999, 11 classes had 90 items on electronic reserve; by Fall 2002, 92 class lists contained 1,255 electronic reserve items. Of course, the form for electronic reserves is available online.

**Regional History Center, University Archives, and Illinois Regional Archives**

Demand for the services of the Regional History Center, the University Archives, and the Illinois Regional Archives comes from students, faculty, staff, administrators, elected officials, and the general public. The state and the university mandate the preservation of historical materials in the Illinois Regional Archives and University Archives. Other users range from local middle school students doing research for history fair projects to genealogists from all over the country: approximately 50 percent of the researchers come from outside the university. The growth of the Internet has increased the number of inquiries from outside the immediate NIU service region.

**Specialized Library Services**

The faculty librarian and library technical assistant who actively develop, promote, and work in the program offer specialized library-use services for those with disabilities at NIU or in the larger community who wish to use library materials and other resources. Assistance is specifically tailored to the needs of the individual. Assistive equipment is available in a specialized study room. In FY02, 35 patrons used the service in 104 separate contacts. Usage varies from year to year.

**Assessment Projects**

In addition to the ongoing benchmarking initiatives mentioned above in which the library engages, four assessment projects were undertaken in the last three years: a collection analysis, a services survey, a website usability study, and bibliographic instruction surveys. Highlights of these projects are presented below.

In 2001-02, Northern Illinois University participated in a state-wide collections assessment project with 76 other Illinois academic libraries. Using the Online Computer Library Center Interactive Collection Analysis
System (OCLC iCAS) to create a CD-ROM that used data from either individual institution’s online catalog or the WorldCat database, the libraries produced a report that examines a collection by call number, within some 24 divisions, 500 categories, and 5,000 subjects. The Illinois Cooperative Collection Management Program, a consortium based at NIU, supported the development of the project. The first phase of the project resulted in a CD-ROM which contains broadly aggregated data on the numbers of holdings, unique holdings, and overlapping holdings in Illinois academic libraries. By selecting peer institutions with which to compare the University Libraries collections, NIU was able to get a sense of the quality of the Libraries’ collections. The results of the analyses comparing the quality of NIU’s collection in comparison to those at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Illinois State University are reported above.

In spring 2002, 730 faculty members and supportive professional staff completed an online survey about their satisfaction with functions in the library such as circulation, periodicals, the reference desks, and information delivery services. Ninety percent of respondents found service at the reference desks to be good or excellent; other service desks received high marks as well. Of those who used NIU’s interlibrary load service, 73 percent were very satisfied. Seventy-seven percent of reference service users reported that they were usually able to get the information they needed, and 97 percent of the patrons who interacted with the staff at the periodicals desk found them to be professional.

During FY02, a task force was formed to assess the usability and community perceptions of the University Libraries website. Sixty-two individual participants attempted to answer a series of 11 questions using the Libraries web site, and two focus groups met to discuss the website. Results indicated problems with the wording and organization of the website. As a result of the findings of the focus groups and usability testing, the website was redesigned and dramatically simplified.

In the spring of 2002, the NIU Public Opinion Laboratory assisted the library faculty in sending out a survey to 47 freshman composition instructors whose classes had received bibliographic instruction as part of English 104 or 105 classes. Twenty-seven faculty members responded, evaluating the instruction their classes had received in terms of amount, clarity, and relevance of the information presented during the instruction sessions. Twenty-three of the 27 (86 percent) found the instruction clear and useful or acceptable, and 22 of 27 (81 percent) rated the instruction excellent to fair. In written comments, technology, either that of the classroom or the design of the homepage, was cited as cause of most below-average responses. The creation of the libraries’ new technologically
enhanced instructional suite is expected to address many of the concerns expressed about the quality of instruction.

**Digital Projects**

The American Archives Digitization Project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is scanning a nine-volume compilation of Revolutionary War era pamphlets and handbills published in 1838. The *Mark Twain’s Mississippi Project*, also funded by the NEH, is planning a coordinated set of public programs examining this American region through the lens of Twain’s works. In addition, the Digitization Unit, with the help of the DeKalb County Community Foundation and the NIU Foundation, is supporting the digitization of local history materials at the Sycamore Public Library, Ellwood House Museum, and other cultural heritage institutions. Other projects include the *Beadle and Adams Dime Novel Digitization Project*, the *Horatio Alger Digital Repository*, *Getting the Message Out! National Campaign Materials 1840-1860*, and *Prairie Fire: The Illinois Country 1673-1818*.

**The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau**
The *Thoreau Edition* project housed at Founders Memorial Library since July 1999 was founded in 1966 as an attempt to recover the lost words of one of America’s most influential writers, and to answer the pressing need for a complete, definitive, annotated, and readily available edition of his writings, including his journal and correspondence. Twelve volumes of a projected thirty have been published by Princeton University Press to date. This project is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**THE DAVID C. SHAPIRO MEMORIAL LAW LIBRARY**

The *David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library* offers extensive support services to the college, university, and surrounding communities, and has a strong reputation as a service-oriented unit. The library provides one of the best ratios of library materials to students of any American law school.
Staffing, Organizational Structure, and Governance

A key strength of the Law Library is its staff. There are 12 full-time positions assigned to the library: five professional librarians and seven support staff. The professional librarians are all tenured or tenure-track faculty with academic rank, with the locus of tenure in the Law Library. Three of the five librarians have tenure. The director of the Law Library reports to the dean of the College of Law and is a fully participating member of the law faculty, although his tenure is in the Law Library. The librarians also play an active role in the college and serve on many college and university committees.

The seven support staff positions include a library secretary who serves as the library’s bookkeeper, secretary, and Web design/maintenance specialist; an acquisitions technician who assists in some cataloging activities; a cataloging technician; a serials clerk; a U.S. government documents and interlibrary loan technician; and a circulation manager who supervises student workers in the areas of circulation, reserve collection desk activity, collection maintenance and the delivery of media equipment to law school classrooms.

While the librarians and support staff do an excellent job in providing service, they are spread thin. The librarians share weekend reference duties and three share weekday evening reference duties. One concern involves the effects of the classification practices of the State Civil Service System on a small department like the Law Library. All Law Library support staff are civil service employees whose salaries depend on classification levels. The system classifies positions based on the perceived level of skill required for the most significant tasks performed, but no allowance is made for the greater range of skills required of employees who need many skills to perform many different tasks. While several employees in the Law Library have multi-faceted jobs their levels of compensation do not reflect this. Change to classification criteria is needed so that the multi-faceted duties and associated skill sets of operating staff in the Law Library are credited.

The Law Library maintains an active cooperative relationship with NIU Libraries, which manifests itself in a number of ways. The director of the Law Library is an active member of the University Libraries Advisory Committee, a group consisting of faculty from each of the colleges of the university. This committee serves as an information conduit and as a source of feedback to the University Libraries. The director of the Law Library and the University Libraries associate dean for collections meet informally to discuss purchases and matters of interest that affect both libraries. The associate director of the Law Library is a member of the implementation committee for the Voyager Integrated Library System and played an active part in helping to formulate the NIU library profile.
Facilities
The Law Library occupies 25,000 square feet of space in Swen Parson Hall. In addition, there is a 625 square foot faculty library/lounge in the faculty office suite. The library offers seating for 206 users, approximately two-thirds of the student body. Twenty-seven carrels in the north wing and 20 work stations in the south wing have electrical capacity. Two small study rooms are used for group study, student videotaping, and media viewing, and a 22-seat study room doubles as a classroom.

The facility, though very functional, does have some limitations, which include lack of space for additional shelving to accommodate collection growth and a physical plant that experiences water infiltration during heavy rains, due to deteriorating masonry. A number of steps have been taken to address the shelving problem since 1995. At that time, the stacks were more than 80 percent full. The rearrangement of existing library space added an additional 630 feet of shelving, and the Law Library was given access to closed stack storage made available by a move of the University's Regional History Center and Archives to Founders Memorial Library. The new closed stack storage space offers an additional 12,600 linear feet of shelving, and the library has moved 26,500 little-used volumes to closed stack storage.

While closed stack storage of little-used materials is helpful, it is not a substitute for a plan to accommodate the growth of a collection that is easily browsed by researchers. Several options are being explored. One option is compact shelving. One estimate indicates that shelving capacity could be increased by 90 percent through this technology. Pursuit of this option would increase the number of linear feet of shelving in the north wing from 6,048 to 11,491, enabling the law library to have an additional seven years of growth at current rates. Another option is to expand space; however, this option would require moving other offices and is not planned at this time.

The university has made some progress in addressing water infiltration problems, and fortunately, no leaks occur directly over book stacks. Spot repairs have been pursued more vigorously during the last several years, resulting in fewer leaks. In 2001, the university commissioned a study by an architectural firm experienced in stone repair to determine repair costs. The estimate came in at $1.3 million, well above what was estimated by university officials in 1999. It is unclear when the necessary funds will become available to complete this project.

Financial Resources
FY01 saw increased spending for library materials, equipment, and salaries that was more than 32 percent greater than the level of spending in FY96. The overall level of spending in FY96, $1,085,822, had earned the library a rank of 153 among the 180 American Bar Association-accredited law
schools. The increased level of spending for FY01, $1,436,553, gave the library the much improved rank of 139 of 185 ABA-accredited law schools. This level of spending reflects consistent improvement in spending levels for all intervening years. The overall level of spending for the Law Library was even greater in FY02: $1,480,904.

Collection development dollars spent in FY01 were 32.9 percent greater than in FY96, resulting in an improvement in ranking among the ABA-approved law schools from rank 141 in 1996 to rank 137 in 2001. Support for legal serials almost kept pace with legal serials inflation for this period. Figures supplied by The Bowker Annual Library and Book Trade Almanac indicate that prices for legal serials were 32.4 percent greater in 2001 than they were in 1996. The Law Library’s level of spending for legal serials in 2001 was 31.5 percent greater than it had been in 1996, so the library’s ability to purchase legal serials was not impaired during this period. The level of spending for serials in FY02 was even greater.

The library materials budget is adequate to support collection maintenance and growth when supplemented by the State of Illinois at five percent or greater. The state’s practice is to appropriate percentage increases to the materials budgets of state-supported libraries on an annual basis, with amounts varying depending on budget. In FY00, the materials budget was incremented 10 percent, in FY01, it was incremented five percent, and in FY02, it was incremented three percent, or an average of six percent. No increments were appropriated in FY03 and FY04. In FY04 the dean of the College of Law reduced the budget of the Law Library by $20,000 as a portion of the college’s budget rescission. The loss of the state appropriations has made it difficult to maintain the library’s serials subscription, the costs of which, like other library serials, have increased substantially in recent years.

**Collections**

The Law Library holds more than 222,000 volumes, including comprehensive collections of federal and state statutes and judicial opinions, as well as most major legal treatises, periodicals and loose-leaf services. As a federally designated depository, the library also receives selected government documents. The Law Library has a good basic research collection for most areas of American law, offering in-depth research-level coverage of 32 subject areas and study-level coverage of almost all other areas. Study-level coverage is offered for European Union, British, and international and comparative law. The collection is small compared to collections at other accredited law schools; however, the collection has been able to support the research and class-related needs of the college’s faculty and students. In a 2002 survey, faculty rated highly the quality of the collection in the areas in which they have research and teaching interests.
Technology Support
The Law Library has increasingly relied on electronic sources of information. Often electronic media provide better search capabilities than print, and they also enable law libraries to slow the growth or reduce the size of their print collections. Many databases have been licensed to Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw, the two largest legal database providers in the United States. These databases were once available without charges beyond the cost of the educational contracts with these two providers. However, many database providers licensing their products to Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw have modified their licensing agreements to provide access to products only if the law school also pays the database provider.

The library’s collection grows by approximately 4,000 volumes a year. While there has been much discussion that electronic availability of legal information is making law libraries less dependent on printed materials, this is true in law firm and corporate law libraries, but it is not true for academic libraries. Many of the materials that academic law libraries collect, most notably legal treatises, are not available in electronic format. Also, some database providers, like Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw, require that access to their databases be limited to law school students, faculty, and staff. The NIU Law Library serves as a resource for the entire community, so these restrictions make exclusive reliance on electronic databases difficult.

In 2002, a major change began in the use of automation in the law library. The State of Illinois contracted with Endeavor Information Systems to make its Voyager Integrated Library System available to all of the 44 member libraries of the Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization. The Voyager System is a complete and fully integrated library system containing modules for cataloging, serials control and acquisitions, interlibrary loan, circulation, and an OPAC. The Law and University Libraries share the system, but their individual cataloging and serials/acquisitions data are divided.

The Voyager System became operational in August 2002. As of September, the Law Library was utilizing the OPAC and the cataloging module. NIU will not utilize the inter-library loan module but following training in fall 2003, the library staff anticipate bringing up both the circulation and acquisitions/serials modules in calendar year 2004. The Law Library will continue to use the OCLC bibliographic utility to complement its Voyager cataloging and interlibrary loan activities. Users may also access the Library’s collection through the web-based Voyager OPAC and through a card catalog. It is anticipated that if most are satisfied with the Voyager OPAC, the card catalog will be removed.
The Law Library houses the law school's student computer laboratory. The laboratory is located in a 500 square foot room that currently has 14 computer work stations. All work stations have direct connections to the university's fiber optic backbone and are networked to a high-speed laser printer. All computers have Pentium IV processors and offer students access to Internet Explorer and Netscape web browsers, email, word processing, and the Microsoft Office Suite. Negotiations with Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw representatives have resulted in vendor-supplied T1 lines for exclusive direct high-speed connections to their databases.

In 2001, seven nodes for access to the NIU backbone by laptop computer were installed in the library at study tables near the Illinois collection, and cables and network cards are available for checkout at the circulation desk. This service has proven popular with law students. The college has begun exploring issues involving wireless technology. Seven computer workstations with attached printers in the public areas of the library are available for the library's users; these computers offer access to email, web, and CD-ROM resources, but are not available for word processing.

All library staff have networked computers at their desks that are directly connected to the Internet and have sufficient memory and processing speed for the tasks for which they are used. All computers are regularly upgraded.

**Instruction and Reference Services**

All professional librarians offer reference services. Through the use of staggered work schedules, they are available seven days a week for a total of 71 hours. Two law students, each holding a graduate assistantship, offer reference services on Sunday through Thursday evenings, from 7:30 p.m. to closing for a total of 20 hours. The only times that the Law Library is open when reference services are not available are Friday and Saturday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A vacant position in the Law Library was filled in 2000 by an additional public services librarian, bringing the total number of librarians whose primary duty is to provide assistance to library patrons from two to three. This enabled the library to greatly increase the number of hours that professional librarians are available to serve the public. In addition to reference support, the library staff also assist with media support; support for computer applications, including the Blackboard® class instructional system; and legal research instruction.

**Interlibrary Loan Service**

The Law Library offers interlibrary loan service for faculty and students, receiving requests for library materials by mail, fax, or the Ariel system. The Law Library maintains cooperative relationships with other academic law libraries located in the Midwest, primarily through participation in two consortia, the Mid-American Law School Library Consortium (MALS LC)
Other Library Services
The Law Library provides several current awareness services to faculty in the college. It routes loose-leaf services, newsletters, journals, and other materials; notifies faculty of newly received books in their areas of interest; and makes available the electronic SmartCILP (Smart Current Index to Legal Periodicals), Legal Scholarship Network, and BNA email notification services. The library also provides photocopies of periodical articles to the law faculty upon request, and maintains reserve collection services for college classes.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY MUSEUM

The Anthropology Museum was founded in 1965 for the purpose of supplementing the teaching resources of the faculty in the NIU Department of Anthropology. Artifacts and material collected have reflected the needs of the faculty, and include osteological material in the form of casts and models of humans and primates, archaeological type specimens of stone tools and arrowheads, and ethnological artifacts from societies studied by faculty members in the department. Over the years the collection has grown with contributions from the anthropology faculty, from faculty in other departments of the university, and from members of the surrounding communities. The museum has supplementary materials such as slides, photographs, and audiotapes. These materials are placed on display and are used as a resource in teaching at NIU and in the community.

The director of the museum maintains the collections, curates exhibits, raises funds for the facilities, provides educational programs for surrounding public schools, and teaches a 400-level course on museum methods at NIU. Some of the more routine work of the museum is carried out by work-study students, which provides them with the opportunity to learn some basic skills associated with museum work.

The physical facilities of the museum consist of an exhibit hall in the Stevens Building, which is approximately 2500 square feet, plus collections storage and office and workshop space in the basement of Cole Hall of approximately 2800 square feet. The Stevens Building museum exhibit space is open to the public five days a week from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the school year. Work-study students act as attendants. Admission to the museum is free. Records of visitors have only been kept since spring semester 2002; on average approximately 100 visitors per month come to
the museum. Funding for exhibits is sought from sources on the campus or in the community.

The museum's exhibits consist of permanent and temporary displays. Most recently there were displays on Neanderthals, primates, bone diseases, mastodons in the Ice Age, and cave paintings of early Homo sapiens. An area of temporary exhibits included textiles from Timor and Indonesia, and another on Native American Lakota Sioux featured parfleche examples and clothing with quill and bead work.

Of the collections gathered since 1965, the museum holds some 5,500 ethnographic artifacts, primarily of recent origin. Of this amount approximately 20 percent of the pieces are textiles; the remainder are three-dimensional objects. The majority of this material is associated with cultures in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific; the Southwest and Plains Native Americans are also well represented. A sampling of artifacts from Africa and Central and South America, Alaska, and Greece can be found in the collection as well. Of archaeological material, the museum collection owns approximately 50,000 pieces consisting of stone tools, projectile points, and pottery shards from the state of Illinois and the Southwest United States. Lastly, the museum maintains an osteological collection of over 50,000 human and animal skeletal pieces.

The museum loans artifacts to other museums for exhibits; objects of lesser value are loaned to schools in the surrounding community. The museum maintains contacts with schools in the DeKalb and Sycamore area, and provides exhibits for special events or classroom talks with artifacts brought along as examples. Some community colleges in the northwest Illinois region prevail upon the Anthropology Museum to provide small exhibits for libraries or cases in hallways with an educational theme for such occasions as Black History month or a Southeast Asian Symposium. School groups also regularly visit the museum, and the exhibits are visited frequently by NIU students in anthropology classes who wish to examine specimens discussed in their courses.

THE BLACKWELL HISTORY OF EDUCATION MUSEUM

The mission of the Blackwell Museum is to promote interest in the history of education. The focus of the museum is not merely on the curriculum used in early schools, but also the wider, agricultural community that sustained small schools. The museum proper is located in the lower level of Gabel Hall.

The acquisition and reconstruction of the Milan Township One-Room Schoolhouse was a major addition to the Blackwell Museum. The primary
goal of the schoolhouse is to provide a resource for the study of one-room, rural education. The school was reconstructed on campus in 1999 and is located on Annie Glidden Road. It is open to scholars of education and to local school groups, with which it is quite popular.

The Blackwell Museum started an endowment fund to help defray the cost of maintaining and running the Milan Township Schoolhouse. Besides the schoolhouse, the museum owns approximately 15,000 books dealing with education: textbooks, teacher preparation manuals, and reference books, among others. The museum also owns several thousand artifacts, including the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) collection of antique audio-visual equipment. At present, the museum collections must be accessed in person, but the museum is in the process of re-cataloguing its collections in order to provide a searchable list on its website. Current research initiatives at the Blackwell Museum include an oral history of teachers and students of one-room schools, the Emma Willard papers project, and an annotated bibliography of the books that have most influenced education throughout the years.

THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

The dual roles of the Northern Illinois University Art Museum are to contribute significantly to the university’s educational curricula, and to provide opportunities for art education and cultural enrichment to the people of the northern Illinois community. The NIU Art Museum extends the university’s commitment to excellence into the realm of the visual arts by promoting the understanding and appreciation of visual art in general, and that of contemporary art in particular. The museum accomplishes this objective by mounting a balanced program of professional exhibitions and projects that are augmented by written educational materials, gallery talks, artists’ lectures, panel discussions, symposia and other related activities. Principal goals of the museum are to increase visual literacy and to enliven the connections between the visual arts and other arenas of human experience by offering opportunities for both contemplation and intellectual adventure.

First created as an academic unit within the College of Visual and Performing Arts in 1989, the NIU Art Museum consists of two separate galleries, the Altgeld Gallery on the NIU campus and the Chicago Gallery located in downtown Chicago. The NIU Art Museum exhibitions and projects in both DeKalb and Chicago feature artwork in a variety of media by diverse artists. Mindful of, and in support of our multicultural society, the museum staff actively seek works by artists of different nationalities, races, ages, and social/political viewpoints. These two venues serve
somewhat different purposes and audiences, and therefore have slightly different missions.

**Staffing**
The Art Museum staff is definitely its greatest asset. With four full-time supportive professional staff members, the museum typically mounts eight to ten exhibitions a year. The staff consists of the museum director who reports to the dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts; an assistant director; a preparator; and a director of the Chicago Gallery. All staff members have extensive museum experience, and the museum director is active in several professional museum associations and has served on both national and regional boards. The staff are aided by one graduate assistant and four to six student workers annually.

**Financial Resources**
The museum’s current non-personnel budget is less than $11,000 per year. Approximately one-third of the budget supports basic operations, leaving approximately $8,000 with which to supply quality programming in two separate venues each year. This modest amount is used to cover exhibition preparation, shipping, professional art moving, announcement card printing and mailing, public relations and marketing, equipment, tools, paint, and office supplies. The museum currently has no funds for the maintenance of its permanent collection.

Over the last eight years the museum has received more than $100,000 in exhibition support from the Illinois Arts Council. These critical annual grants have, at times, more than doubled the museum’s programming resources for the year. The museum’s reliance on an outside agency for such substantial support is precarious, particularly now as state budget cuts are threatening the existence of the Illinois Arts Council.

**The Collections**
The NIU Art Museum has a relatively small permanent collection of contemporary art. Numbering slightly over 1,000 pieces, 90 percent of the collection consists of works on paper, primarily contemporary prints. All the works in the permanent collection have been received as gifts: the Art Museum has never had a budget for the acquisition of art.

The Art Museum is closely affiliated with the NIU Center for Burma Studies and houses many of the objects in the Burmese Art Collection. The Burma Collection consists of secular and sacred objects dating from the 11th through 20th centuries. It is one of the best collections of Burmese art in the U.S., if not in the world. The museum staff works closely with the curator of the Burma Collection to exhibit selections from the collection on a regular basis.
The museum is also loosely affiliated with the NIU Historical Scenic Collection of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. The relationship between the NIU Art Museum and the Opera Collection, which has its own curator and is housed off campus, needs to be more clearly defined, especially as its curator is scheduled to retire within the next three years.

**Special Initiatives**

While Altgeld Hall, the main gallery of the museum, has been closed for several years to allow for extensive renovation and restoration, the NIU Art Museum has been engaged in an innovative program entitled Museum without Walls. This program considered the entire campus and its surrounding community as potential exhibition space. During this “wall-less” phase, the museum presented art installations, projects, and exhibitions in various public spaces. These art (ad)ventures were all developed, designed, and produced in alliance with NIU and community “Partners in Art,” and were intended to build community allies and audiences. One of the main objectives of the program was to challenge local audiences to expand their perceptions regarding contemporary art by intentionally blurring the divisions between art and non-art, artists and non-artists.

During the past four years, the NIU Art Museum used this program to partner with The City of DeKalb, the DeKalb Park District, Main Street DeKalb, and the DeKalb County Farm Bureau, as well as with the Fine Arts Committee of the Campus Activity Board (an NIU Student Association group), the NIU Archives, and the NIU Departments of Art, Geography, and Geology and Environmental Geosciences. Within this period the museum and its partners have created a three-story high mural in downtown DeKalb that reflects the history of the city, a 57-foot-wide brick labyrinth and memorial garden in an underused city park, a large temporary sculpture on campus, and several storefront installations in downtown DeKalb. The “Museum without Walls” program has received extensive financial support from outside agencies for these projects and been very effective in opening up channels of communication between the NIU Art Museum and varied university and community groups.

**The Altgeld Gallery**

The Altgeld Gallery in DeKalb embraces the university’s teaching mission, and strives to integrate its exhibitions with the university’s curricular goals in various academic programs. The gallery concentrates its resources on providing the university and the regional community with high quality visual arts experiences not usually available in the area, and on developing supporting programs that expand awareness and knowledge of the visual arts. By making the Altgeld Gallery’s exhibitions and programs available and
of interest to the general public, the Art Museum significantly strengthens the university's public service agenda.

After being closed for extensive renovations, the NIU Art Museum is scheduled to move back into Altgeld Hall in spring 2004. Approximately 5000 square feet on the first floor of Altgeld Hall have been specifically designed for the NIU Art Museum and will allow for three separate galleries as well as office and storage space for the permanent collection. The new office and storage space, although adequate for now, unfortunately does not allow for any expansion of either staff or the collection.

**The Chicago Gallery**
The Chicago Gallery, which was established in 1985, is an outreach unit for both the Art Museum and Northern Illinois University as a whole. This gallery was founded with the intent of strengthening ties between NIU and the Chicago community. As the primary audience of the Chicago Gallery is generally more familiar with contemporary art, the museum uses this space to present contemporary exhibitions that explore complex theoretical concepts. Moreover, as a non-profit venue located in the midst of a commercial gallery district, the NIU Chicago Gallery strives to present exhibitions that are either inherently non-commercial —such as highly conceptual work and/or installations —and to represent artists whose work would not normally be seen in the surrounding commercial venues. The Chicago Gallery also serves to represent the students, faculty, and educational programs of NIU to Chicago audiences by exhibiting the work of master of fine arts students every summer, and the work of the School of Art faculty biannually.

After a successful nine years in its original location, the NIU Chicago Gallery moved across the street to larger and more visible quarters in 1994. Located in the heart of the River North gallery district, the new venue consists of 5000 square feet, of which more than 3,000 square feet are used as exhibition space. With the opening of new space in Altgeld Hall, both gallery spaces will have museum-quality environmental controls, adequate security systems, and will be accessible to those with disabilities.

**The Jack Olson Memorial Gallery**
According to its mission statement, the Jack Olson Memorial Gallery is a teaching gallery within the School of Art. The exhibited work and other scheduled activities are linked directly to the curriculum and educational objectives of the school and the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Currently, the assistant director of the NIU Art Museum manages the scheduling of the gallery and oversees the installations and maintenance of the gallery. Museum staff chair the Gallery Advisory Committee. The museum staff and student assistants install, guard, and deinstall any
professional exhibitions, while various art student groups, under supervision of a School of Art faculty advisor, coordinate the student shows. When the NIU Art Museum reopens in Altgeld Hall after renovations are complete, full direction of the Olson Gallery will return to the School of Art and may be coordinated by a faculty member from the School of Art.

The Olson Gallery, located on the 2nd floor of the Visual Arts Building, is approximately 2800 square feet with 175 running feet of permanent wall space and an additional 50 to 100 feet of wall space on moveable walls. The gallery is a locked, alarmed facility with track lighting. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system, however, cannot be controlled from within the gallery.

An annual budget of $8,000 for the Olson Gallery is provided by the School of Art from its operational funds. Approximately half of the money is spent on publicity and exhibition receptions. The other half pays for student guards for the professional shows, a luncheon for high school jurors and volunteers in conjunction with the Annual High School exhibition, transporting artwork, and facility maintenance.

Four exhibitions are held during each of the fall and spring semesters: two professional exhibitions and six student group exhibitions. Summer exhibition slots are available to display work of individual master of fine arts students and the College of Visual and Performing Arts Community School Summer Camp. The gallery is wheelchair accessible, free, and open to the public. Gallery hours are generally 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and by appointment.

The School of Art Graduate Gallery
The School of Art Graduate Gallery provides space for students’ capstone exhibitions, either as visual theses or visual presentations. Students are required to do a visual exhibition and provide research documentation as partial completion of the master of fine arts degree program. Degree candidates for the M.A. degree program in Art have the option of a visual presentation, exhibition, or written thesis. The exhibitions, for which slides are made, also allow for program evaluation over time. The graduate program coordinator for the School of Art oversees the Graduate Gallery.

The gallery is located on the second floor of Jack Arends Hall on the NIU east campus. The space occupies approximately 560 square feet, with dedicated gallery track lighting. A nearby storage area contains equipment, model stands, display cases, and materials made available for the installations. As many as 12 exhibitions are held per semester. Each exhibit runs from one to two weeks. As partial fulfillment of the degree
requirements, the students at their own expense install their own shows. Operational funding for the Graduate Gallery is primarily limited to facilities maintenance.

**The Holmes Student Center Gallery**

According to the mission statement of the Campus Activities Board, the purpose of the Holmes Student Center Gallery is to “give NIU students the opportunity to (a) show their art in a professional setting in the Holmes Student Center and Gallery Lounge through an ongoing series, (b) program special art events corresponding with the interest of the student body, (c) assist the Curator of the Student Association Art Collection in working towards a more advanced security system that will ensure protection of the Student Association Art Collection.” This gallery consists of approximately 99 feet of wall space on the west wall of the first floor of the center.

The annual budget for the gallery is $8,300, appropriated by the NIU Student Association. Half of this budget is dedicated to maintaining the Student Association Art Collection. The Student Association Permanent Art Collection consists of approximately 250 pieces. Several of the pieces can be viewed on the second and third floors of the Founders Memorial Library and in various areas of the Holmes Student Center and the Campus Life Building.

Maintenance of the gallery is coordinated between the Holmes Student Center and Campus Activities Board, whose advisor manages the gallery. Exhibits occur over a period of nine months during the regular school year, and last for two weeks. Student artists put on 16 shows; two additional shows are juried events sponsored by other campus units, including the Center for Black Studies. While the gallery is currently working on a more precise process to determine the amount of traffic it attracts, estimates are that on average, 25 persons per day view the various shows, a total of about 885 per year.

**EVALUATION**

The libraries, museums, and galleries support the teaching, research and artistry, and service and outreach missions of the university. These resources are well-matched to the academic areas offered by the university.

The University Libraries’ and the Law Library’s collections continue to support adequately the university’s mission of teaching, research, and service. The collections are both broadly based and specialized, and, as would be expected in a large institution, there is variation in the comprehensiveness of the holdings across disciplines. Collections range from satisfactory to outstanding.
These units have maximized their resources through consortia, effective use of appropriate technology, and strong histories of grant procurement and donations. The staffs of these units are clearly an exceptional resource serving faculty, staff, students, and members of the broader NIU community.

The constraints to these units fall into two major, but not unrelated, categories: finances and facilities. The budgetary challenges faced by the State of Illinois, coupled with extraordinary increases in the costs of some types of library materials, have resulted in many periodical titles having to be eliminated from the University Libraries’ and the Law Library’s collections. The impact of these factors have somewhat been mitigated by materials being made available through technology, document express, and interlibrary loan; however, there is a loss of that opportunity for serendipitous discovery while browsing through print journals.

Limited deferred maintenance and remodeling money is a concern for the Law Library, which also has need for expansion. To some extent the need for space has been mitigated by the allocation of space vacated by the University Archives and Regional History Center. Some of the museums lack adequate storage space to house their collections. Additionally, as is often the case with paper collections such as maps and musical scores, deterioration of the materials is a threat without proper treatment, storage, and, in some cases, restoration.

The galleries and museums provide opportunities for faculty and students to display their works in professional settings. They also bring others, such as patrons and school children, to the campus or to the Chicago Gallery to see a slice of NIU. The libraries, galleries, and museums are an integral part of campus life and add a very enriching component to the university. As resources become available, there are many opportunities for these facilities and programs to provide even more benefits to the university and the region.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes:

- a physical plant that supports effective teaching and learning
- academic resources and equipment (e.g., libraries, electronic services and products, learning resource centers, laboratories and studios, computers) adequate to support the institution’s purposes
Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

i. evidence of support for the stated commitment to the fine and creative arts through provision of sufficient human, financial, and physical resources to produce creative endeavors and activities.

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution.

d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution's continuance.

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

e. relationships with other institutions of higher education conducted ethically and responsibly; appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions.

f. appropriate support for resources shared with other institutions.

h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations.
TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

In the last decade technology, in general, has changed all campuses across the country. During this time, Northern Illinois University has made a concerted effort to keep up with the challenges posed by technological advances by making significant investments in new technology and additional support services for instruction, research, and administration. The most significant impacts technology has had on campuses are the amount and speed of access to content and the speed of communications between and among students, faculty, staff, and the community at large. Staying connected to students is key to the university’s long term strategy and viability, and this can only be done in an efficient and timely manner with technology.

Technology support begins with Information Technology Services. Information Technology Services reports to the vice president for administration and university outreach. It provides overall technology leadership for academic and administrative resources on campus, with direct control over central computing, telecommunications, networking, printing, copying, general access computer laboratories, and information systems support for the university. Acting as the campus chief information officer, the associate vice president for information technology provides direction, leadership, planning, management, and coordination in applying information technology to all aspects of the institution’s educational, administrative, research, and service activities. The associate vice president receives direction from the Computing Facilities Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from all major constituencies on campus, the Council of Deans, and the Administrative Operations Cabinet.

The university’s technology support rests upon a mixed model combining both central information technology support with distributed, college-based information technology support. The university has a strong central staff providing the production environment necessary for reliable, cost-effective, accountable systems for the campus. The staff attends and participates in higher education forums, particularly EDUCAUSE, NASULGC, and ACUTA and has adopted “best practices” in several areas. Distributed or college-based computing environments have staff with a discipline-specific focus who work directly with the faculty, staff, and students of their college.

In the past, high speed data networks were considered to be a luxury; today they are a necessity. During the last decade, while the campus was rebuilding its physical infrastructure, telecommunications rebuilt the copper cable plant and added fiber to all buildings on campus. NIU net, the campuswide data network, is a major strength on campus. Every residential room on campus is connected to this network. The networking technology...
and backbone are state-of-the-art gigabit Ethernet with over 10,000 high-speed network connections available anywhere on campus. The network supports all common standards and the staff is testing and ready to implement new technologies as soon as standards are adopted. Wireless connections have been added to many student facilities and some classrooms. A number of administrative, educational and residential buildings are supported by category three cabling and some must rely on DSL for their network access because of structural limitations of the buildings that make it cost prohibitive to add higher speed access. In the long term all of these facilities will need to be upgraded. The residence hall analog CATV system needs to be replaced with digital, high definition access to remain competitive. There is a significant opportunity with the upgrade of this system to also upgrade the residence hall units that are now on DSL to high-speed Ethernet. Widespread deployment of cellular services continues to grow quickly and full third generation (i.e., fully digital) technology will be added during 2003.

The university's administrative and student data systems are a mixture of purchased and custom developed systems that have been extensively modified and integrated. As a testament to how well the custom development systems were done, some of them have lasted over thirty years. It was clear as the university approached the turn of the century that all of these systems would have to be replaced. The days of writing one's own system are gone as system development is too expensive and time consuming. The problem faced was that no vendor had yet built the web-based student services system required to maintain a leadership role for campus technology. While it was felt that enterprise resource planning systems (ERP) were the most desirable options, the $50 million, do-it-all approach was not a viable one for NIU. After a lengthy and exhaustive process, PeopleSoft was picked as the vendor most likely to have the systems desired, when needed. The financial system was the most problematic for the century roll-over, so it was converted first. After the successful and under-budget conversion of the financial system, the human resource modules were installed. These two projects allowed the university time to retrain the technical staff to the new technology and also get the users accustomed to packaged systems. Most importantly, it gave the vendor time to develop a truly web-based system for student services. The university is now ready to fund and implement the student service modules in a portal environment. As state universities continue to face increasing budget constraints, student self-serve systems are one answer to keeping administrative costs down and allowing students to communicate with the university on their own terms.

General access, classroom, and specialty computer laboratories have played a significant role in providing access to students. The addition of smart
classrooms has also met with success for both faculty and students. The university operates over 2,000 networked computers in various laboratories across campus. Students have access to printing in all laboratories and copiers throughout campus. There is a major upgrade in process to tie the student OneCard to both the copiers and the printers. More than 100 teaching spaces support various types of smart classroom technology. Media Services has refocused its services from maintaining overhead projectors and other equipment to maintaining smart classrooms and assisting faculty with graphic enhancement to their online content.

In the content areas, the library continues to provide leadership in digital access to materials both within its walls and from the network. The Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center provides significant training and support for faculty to move their course content to the digital arena and to incorporate their materials with the latest technologies. E-Learning Services, a unit of University Outreach, also works with faculty to convert their material to an online interactive format. In order to reduce the student training necessary to access class information and discussion, Blackboard® was selected by the faculty as the standard way for delivering and managing courseware on the Internet. During the first year of an open “test project,” approximately 30 percent of the student and faculty populations tried to use it. The fall 2003 usage figures showed 789 course sections in which the Blackboard® technology is being used. There are 460 faculty and staff who are active users on the Blackboard® system, with 13,328 students enrolled in one or more courses on Blackboard®. This has quickly become a well-integrated use of technology in delivering the academic mission of the institution.

University Outreach contains all of the university services necessary to connect the university to the region. The support group handles all of the technology needs at NIU’s regional centers where credit classes are offered in the evenings and business training and conferencing are offered during the day. All facilities support voice, data, and video over IP back to the central campus.

**CENTRAL TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT**

Central technology support is provided by six units with distinct, well-defined areas of responsibility. They are the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, Information Technology Services, Media Services, Testing Services, the University Libraries, and University Outreach.
Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center

In August 1998 the Faculty Development Office was reorganized and renamed the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center to provide comprehensive support for the faculty and academic supportive professional staff. Prior to 1998, the Faculty Development Office focused mostly on providing grants to individual faculty and supportive professional staff to help them pursue professional development opportunities outside the university. Since its reorganization, the center has grown from three to seven full-time professional positions. Their goals have been to enrich NIU’s academic environment through activities that facilitate and promote effective teaching, support professional development, stimulate research and scholarly activities, and encourage the integration of instructional technologies. These goals have been met by conducting workshops on teaching and technology integration, arranging for outside speakers on teaching related issues, providing individual and small group consultations, and arranging for mentors for new and continuing faculty.

Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services is the largest of the technology support units in the university. Its charter is “to implement, operate, maintain, and continuously upgrade the university’s communications and computer systems, infrastructure, applications, document and technology services.” The scope of responsibility for Information Technology Services is the entire university. Its role is to be the technology leader for the university’s students, faculty, staff, alumni, annuitants, and educational community, and for the region. The goal of the unit is to surround students, faculty, and staff with advanced technologies, enabling them to be productive in their professional and community roles. Through people, processes, and performance, Information Technology Services provides information technology customer support and solutions, and partners and collaborates with distributed information technology personnel to share vision and resources that ensure optimum delivery of information technology resources and services. Information Technology Services is comprised of the following units: Customer Support Services, Document Services, Enterprise System Services, and Information Services.

Customer Support Services is the primary customer interface unit of Information Technology Services, employing 59 full-time staff and, on average, 180 student workers per semester. Through various service groups, it provides reliable support for computing and telecommunication services including problem resolution, hardware and software installation, application support, customer education, and laboratory management. Specifically, Customer Support Services supports and maintains 35 computer laboratories with approximately 1,000 computers and 63 smart classroom podia. It develops and delivers short courses grouped in seven
general categories: communications, computing, database, presentation/publishing, spreadsheets, statistics, and web publishing/word processing. Customer Support Services provides trained help desk staff to handle calls for computing hardware and software support as well as for telecommunications hardware and software support. Other technical service units both inside and outside of Information Technology Services depend on Customer Support Services to provide front line support services. The staff receives and handles more than 1,000 calls per day at their busiest times. Customer Support Services' most recent major accomplishment was to upgrade all student computing laboratories to the Windows XP operating system in summer 2002.

There are currently more than 33 computers with adaptive technology in 26 lab locations. Information Technology Services currently provides two options for students with vision impairments: WindowEyes®/ZoomText®, and JAWS®/MAGic®. Over the past year Information Technology Services has begun to phase out the WindowEyes option so resources can be dedicated to maintaining JAWS®, the screen reader of choice recommended by the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services. Because the transition from one to the other can be difficult, Information Technology Services offers one-to-one training on JAWS.

The adaptive technology hardware includes 21 monitors that facilitate screen enlargement for students with low vision and scanners with OmniPage® 11 optical character recognition. Optical character recognition allows printed text to be converted to a digital file that can be read aurally by screen readers. This adaptive technology helps visually impaired students, those with learning disabilities, or anyone who needs to “hear” the words rather than read them visually.

In summer 2003, Information Technology Services introduced NexTalk®, text telephony software by NXI Technologies, in all student computing laboratories. This software enables students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use computers in NIU laboratories to communicate with others using TTY technology. This adaptive technology converts analog input to digital using a chat-type medium.

In efforts to accommodate students who use standard wheelchairs, Information Technology Services provides height-adjustable tables and chairs in every computer laboratory. Most buildings are now also accessible with automatic door openers and ramps.

The university is required to have its information on the World Wide Web accessible by students with disabilities. On February 14, 2002, then-Governor Ryan asked that all Illinois state agencies follow the guidelines set
forth by the Section 508 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act. In spring 2003, Information Technology Services began to include A-Prompt®, a Section 508 compliance checker, in the base image of all student computer laboratory machines. A-Prompt is an important tool for web developers who create information intended for the general public.

NIUtel, the telecommunications arm of Information Technology Services, provides and supports complete data and telephony communications services. These services include the full complement of custom local area signaling service features on the university’s 12,000-line central office communications system; unified messaging; voice activated dialing; digital, analog, and voice over IP services; and mobile communications services. All residential and business offices are provided with custom local area signaling and voicemail services as part of the base service. Information Technology Services has also implemented a communications customer-partnering program to enhance communications between individual departments and telecommunications for consulting and providing technology solutions for customer needs.

Document Services has been serving NIU faculty, staff, and students since 1952. The Document Services organization is comprised of 30 full-time staff who provide high quality printing and finishing services at competitive prices. Document Services provides expertise in state of the art technology involving the design and layout of documents for printing and/or digital output, offset and digital printing, finishing and mailing fulfillment, and convenience copying, printing and faxing. This unit also provides central software licensing, copying, and distribution to keep software costs at a minimum.

Enterprise Systems Support is responsible for the installation, operation, maintenance, and upgrades of the computing resources located in NIU’s central information processing facility. These hardware and software resources include the university’s mainframes, minicomputers and UNIX systems, centrally managed file servers, electronic mail servers and storage, and their respective operating systems. This organization employs 43 full-time staff who provide network security services, network management, student laboratory development, and wireless network services.

Enterprise Systems Support provides user log-on identifications to all students, faculty, and staff at the time they become affiliated with NIU. Computer operators are available to handle data processing questions 24 hours a day, six days a week. System availability and other important information are provided through system messages and email notification to campus network administrators and users.
The 49 full-time staff of Information Services provide information or data processing services to each of the university's four divisions. These services focus on the support of administrative applications and systems and on the development of new and replacement systems. Priorities of Information Services are to leverage application technology so that the business and academic strategic priorities of the university are realized, and to align Information Services with the university's strategic business and academic initiatives.

In addition, the Information Services Campus Web Services Team, developed in 2001, addresses the growing need for web services support. The mission of the team is to support the university's broader initiatives through use of web-based technology, thereby enhancing the university's value to its many audiences. These audiences include students, faculty, staff, prospective students, alumni, academic colleagues and researchers outside the university, media, visitors, neighbors, and the general public. The team provides guidelines for building web pages and websites, web consulting services to the campus community, develops content management tools, and provides instruction.

Each division of the university has a technical team that supports administrative applications. Within the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, the academic services technical team's goal is to provide, facilitate, and promote excellent computer service to administrative computer users within the Office of Registration and Records and its related units. The systems they support include the Financial Aid Management System and the Student Information System, as well as the subsystems that support admissions, registration, classroom scheduling, degree audit, grade reports, transcripts, and graduation evaluation. Recent upgrades to these systems include telephone registration; web-based registration, grade reports, and data from the Office of the Bursar; admissions and recruitment tracking; degree audit (DARS); course applicability system (CARS); financial aid; and the online application for admission to NIU.

The student services technical team provides, facilitates, and promotes excellent computer service to administrative computer users within the units reporting to the vice provost for student affairs. This team manages the installation of personal-computer vendor software, such as MS Office, GroupWise, and Netscape, for the units in student affairs. They also provide consultation and install personal computer and mainframe software, such as the Residential Management System for Student Housing and Dining Services and PyraMED for University Health Services. Systems supported include the CBORD housing management system, the CARES career and resources enterprise system, a patient tracking system for
University Health Services, and a case tracking system for the Judicial Office.

The business systems team’s mission is to provide, facilitate, and promote excellent computer service to administrative computer users within the Division of Finance and Facilities. The team provides computer services in the areas of Accounts Receivable, Blackboard®, e-Transaction (OneCard), Campus Parking Services, and the PeopleSoft enterprise financial management system, implemented in March 1999.

The general administration technical team provides, facilitates, and promotes excellent computer service to administrative computer users within the Division of Administration and University Outreach. The team provides computer service support for the PeopleSoft enterprise human resource system, implemented in July 2001; the development and maintenance of in-house personal computer applications for salary range reporting; and Civil Service Testing Administration.

Information Services has a number of plans for improvements and enhancements of systems and services. A process will be created in Blackboard® to support multi-section courses, enabling faculty to maintain one course site instead of multiple sites for multi-section courses. Testing has begun to determine the feasibility of implementing the Campus Community functionality of Blackboard®. The Blackboard® Course Management System itself was upgraded to Version 6.09 in June 2003. This upgrade contains significant improvements for managing the online grade book and the virtual classroom. The improved virtual classroom will enhance the environment for those courses using distance learning technologies. In addition, web interfaces are needed for existing systems. This will be accomplished by upgrading the Financial Management System and the Human Resource Information and Payroll system to Version 8. In the future, students will be provided with a web portal and single sign-on capabilities to insure secure and easy access to all resources on campus.

Media Services

The Division of Media Services is a centralized production service unit with responsibilities for creating media in support of the teaching and research missions of the university. It consists of two units, Media Production and Technical Services, with a full-time staff of 40 who are assisted by a number of student workers and interns.

The Media Production unit is composed of professional video producers/directors, photographers, graphic designers, and imaging technicians responsible for the creation of video, still, and multi-media imagery for university use in teaching, research, and public affairs. Support is available
for all university departments and to individual faculty. Media products include analog and digital video, still photography, signage, displays, web design and multi-media, image duplication, digital media creation and transfer, and assistance with media planning and design.

The Technical Services unit is composed of electronics technicians and engineers responsible for the design, installation, and maintenance of the university’s more than 100 smart classrooms; lecture hall support; media equipment distribution; media equipment selection and purchase consultation; and technical support and maintenance of the Department of Communications’ Northern Television Center. The goals of the unit are to provide a wide range of professional, quality media that support the teaching and research missions of the university and to provide departments, faculty, and students with professional quality media products. They support the integration of technology into classroom instruction, improve the understanding of the effective use of media as a tool for research, and introduce new technology services to the NIU community.

Media Services improvement plans call for developing online help features tailored to individual smart classrooms, developing a campus advisory group to assist in the exploration of new service offerings, adding a video producer/director staff position, continuing to pursue new technologies that expand the range of departmental services, expanding the division’s online service offerings, and continuing its transformation from analog to digital services.

**Testing Services**
The Office of Testing Services supports the NIU community in all aspects of testing. The office has nine full-time employees who provide the NIU community with assistance in developing, administering, and scoring tests; reporting and using test results; and maintaining test files. The office scans approximately 500,000 response sheets per year and receives and processes in excess of 30,000 ACT and SAT scores.

The office is divided into four major service areas. Test Administration administers a variety of tests, primarily to NIU students, and also functions as a test administration center for national and state testing programs. Scanning and Data Processing scans and processes the answer sheets for all NIU classroom tests and examinations for those faculty who choose to use its services. In addition, it scans sheets for faculty, student, and administrative projects such as surveys and questionnaires. It also scans the forms for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness and the end-of-semester grade sheets used to generate grade records. Psychometric Services provides support in test validation research activities, as well as in other statistical,
research, and measurement functions. National Testing Programs is responsible for receiving, processing, and maintaining the test scores for such national testing programs as ACT, SAT, PRAXIS, CLEP, Advanced Placement (AP), and others.

The office has developed a test score database system that supports most of the test score entry, processing, reporting, research, and maintenance activities of the office with database access extended to other departments on campus. It has rewritten the New Student Testing Program software for the scanning and immediate reporting of placement and proficiency test results to students. This new software also transmits score updates automatically into the university’s TRACS registration system and the office’s database. It has also developed a procedure for the electronic transmission of classroom exam score results to faculty who use the office’s services.

Plans of the Office of Testing Services include acquiring/creating a secure web-based solution for reporting classroom test results to faculty. This innovation could eliminate the preparation of paper reports. The office also intends to assist the Office of Registration and Records in the selection and development of a new student database to improve two-way data sharing between the Office of Testing Services and the Office of Registration and Records, and to establish a larger testing laboratory to accommodate computer-based testing on a larger scale than the current six-computer workstation laboratory can accommodate.

**The University Libraries**
The primary mission of the *University Libraries* is to develop and maintain a research library that provides access to scholarly information and literature in support of undergraduate study, graduate study, professional education, and research. In the last decade, it has met this mission through staff commitment to the application of technology. Since 1992 the format of research tools has changed from CD-ROM-based to electronic formats available via the Internet. The conversion to Internet-based indices and abstracts began in 1996. In 2002 all major research tools in electronic format were made available to users through the library’s website. Also provided were access to web-based indices and abstracts that provide full-text articles; a method for remote authentication, so students, faculty, and staff can conduct library research anywhere, anytime; electronic versions of services, such as Ask-A-Librarian; the submission of article and book requests; the delivery of articles via email; and electronic course reserves.

In fall 2001, a smart classroom suite was installed in Founders Memorial Library, where the bulk of library instruction now takes place. The suite has three smart classrooms, two of which use the classroom management
program SynchronEyes. The largest room consists of 36 flat-screen computers for students, an instructor podium containing a server-level computer, a compact disc player, a DVD player, a videotape player, a cassette player, a Docucamera, and a satellite link. The room features a Smartboard, two projection screens, and three projectors. The second classroom features 10 flat-screen computers for students, an instructor podium containing a computer and compact disc player, a Smartboard, and one projector. The smallest classroom, used primarily for staff training or studies, offers six flat-screen computers.

The Digitization Unit employs three full-time staff members and 10 students on several projects currently in progress. The Abraham Lincoln Historical Digitization Project, initiated in 1998, funded by the Illinois State Library, Illinois Board of Higher Education, Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, produces the Lincoln/Net World Wide Web site. The Illinois Historical Digitization Project, funded by the Illinois State Library and Illinois Board of Higher Education, is currently digitizing and presenting historical materials from Illinois in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The American Archives Digitization Project, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is scanning a nine-volume compilation of Revolutionary War era pamphlets and handbills published in 1838. The Mark Twain's Mississippi Project, also funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is planning a coordinated set of public programs examining the Mississippi River region through the lens of Twain's works. In addition, the Digitization Unit, with the help of the DeKalb County Community Foundation and the NIU Foundation, is supporting the digitization of local history materials at the Sycamore Public Library, Ellwood House Museum, and other cultural heritage institutions.

University Outreach
Northern Illinois University has served the citizens, agencies, and communities throughout its service region for many decades. NIU has extended its mission into the region in countless ways by providing classes for working adults at regional sites, helping city planners assess public opinion on local issues, and offering technical assistance to social service agencies with limited resources, among others.

University Outreach, a unit within the Division of Administration and Outreach, was created in 2002 to provide leadership in creating support services for all campus units that provide services to the region. University Outreach has two technical support groups: the Centers Technical Support Group and eLearning Services. The Centers Technical Support Group consists of five full-time staff who provide first-line support for the laboratories and technical equipment at the university's regional
centers: NIU Hoffman Estates, NIU Naperville, and NIU Rockford. With the support of the central Information Technology Services group, all centers have voice, data, and video access to the campus. While the laboratories in the centers are available for student access in the evening, their daytime use is for business customers. The servers, laboratories, conference rooms, and video centers in the centers are dynamically set up to meet the needs of faculty and students, as well as the business customers who use these facilities for training and seminars.

eLearning Services provides a team of 12 experienced specialists in learning and technology who help faculty and businesses create high quality web-based courseware. The end product is learner-centered courses that are highly engaging, interactive, and effective. This support group specializes in online education, assessment, registration, and conferencing services.

**DISTRIBUTED TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT**

In addition to the central technology support described above, the seven academic colleges have technology services that support instructional needs and serve the students, faculty, and staff in their colleges.

**The College of Business**
The College of Business has a Technology Resource Group that currently consists of six full-time staff members who serve approximately 150 faculty and staff and 5,000 students. The group is a support, service, and consulting team available to faculty, staff, and students to assist with all facets of technology usage: computer laboratories and related hardware/software, network/Internet setup, web page development, computing hardware and software support, software training, and course-related technologies. The group operates nine servers to support the college's technology needs, and supports approximately 400 computers that are replaced on a three- to four-year cycle. Five computer laboratories in the college house more than 170 PCs and feature high speed laser printers.

In August 2002 the college relocated to Barsema Hall, a new world-class facility described as “essentially one big communications port.” With this move, the technological infrastructure of the college's programs is among the most advanced in the country. Barsema Hall is equipped to provide students with wireless access to the World Wide Web. Every fourth seat in every classroom is also hard-wired for Internet access. The classrooms are wired to allow faculty to project videos, documents, computer images, or the vast resources of the Internet. A sales training suite allows faculty to monitor simultaneously up to four groups of students conducting sales role play scenarios, as well as to tape each one of those sessions for later playback, analysis and critique. The setup rivals the best to be found in both
industry and on college campuses. The donation of funds to build Barsema Hall has moved the college from an adequate technology base to a state-of-the-art facility.

In addition, flat screen monitors posted throughout the building flash messages about classes, clubs, and activities throughout the day. A fully equipped video conferencing room facilitates collaboration with classes at other business schools around the country, enables meetings with industry representatives who are working on projects with students, and provides students with the potential of direct access to international experts unable to travel to DeKalb.

**The College of Education**
The College of Education first named a part-time technology director in the early 1990s. Today, in addition to a part-time director, technology support in the college is provided by a full-time technology support staff of three: an information systems manager, a technology support coordinator, and microcomputer support specialist; and several student workers. The director and the information systems manager serve as the primary instructors of a semester-long course for faculty called Integrating Technology into the Curriculum. The staff maintain six computer laboratories and a total of approximately 700 computers. They also operate and maintain the college's file servers and website, and assist faculty in developing their own websites. The staff provide services to more than 200 faculty and staff located in six buildings who serve the college's 5,000 students. The college provides each faculty member with a computer system from central funds to maintain parity across departments; replacement occurs on a three- to four-year cycle. To meet faculty needs, the staff installed an automated support request system, enabling more efficient tracking and handling of service requests.

The **Learning Center** houses a student computer laboratory where students have access to specialized educational software. Technology resources provided by the center include, but are not limited to, computers, printers, scanners, kiosks, classroom technologies, Internet resources, and other technology innovations. The center also provides student access to traditional technologies, such as laminating, cameras, and video equipment, and has equipment available for loan to faculty, staff, and students. In addition, the center provides technology access and support for others associated with the college and maintains the archives of the International Association for Educational Communications and Technology.

The college hosts and supports two distance education videoconferencing classrooms. Through a partnership with the Dukane Corporation, the college operates a state-of-the-art media distribution system, with a second system available for training and demonstration. Support for faculty users
is provided whenever classes are scheduled, both weekdays and on the weekends. The college also maintains and supports faculty use of more than a dozen smart classrooms in three buildings, and operates an intranet to support the internal operations of the college. The college has a need for all of its dedicated classrooms to be remodeled into smart classrooms.

The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
In 1995, the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology moved to a new state-of-the-art Engineering Building that includes seven smart classrooms, one distance learning classroom with full videoconferencing capabilities, 33 engineering and technology laboratories, and two general access computer laboratories that are specially equipped with 130 computers dedicated for use by engineering and technology majors. The college maintains its own computing operations center with a full-time technology staff of three: a computing systems manager and two full-time network technicians, and fourteen part-time student employees. The staff currently maintains approximately 600 computers and serves the college community of faculty, staff, and students that exceeds 1,660 individuals. Computing resources are purchased by the departments and upgraded approximately every two to three years. Technology support is provided via an online work order system with most requests handled within 48 hours. In addition, the college employs two full-time technicians to assist in the areas of machine operations/ maintenance and electronic equipment operations/ maintenance.

The College of Health and Human Sciences
The College of Health and Human Sciences has made significant progress in meeting its technology goals, which were established in the mid-1990s. The college has a faculty of 160 and a student population of approximately 2,200 enrolled in programs in six academic schools and departments who are served with technology support provided by three full-time staff members. This group supports over 300 personal computers, two laboratories and five servers. Online application training has been designed to help faculty and staff keep current with new applications as they enter the market. The college has designed and implemented jointly with the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, a 48-station computing classroom with SmartBoard that is widely used beyond the college. There is also a second lab specifically configured for the School of Nursing with 28 work stations. The college web server has recently been upgraded to handle the increasing volume of information being put online for students; this resource has become widely used within the college. Within the last year the college added more than 50,000 files, which brings this resource to more than 200,000 files. Group Policy was deployed within the network to send applications to users’ stations without staff physically visiting the station. This has saved hundreds of staff hours and reduced the
time for software additions and upgrades. Capacity has been added for student portfolio websites for class related projects. Remote desktop sharing has been implemented to allow support staff to access systems worldwide, providing quicker and more efficient services.

**The College of Law**
The College of Law operates from its facilities on the campus as well as from the Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic in Rockford. Technology support for more than 40 college faculty and staff and approximately 300 students is provided by two staff members and one graduate assistant. The college has two classrooms with network connections and provides a computer and projector on mobile cart for shared use. Faculty are increasingly using Blackboard® to enhance interaction between faculty and students and between and among students.

The College of Law Library houses the student computer laboratory. The laboratory is located in a 500 square-foot room that currently has 14 computer workstations. All networked computers have Pentium IV processors and offer students access to high-speed printing, web browsers, email, word processing, and the Microsoft Office Suite. Negotiations with Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw representatives have resulted in vendor-supplied T1 lines for exclusive direct high-speed connections to their databases.

The library has seven computer workstations with attached printers in the public areas of the library available for all users. These computers offer access to email, Web, and CD-ROM resources, but are not available for word processing. In 2001, seven laptop computers with network access were installed in the library. Cables and network cards are available for checkout at the circulation desk, and this service has proven popular with students enrolled in the college. The college has begun exploring the possibility of installing wireless technology in its facility.

Interlibrary document-sharing capabilities were greatly enhanced in 2001 with the purchase of an Ariel workstation and a high-speed document scanner. Requested documents are digitized using a high-resolution document scanner. The digital file is then converted by the Ariel software into a TIF image that is sent to the requesting library via the Internet. Upon receipt, the document is either printed or converted to a PDF file.

In Spring 2004 the college anticipates the opening of the Chessick Legal Skills Training Center, which will include two new classroom spaces dedicated to the college for technology-based instruction. These facilities will be designed to interconnect with existing networking capabilities in the college, and allow for the use of a variety of technologies in instruction. The technology courtroom will have the capacity of serving 30 students.
conveying the environment of a courtroom, while also providing the capability to reconfigure the furnishings to accommodate different instructional purposes. The technology courtroom will include flat-screen monitors for multiple viewing of evidence, computer and internet connectivity, touch screen control systems, and sound and video systems for additional capabilities in presenting evidence. The smart classroom will accommodate 40 students, and will provide state-of-the-art technological capabilities consistent with university smart classroom standards. Technology in the room will include a multimedia-based projection system as well as a network and power connection for each student station to interact with the College of Law network.

The college plans to standardize hardware, to develop a replacement schedule, to upgrade the 14 station laboratory, to provide power and wireless network access for students to use notebook computers in lecture halls, to add network connections in the library, and to increase faculty use of technology in teaching.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences consists of 17 departments and several research and support centers. Technology support at the college level is provided by three full-time and one part-time staff members who provide web page support and support for approximately 600 computer systems. Technology upgrades for faculty and staff occur on a four-year cycle based on a college-level plan. Faculty also have access to the university smart classrooms in DuSable Hall that are supported by Media Services, and make extensive use of Blackboard® features in their instruction. The freshman English program is taught exclusively in the university’s general-access computer laboratories, and requires the use of seven laboratories each semester to provide the technology to support more than 130 sections of English composition courses.

Because of the size and diversity of the college, many departments employ their own department-level technology staff to support specialized laboratories. The Department of Communication has, perhaps, the most complex technological support environment in the college because it teaches students to use several different types of technology across 10 different laboratory and/or studio environments. The Foreign Language Multimedia Learning and Training Center is among the most advanced of those in foreign language instruction in the world with 70 audio/video-enhanced workstations. The use of technology is further emphasized in foreign language instruction through a joint program with the College of Education. The Department of Mathematical Sciences uses more than 75 UNIX stations to carry out its instructional and research missions. Through a collaborative arrangement, the Department of Physics works with the
Fermi National Research Laboratory and Argonne National Laboratory in electronically mediated environments that support instruction and research. The Department of Computer Science runs several specialty servers, shares the use of general-access and computer-science laboratories, and utilizes the university’s S390 server to provide secure access for student work and administrative computing. This arrangement has provided significant access to a large server for student work, and lowered the overall cost to the university.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts

The College of Visual and Performing Arts has three schools: Art, Music, and Theatre and Dance, with more than 100 faculty and 1,700 students. The schools use seven large laboratories with 65 Apple computers and 73 Intel computers: the Media Laboratory, the Fine Art Studio Laboratory, the Visual Communications Studio Laboratory, the Interior Architecture Studio Laboratory, the Time Arts Studio Laboratory, the Music Computer Laboratory, and the Theatre Studio Laboratory. In addition, seven smaller specialty laboratories are in use, primarily for music applications. Ten classrooms have been upgraded to smart classrooms. Four faculty members help to operate and manage the curriculum-specific laboratories for special activities in music and art. Information Technology Services provides the support for and operates the large laboratories, and provides technical assistance to the faculty, staff and students on an as-needed basis.

EVALUATION

Providing technological resources and training is a crucial component of higher education today. NIU has been able to provide for and support the technological demands of the students, faculty, and staff. There are teaching and research areas that are technology intensive, and for the most part, the students, faculty, and staff have adequate technology; in many areas the technology resources are exemplary. Central information technology services provided in those areas common to most units makes for cost effectiveness, while the distributed information technology services model keeps the focus at the user level and is more responsive to specialized needs than a totally centralized system could be. The central unit engages in ongoing evaluations to determine the efficacy of its training programs for faculty and staff, hotline operations, and other services, and to improve its support for and effectiveness in meeting the needs of campus constituencies.

Technology is being used for its impact on student learning. This is evidenced through the explosive growth of Blackboard® use in the faculty’s development of online and blended courses. Faculty elect to use one or more of the features of Blackboard® for their courses, but the conversion of
courses from a face-to-face format to an electronically mediated one is time-
and labor-intensive. The university has been able to provide instruction,
consultation, and support services to assist faculty in the development of
online and blended courses, but lacks all the resources it could use to
provide them with compensation or course release for this work. While the
number of faculty using Blackboard® is high, relatively speaking, the
university offers few courses that are fully online, and has no degree
programs online. A small amount of funding has been awarded to
University Outreach through the IBHE’s Higher Education Cooperation
Act (HECA) grant program to support the development of online courses.
Additional online or blended courses would provide students with
additional access to courses with no or minimal commuting to campus,
which is particularly appealing to non-traditional undergraduate students
seeking degree-completion programs.

A pilot project, initiated by the Office of Assessment Services and the
Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center in fall 2003, is
underway to assess students’ perceptions of the effectiveness of course
materials and the electronically mediated communications capabilities of
Blackboard® on their learning style preferences. The data from this project,
being conducted via an online survey, should provide some guidance to
faculty in making the most effective use of Blackboard® features, and in
preparing students to take the greatest advantage of the learning resources
available to them in this instructional medium. The data should also be
useful to the campus units with responsibility for training and technology
support services in determining how they might better meet faculty needs.

The increased use of technology as an instructional tool is also evidenced in
the substantial allocation of university resources to install smart classroom
technology in instructional spaces. Faculty requests to have their courses
scheduled in the converted classrooms have continuously increased since
the inception of the project. In fall 2000 the Office of Assessment Services
conducted a project to evaluate faculty and student perceptions of the
efficacy of the instructional media of the university’s smart classrooms. The
findings of the project indicated that the majority of both faculty and
students felt the set-up of the classrooms was convenient and facilitated
students’ hearing and viewing. The majority of faculty (78 percent) using
the smart classrooms felt they enhanced students’ learning, and some (38
percent) thought the smart classrooms encouraged students to work harder
on course requirements. On the whole, students (65 percent) felt the
classrooms encouraged time-on-task, but only 29 percent felt that the smart
classrooms encouraged them to work harder.

With the rate of change in technology, a university faces a major challenge
in maintaining the currency of the technology for its various applications.
At NIU, as is the case throughout much of the nation, recent economic conditions have created the need for more careful planning and the judicious allocation of resources to maintaining and enhancing technological resources. As more faculty develop an interest in and/or expertise with the use of instructional technologies, demands for their availability are expected to increase. More students arrive at the university with sophisticated skills in the use of technology, and they expect to have technological resources available to them. In May 2003, the NIU Board of Trustees approved a technology surcharge that will be levied through FY08 to help fund technology improvements across campus and to assist in meeting the increasing demands for technological resources.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

j. academic resources and equipment (e.g., libraries, electronic services and products, learning resource centers, laboratories and studios, computers) adequate to support the institution’s purposes

Criterion Three: The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

f. ongoing support for professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SERVICES

The human resources of a university are its most valuable asset. The mission of the institution is carried out by its people, and many support units and processes enable those most directly involved in the mission to succeed. This discussion of Northern Illinois University human resources and services will be comprised of six sections: faculty and staff; workload; shared governance related to human resources; personnel processes; grievance procedures; and resources for staff provided, primarily, by the Human Resource Services (HRS).

FACULTY AND STAFF

In addition to being a university’s most valuable asset, human resources represent a significant investment. Personnel expenditures account for approximately 80 percent of the operating budget. While changes in levels of funding, adoption of new policy initiatives, and reorganization of administrative structures and personnel are important to the life of the institution, the institution relies on the existence of a well-qualified, committed staff to ensure that the resources are used in the most efficient and effective way possible, that policy initiatives are carried out in the spirit in which they were adopted, and that changes in the organizational structure of the institution are used to the best advantage of NIU as it provides educational services to the region.

Personnel at NIU are grouped into three major categories: faculty, supportive professional staff, and operating staff. The NIU faculty is comprised of regularly appointed individuals in tenured or tenure-track positions, and temporarily appointed instructors and other un-ranked instructional positions. NIU employs an FTE of approximately 1,160 faculty. Of this number, about 280 are employed on a temporary basis. NIU’s policy is to use regularly appointed tenured and tenure-track faculty for its primary instructional services. Non-tenure-track appointments are used to fulfill emerging or temporary staffing needs, to appoint qualified visiting faculty on a short-term basis, and to staff various grant-funded research initiatives. Temporarily appointed instructors who are appointed to at least a 50 percent load are represented by a collective bargaining unit. Benefits applicable to the faculty are provided pursuant to the Regulations of the NIU Board of Trustees. Retirement, health, life, dental, and other group insurance benefits are provided by the State of Illinois. NIU’s regular faculty are represented in the system of shared governance through an elected Faculty Senate.
Since 1994, the number of faculty has changed with the financial capabilities of the institution. The levels of change in full-time faculty are set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>+33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total headcount of part-time faculty in 1994 was 193; in 2002, that number had risen to 279. Overall, the university has increasingly relied on instructors to fill the gaps, particularly in certain lower-division and core competency areas of instruction, created by a reduced number of faculty with rank coupled with increasing enrollment.

The supportive professional staff is comprised of individuals in a very wide range of administrative or academic departments who have significant oversight responsibilities for university programming, administration, or the provision of services. NIU employs approximately 850 professional staff in 466 different position titles. Members of the professional staff may also take on teaching loads, although they do not hold academic rank; 203 professional staff were involved in instruction in fall 2002. They are employed on a regular continuing or temporary (year-to-year) basis. Approximately 240 professional staff are appointed on a temporary basis due to the indefinite nature of their responsibilities or the fund source underlying their position. Professional staff are exempt from participation in the Illinois Civil Service system by virtue of documented aspects of the position description. Benefits applicable to the professional staff are provided pursuant to the Regulations of the NIU Board of Trustees. Retirement, health, life, dental, and other group insurance benefits are provided by the State of Illinois. The professional staff are represented in NIU’s system of shared governance through an elected Supportive Professional Staff Council and are also guided by the policies and procedure in the Supportive Professional Staff Handbook.

It should be noted that many new roles and types of positions have been added to the supportive professional staff category since 1994. Since that time, the university has been required to adopt a large number of services and requirements that require specialized training and skills. The academic enterprise supported by the professional staff has become more complex. The regulatory and legal environment has required Human Resource
Services and NIU to staff functions requiring significant professional expertise, and the rate of change and demands for new technology applications has grown explosively. Many of these new responsibilities have been delegated to professional staff employees due to the skill level and experience required.

Supportive professional staff have also been affected by budget contractions in the last two fiscal years, and, like the other groups of employees, have faced challenges based on declining numbers of personnel in relation to the scope of work required. Statewide data summarizing the deployment of staff resources demonstrate that NIU has the lowest proportion of payroll resources dedicated to the “administrative and other professional” category among the Illinois public universities; the professional staff comprise most of the positions in this category. This relative proportion is maintained by NIU, despite the fact that NIU is among the most complex and extensive institutions in the state.

The operating staff is comprised of individuals hired under the rules and procedures of the State of Illinois - State Universities Civil Service System. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) listing of categories pertinent to operating staff personnel is reflective of the nature of operating staff work at NIU. The positions include secretarial/clerical, technical/paraprofessional, skilled craft, and service/maintenance personnel. NIU employs approximately 1,750 operating staff. These employees are classified among 408 classifications and 162 promotional lines. Operating staff appointments are made on an hourly or salaried (Fair Labor Standards Act–exempt) basis, depending on the nature of responsibility associated with the position. Operating staff must complete a standardized testing process and probationary period to be considered “status” employees. Benefits applicable to the operating staff are provided pursuant to the Regulations of the NIU Board of Trustees. Retirement, health, life, dental, and other group insurance benefits are provided by the State of Illinois. All members of the operating staff are covered by the State of Illinois civil service law and the rules set out in the Operating Staff Handbook. Certain classifications of operating staff are represented by collective bargaining organizations. Their respective collective bargaining agreements cover wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment for these operating staff. Operating staff members participate in NIU’s shared governance system through the Operating Staff Council, a representative forum of elected peers.

The number of civil service personnel has decreased during the years covered by this accreditation. This one percent decrease (1,798 to 1,776) has occurred in part-time staff (124 to 89) and has not been covered by increases (1,674 to 1,687) in full-time staff. These decreases are seen in
unfilled positions in several classifications, particularly in the janitorial staff. The percentage of civil service employees over the age of 55 has also increased (17 percent to 19 percent), creating a prospective need for replacement of personnel at a greater rate than in the past, and reducing the capacity of civil service staff as a whole to address important elements of work assigned to operating staff around the campus. As in the case of the faculty, addressing the staffing issue is sure to place a great deal of pressure on NIU and its planning for the future.

The total number of full-time employees has risen from 3,188 in 1994 to 3,434 in 2002. This represents an increase of 246 employees, approximately 7 percent. During the time period, the number of full-time faculty decreased from 1,036 to 960, a reduction of 7 percent. This was somewhat offset by an increase in part-time faculty from 186 to 227, with a net FTE increase from 1,129 to 1,161, a gain of 3 percent. During this time, the number of undergraduate students increased from 16,423 to 17,468 (6 percent) and the total number of students increased from 22,881 to 24,948 (8 percent). As can be seen by comparing these percentages, this rate of change among the number of non-faculty staff is consistent with the overall growths in enrollment; however, the FTE of faculty has not increased at the same rate as the student enrollments, and the tenured and tenure-track faculty have declined in number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 16. Faculty Demographics</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 17. Professional/Non-Faculty Demographics</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NIU has continuously sought to maintain its existing diversity and to increase diversity wherever possible.

Demography
NIU has continuously sought to maintain its existing diversity and to increase diversity wherever possible. This is certainly the case in the different categories of employees. The EEOC data used to monitor diversity are presented below, using the breakouts of faculty, professional/non-faculty, and other (secretarial/clerical, technical/paraprofessional, skilled craft,
While these categories do not specifically match the faculty, supportive professional staff, and operating staff classifications reported in the Basic Institutional Data Forms, the classifications are similar enough to allow general comparisons to be drawn.

As these tables show, NIU has realized overall gains in diversity since 1994. The percentage who are Caucasian/Non-Hispanic has decreased in the faculty positions (from 87 percent to 82 percent) and the secretarial, technical/paraprofessional, skilled craft, service/maintenance group (from 94 percent to 90 percent). In the professional/non-faculty category, the percentage has remained basically the same (85 percent and 86 percent). Another traditional area of diversity, the number of women employed by an institution, has also increased. In 1994 the workforce was 49.9 percent women (n = 1,586 women employees); in 2002 the workforce was 54.2 percent women (n = 1,850 women employees). The majority of these employees are secretarial/clerical (n = 483). There have been significant increases in both the number and the percentage of women in executive/administrative managerial and faculty categories, as well as professional/non-faculty.

In 2002, NIU has a more diverse, slightly larger, workforce. The workforce, as a whole, is also slightly older. In 1994 the median age range of full time employees was 41-45; in 2002 the median age range of full time employees was 46-50. This is consistent across the 3 workforce categories. This “graying” of the workforce is not surprising; however, this is an issue that must be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 18. All Other Employees’ Demographics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/Non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/Non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 19. Primary Occupational Activity of Women at NIU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive/Administrative/Managerial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Non-Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial/Clerical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Paraprofessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/Maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
addressed by the university, through retaining junior members of the community and attracting individuals to help NIU to grow in the next decades.

Increasing rates of retirement are another complication introduced by the aging of the workforce. In 1998 the State Universities Retirement System made fundamental changes to the retirement plans available to state employees by adding portable and self-managed plans to the traditional general formula benefit plan. A new calculation formula was implemented by the State of Illinois for the general formula plan (used by most employees), resulting in a substantial enhancement of benefits. The university was instrumental in leading the effort among the public universities to implement these enhancements to the retirement program.

**Workload**
The data below present the teaching loads for faculty since 1994.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Student FTE</th>
<th>Faculty FTE</th>
<th>Load</th>
<th>Student FTE</th>
<th>Faculty FTE</th>
<th>Load</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>17,802</td>
<td>1,108.8</td>
<td>16.05</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>17,160</td>
<td>1,105.6</td>
<td>15.52</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>16,719</td>
<td>1,109.3</td>
<td>15.07</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>17,238</td>
<td>1,079.8</td>
<td>15.90</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>17,680</td>
<td>1,030.8</td>
<td>17.15</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>18,088</td>
<td>1,068.0</td>
<td>16.90</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>18,306</td>
<td>1,079.9</td>
<td>16.95</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>18,800</td>
<td>1,129.2</td>
<td>16.65</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>19,958</td>
<td>1,138.6</td>
<td>17.50</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there have been fluctuations in the number of faculty during the 1994-2002 period, there has been a general increase in teaching load throughout most of the university, as seen in the student-faculty ratios provided above. The 2002 load was the highest during this review cycle. There is also variation in the Law School, with the 2002 loads being the highest since 1995. It should be noted that while the data account for the number of sabbatical leaves during each year, it does not account for release time given to faculty who have accepted administrative positions in academic departments. This results in fewer people with faculty rank carrying full teaching loads, which suggests that the teaching load is slightly heavier than the data show.

An additional consideration is the distribution of graduate coursework among departments across the campus. While most departments offer graduate course work, the amount of graduate programming, with its attendant responsibilities for thesis and dissertation advising, varies
considerably. With fewer full-time tenure and tenure-track faculty (893 in 1994, and 778 in 2002), there are fewer people to cover the increasing responsibilities of graduate research advising and shared governance. If these differences could be mapped with certainty over time, it is likely that the teaching load patterns would be better understood.

Instructors are the largest category of unranked, non-tenure-track faculty. Instructor positions require at least master’s-level qualifications in a relevant discipline or sub-discipline. Approximately 16 percent of the teaching load is carried by instructors. These loads are concentrated primarily in the lower division, core competency areas of instruction. It should be noted that not all departments employ instructors. In 1992 the instructors opted for union representation as the means to determine their terms and conditions of employment within the university. Prior to the formation of the union, the rates of compensation, procedures for reappointment, workloads, and evaluation procedures for instructors varied considerably across the colleges and academic departments. The salaries paid to many instructors were low due to the wide availability of qualified personnel to fulfill these roles. Some instructors had been successively reappointed for several academic years, resulting in salary compression issues with newly hired instructors. These issues led to an organizing campaign among instructors. Workloads for members of the collective bargaining unit are delineated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and are based on a full-time load of 12 semester hours.

Workloads for the other staff categories have also generally increased. In recent studies concerning administrative costs among the Illinois public universities, NIU was ranked as the lowest public university in the state of Illinois with respect to the percent of resources attributable to “administrative and other professional” staff earnings. NIU has purposefully opted for increased job scope and responsibility with its position administration policies, leading to significant opportunities for career growth and advancement for internal staff members. However, this practice also contributes to significant workloads experienced by university staff members.

The mixture of roles fulfilled by the supportive professional staff, especially the unranked instruction-related positions exempted under section 36(e)4 of the statute, causes some blurring of the line between the professional staff and faculty with respect to activities supporting the instructional mission. That same blurring is seen between more specialized operating staff classifications and certain professional staff positions. Aside from differences in job content, much of the differentiation of these three types of staff is defined by which personnel processes and university resources are available to the group.
STAFF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

NIU has a proud tradition of constituency involvement in the administration of the institution. A list summarizing many different avenues of involvement for NIU’s employee constituencies is provided below. These entities are the overarching structures that permit representation of the faculty, supportive professional staff, and operating staff; these were covered in greater detail in the chapter on governance and planning. There are numerous subcommittees of these groups that address specific areas of importance. Meetings of these groups are open to all interested parties, subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

- University Council
- Faculty Senate
- Supportive Professional Staff Council
- Operating Staff Council
- Unions and Collective Bargaining Units

There are also a number of presidential commissions and advisory groups, which have been established to study and improve the status of several different groups on campus. These are listed below.

- Presidential Commission on the Status of Women
- Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation
- Presidential Commission on the Status of Minorities
- President’s Task Force on Asian Americans
- Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Provost’s Task Force on Multicultural Curriculum Transformation
- Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources Advisory Committee

The websites of these groups also contain links to the various centers and departments on campus that seek to improve the standing and capabilities of the groups they serve.

The work of each of these groups is intended to provide the president, administrative officers, and the campus with information and insight into the different challenges individuals face based on sex, race, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation. These commissions file annual reports to the president and act as advisors to the president and administrative officers when issues that concern the individuals within these constituencies are raised.

NIU may also seek review of the institution’s activities by the commissions. One example of such a review process, by the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, gave valuable insight into the outcomes of the
university's commitment to improving the status of women on campus. Another example is the report prepared by the members of the Commission on Sexual Orientation calling for an on-campus center for the lesbian/ gay/ bisexual/ transsexual community. In response to the report, space in the Holmes Student Center has been allocated to house the office and serve as a meeting place for the lesbian/ gay/ bisexual/ transsexual community, demonstrating the university's clear commitment to listening to diverse voices. Both reports are available at the commissions' websites accessible through the NIU home page.

**Personnel Processes**

Assessment of individuals within the faculty and staff is also important in understanding how the institution works to achieve its objectives. The Regulations of the NIU Board of Trustees, the Constitution and Bylaws, and the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual are the primary source documents for personnel issues and processes. Supplemental materials specific to each employment group are made available to individuals through handbooks, departmental bylaws, college procedures, Human Resource Services announcements, and union contracts where applicable.

The personnel processes related to tenure, promotion, and merit evaluation of the faculty are addressed in Article 5 of the NIU Bylaws. A significant change occurred last year when Bylaw 5.216(C)(1) was changed specifically to include provision of student advising assistance as a recognized component of university service. An effort to change the bylaw, mandating that service be given less weight than scholarship and teaching for tenure, promotion and sabbatical requests, failed. Bylaws 5.216(A)(1) and (2) provide special rules for librarians. These bylaws stipulate that general librarianship is considered a critical evaluation determinant and substitutes for the teaching component for those librarians who do not teach.

Academic departments maintain much of the control of the implementation of evaluation processes for the faculty. All departmental rules for merit evaluation must be affirmed by the University Council, with the enforcement responsibility held by the University Council Personnel Committee. The evaluation process for temporarily appointed, unranked faculty follows procedures set forth in a collective bargaining agreement for instructors, and as established by the academic departments for other unranked faculty members.

In 1996, Human Resource Services issued guidelines for the evaluation of the work of members of the supportive professional staff. The guidelines were developed in coordination with a subcommittee of the Supportive Professional Staff Council. These guidelines provide that the evaluation method be determined between the professional staff member and her/his
supervisor. An annual certification is requested by Human Resource Services, confirming that the evaluation has occurred, and notices are sent to supervisors when evaluations are outstanding.

In 1996, a survey of the supportive professional staff revealed that although the majority of the staff were satisfied with their jobs in the university, many of those with the longest tenure at NIU were frustrated with the lack of opportunities for promotion. This lack of opportunity is no doubt related to the nature of the positions held by professional staff, as those positions are often focused on the administration of individual, highly specific programs. Human Resource Services implemented position administration procedures in 1997 that facilitated greater opportunities for internal promotions, title changes, and mobility for professional staff employees. In 2002 the Supportive Professional Staff Council conducted another survey of the professional staff. The results of the survey indicate that respondents felt most positively about their opportunities for professional development, that their overall job satisfaction was high, and that there was general satisfaction with their benefits. The areas of concern were related to recognition (especially from supervisors), opportunities for advancement, current salaries, performance evaluations, and supervisors’ expectations of employees. Addressing the items identified in the survey will continue to be a focus of the council.

Operating staff are also evaluated on an annual basis. The evaluation is documented by means of a standardized format that was developed in coordination with the Operating Staff Council. Procedures for operating staff evaluations are maintained by Human Resource Services, and notices are sent to supervisors when operating staff evaluations are outstanding. The State Universities Civil Service System Statute and Rules provides that civil service employees be evaluated on an annual basis. Operating staff who are members of a union are bound by the assessment and promotion procedures outlined in those collective bargaining agreements.

**Grievance Procedures**

Several types of grievance procedures are university-wide in their application. Additionally, there are specific grievance procedures for each category of employee. Employees whose positions fall within the scope of a collective bargaining agreement must use the grievance procedures contained in the agreements unless the grievance involves an affirmative action complaint.

It should be noted that the current grievance procedures differ by employment category and are in the process of being reviewed and updated. A University Council Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty and Staff Grievance Procedures has met during the previous 18 months for the purpose of
drafting an integrated grievance procedure that would generally apply to all employment categories, with matters related to specific faculty or staff employment categories referred to the appropriate areas of the university. The ad hoc committee is composed of representatives from all three major employee councils, Human Resource Services, and others such as the General Counsel, the faculty personnel advisor, and the ombudsman. The committee has also attempted to address feedback received from employee constituencies about existing grievance procedures, timelines, and areas of ambiguity.

The ombudsman has been a consistent force in the NIU community. At NIU, the ombudsman is charged with representation of all individuals in the NIU community and individuals affiliated with NIU through former attendance or the attendance of family members. The ombudsman explains rights, investigates allegations, and seeks alternative dispute resolutions where possible. The services of the ombudsman’s office have been used regularly during the 1994-2002 period. Overall, there has been a slight decline in the number of cases (less than 1 percent) (n = 1,051 in 1994; n = 1,044 in 2001). The ombudsman’s office website has annual reports posted from 1998 to the present. Additional resources on the website include the listing of resources available to the university community and a comprehensive listing of the appeals processes, organized by the status of the individual. These provide excellent sources of information for all members of the NIU staff.

The NIU Constitution provides for the position of Faculty Personnel Advisor. Grievances may be filed with the advisor by all tenured and nontenured staff. The advisor makes an annual report of activity and issues. In order to protect confidentiality, the reports do not reveal the specifics of individual cases nor do they reveal rates of filing for specific types of activities. The role and responsibilities of the advisor were the topic of extensive discussion in 2002. As part of the Rules and Governance Committee report to the University Council, several action items were proposed. While these motions were tabled, they do reflect significant attention to the grievance process.

The recently created Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources program in Human Resource Services is another campus-wide resource. Examples of services, policies, investigation, and compliance resources available from Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources can be found on its website. The program was created during one of the reorganizations of the personnel processes at NIU, and consolidates the different affirmative action, compliance, non-discrimination, and diversity programs at NIU. The program is responsible for the investigation and resolution of employee complaints and actively seeks to combine effective principles of employee
relations with institutional compliance procedures. An Affirmative Action and Diversity Calendar is available on the website, and program staff offer training programs and videos about valuing diversity on a regular basis. Compliance training on non-discrimination, sexual harassment prevention, non-retaliation, and complaint investigation procedures is ongoing.

Faculty may pursue grievances or complaints that arise from concerns about discriminatory or harassing differential treatment. These grievances are covered by the procedures established by Human Resource Services and Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources. Other grievances may arise out of perceived inequities in merit review and treatment in promotion and tenure decisions. Faculty grievance procedures and resources are published in the NIU Constitution and Bylaws. The faculty personnel advisor is the primary supplemental resource available to all faculty concerning appeals or questions involving personnel actions. Additional resources available to faculty lie within the departments and colleges through their published personnel procedures. Members of the faculty may seek help from their department chair/director, the dean’s office, and from the dean directly. All faculty grievances may be appealed to the University Council Personnel Committee.

Grievance procedures for the supportive professional staff are set out in the Supportive Professional Staff Handbook. Members of the professional staff have had access to the faculty personnel advisor to assist with grievance procedures. Members of this group may also rely on the ombudsman and Human Resource Services for institutional support of the grievance procedures. The professional staff grievance procedures have been updated over time; the most recent comprehensive revision was implemented in 1995.

A few members of the professional staff have reported problems with the grievance process. Some have reported that professional staff members fear that retaliation could result from the filing of a grievance, a concern that is exacerbated by the year-to-year appointment process for this category of employee. University policies provide for a 12-month notice of non-renewal of a regular professional staff appointment for individuals who have been appointed for at least 3 years. Some members also report difficulty obtaining information from the Supportive Professional Staff Handbook on the Human Resource Services’ website, and report a limited number of physical copies of the handbook. As part of the survey of professional staff employees mentioned earlier, staff employees were asked about the workplace and their knowledge of rights and how to assert those rights. Actions will be taken following the release of that analysis, and it is anticipated that increased training and broader dissemination of the grievance process will result. However, the current grievance procedure is
likely to be replaced by a new one created by the University Council Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty and Staff Grievance Procedures. The ad hoc committee has attempted to respond to ambiguities perceived in the current professional staff grievance procedure in drafting the replacement. Supportive Professional Staff Council representatives have also been very involved in drafting the new grievance procedure.

The operating staff includes both unionized and non-unionized employees. Unionized employees have access to the grievance procedures described in their collective bargaining agreements. Non-unionized employees may use the services of the ombudsman and Human Resource Services to aid them in addressing grievances. Since many do not use computers for their work and may not have easy access to computers, operating staff may be disadvantaged when the relevant material is located online. It should be noted that printed copies of Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources policies and complaint procedures are provided to all attendees at the departmental and college-level training forums and all supervisors are advised to have printed copies accessible to their employees who may not have online access. Human Resource Services is currently working on possible solutions, including the use of computer kiosks that employees can use to access this type of information. Additional sources of information for employees can be found in the Operating Staff Handbook, the “Civil Service Employment at Northern” brochure, and from the Civil Service System Statutes and Rules.

A final chance for an employee to give and receive information about the work environment occurs at the end of every individual’s employment at NIU. Every civil service employee is given the opportunity to have an exit interview with Human Resource Service personnel. The results of those interviews are used to acknowledge strengths and address weaknesses in university working conditions.

**Affirmative Action Complaint and Resolution Procedures**

Any employee who has experienced and/or witnessed acts of discrimination of someone covered by a protected category has the right and/or responsibility to report such acts to Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources. As defined by federal, state, and/or institutional policies, the protected categories include race, ethnicity, national origin, veteran status, sex, religion, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or any factor unrelated to professional qualifications. The affirmative action complaint process encourages employees to seek informal resolution at the departmental level but does not require an employee to attempt this form of resolution prior to filing a formal complaint. If the employee wishes to file a formal complaint, the employee must contact Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources and complete a formal
complaint form. Once received, and if warranted by the facts contained in the complaint, Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources will conduct a formal investigation to determine whether or not discrimination has occurred. If the investigation concludes that a violation of the institution’s policy prohibiting discrimination has occurred, actions necessary to resolve the violation will be implemented along with other recommended actions, which may include discipline and training. If no violation has occurred, disciplinary actions or other solutions may still be recommended in an attempt to resolve the workplace issues. Annual reports summarizing the formal complaints and subsequent investigations are prepared. The current Affirmative Action Policy is available on the Human Resource Services website. This policy was updated and revised in spring 2003.

Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies
Consistent with relevant laws and court decisions, Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources and NIU recognize, and have complied with, the requirement to address and eradicate acts of sexual harassment or discrimination whenever and wherever they may exist. In large part, fulfillment of this requirement has been satisfied via the affirmative action complaint process. However, in addition to these specific formalized efforts, Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources has engaged in ongoing and strategic efforts to provide sexual harassment and discrimination prevention workshops to all employees. All deans and administrative officers have received this training and further training of employees in every department of the university is ongoing and is also provided upon request.

Americans With Disabilities Act
Pursuant to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, NIU prohibits employment and/or academic decisions that are based upon or affected by an individual’s disability when the individual can perform the essential functions of the (academic or non-academic) position with or without reasonable accommodations. The general provisions of the affirmative action complaint process are applicable to any allegation that adverse decisions have been made on the basis of disability. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources also serves as the point of contact for individuals who wish to self-identify as a person with a disability and request reasonable accommodation, if desired. The ADA coordinator is charged with the responsibility of assessing requests for reasonable accommodations and/or determining when a reasonable accommodation is appropriate. An ADA Committee is convened to consider general policies and specific accommodation request appeals.
Retaliation
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and NIU policy prohibits acts of retaliation (intentional adverse employment activity) as a result of an employee filing and/or participating in a protected activity. Any employee who experiences acts of retaliation as a result of participating in the affirmative action complaint process has the right to file an affirmative action complaint. The outcome of the original complaint is irrelevant to the allegation of retaliation.

Resources for Staff
NIU has long sought to meet the needs of its employees by providing discrete service units within the university intended to identify and address the needs of staff. The types of employees served and the specific role fulfilled by the individuals staffing such units can partially differentiate between these service units. Certain units serve all NIU employees and are housed primarily in Human Resource Services. Locating these services in the same division has streamlined the provision of the services and allowed easier identification of the availability of the services. The list of services available through Human Resource Services is easily found on its website.

An issue for NIU identified by the 1994 site visit team was that “The University should continue to examine the efficiency of its administrative structure with special focus on the possibility of consolidating overlapping and competing functions.” NIU addressed this issue with regard to human resources by creating an integrated site for all employee services. Human Resource Services was established in January 1994 as part of NIU’s decision to adopt a strategic management approach toward human resources and to create a “more-than-the-sum-of-the-parts” system of administrative services. This reorganization has allowed Human Resource Services to fulfill basic service functions, and to facilitate and to provide effective strategic approaches that require an effective management of the university faculty and staff workforce as a whole. Much of the energy of the last nine years has been focused on developing new programs and initiatives, responding to a growing set of compliance requirements, implementing new information systems, and expanding the capacity of the division to accomplish its goals while maintaining the level of service to which NIU employees are accustomed. NIU is now one of a very small number of public universities of significant size that has achieved the organizational integration of nearly 100 percent of its core human resource functions.

The creation of the human resource services unit began the process of unifying the personnel system at NIU. This process took a significant step, as a unit, with the articulation of the Excellence 2000 Initiative. This
initiative was launched by Human Resource Services to solidify and define the status of human resources as an integrated feature of university operations, and to assure an effective realization of the value-added potential provided to the university by Human Resource Services. As a strategic planning and benchmarking concept, the Excellence 2000 Initiative is updated every year with a summary of accomplishments and, more importantly, new initiatives and areas of focus as the division responds to the needs of the campus community. Components of the Excellence 2000 Initiative involved:

- Construction and development of the Center for Diversity Resources
- Implementation of the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources program, establishing diversity as a central aspect of all human resource management processes
- Implementation of the PeopleSoft human resource information and payroll systems
- Development of the Excellence 2000 Initiative logo, mission, and philosophy statement
- A Human Resource Services annual report
- A Human Resource Services customer service initiative
- Best practice benchmarking and analysis
- Completion and distribution of employee handbooks
- Development of Human Resource Services advisory committees
- Development of the position administration project
- Prioritization of optimal compensation and benefit programs
- Identification of cross-departmental responsibilities

The status of many of these items – development of advisory committees, development of the position administration project, prioritization of compensation and benefit programs, identification of cross-departmental responsibilities – has been updated in the Excellence 2003 document. The mission and philosophy statements reflect the understanding that Human Resource Services at NIU is an integral part of the management environment. From this perspective, the provision of human resource services is an issue much larger than a single division of the university – it is the responsibility of every administrative office to provide the structure in which good personnel practices can exist.

An outcome of major significance since 1994 is the creation of a program through which similar or related issues could be more effectively addressed. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources, a unit included as part of the human resource administrative services, was established in 1998. The program was constructed around the strategic premise that diversity competency is fundamental to the performance of the university in completing its educational and public service missions. Accordingly, the
development of an employment culture that values diversity is a goal of immediate and long-term interest. By placing the program within the integrated framework of Human Resource Services, the program has the resources and administrative capability to provide services that are fundamental to university human resource management. In addition, the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources committee was established to assist programs and to provide the opportunity for ongoing input into policies and procedures that the program administers. Furthermore, a network of affirmative action associates was appointed to serve as on-site liaisons in every major college and division of the university.

The consolidation of employee relations functions across all employment categories and the elimination of duplicated and/or redundant employee advocacy programs occurred as part of the effort to develop a system capable of successfully linking diversity to the performance ethic of NIU’s employment culture. This consolidation also resulted in the effective facilitation of timely responses to employee relations issues and complaints. This integrated approach, which involves the comprehensive administration of employee grievances/complaints within the scope of Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources, has established the capacity to fully resolve employee relations issues in Human Resource Services without the need for costly and time-consuming referral of matters from one office to another.

**SPECIFIC INITIATIVES IN HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES**

While Human Resource Services has been responsible for maintaining and implementing university policies associated with employment, personnel, and administration, it has also been responsible for fulfilling a number of other essential strategic roles. These roles include a more focused effort in employee training and development, diversity enhancement, affirmative action programs, continued maintenance of complaint resolution procedures, implementation of the PeopleSoft Human Resource Information and Payroll System software, legal compliance, data analysis, workforce planning, and compensation benchmarking. Human Resource Services also has led numerous state-wide initiatives related to the enhancement of new retirement and tuition waiver benefit policies, implementation of State University Retirement System and State Universities Civil Service System administrative procedures, and has participated in Illinois Board of Higher Education hearings related to faculty diversity and the status of part-time and non-tenure-track faculty. As part of an interagency agreement with the public universities, Human Resource Services maintains the statewide civil service pay administration system, and has recently implemented a comprehensive upgrade of the statewide database and processing system for civil service salary ranges,
providing online capability and serving as the administrator of the system for public higher education.

**Enterprise Resource Planning (PeopleSoft) System Implementation**

In 1998 NIU decided to adopt the PeopleSoft software platform to better manage its financial and human resources and facilities needs. Use of PeopleSoft allows for the integration of human resources obligation and fiscal tracking, primarily through the use of an overarching database. In July 1999, PeopleSoft was brought online in financial services; at the end of the spring semester in 2001, Human Resource Services fully converted to the PeopleSoft software system. By August 2001, all offices on campus were using the PeopleSoft system to accomplish their human resources work. This centralized database makes the internal work of Human Resource Services more efficient, and also streamlines the interaction with employees responsible for department-level human resource reporting. One example of this streamlining is that many forms necessary to implement the personnel operations of the institution can now be generated and submitted electronically. The PeopleSoft software is updated on a regular basis.

The shift to PeopleSoft was not easy for the supportive professional and operating staff personnel who use the new software on a regular basis. There is ongoing concern about fiscal strain which will most likely occur due to the need to upgrade equipment and software, meeting the demands of new software upgrades, and the concern that insufficient personnel are available at the departmental level to adequately maintain the technology. An additional concern is the need for computer access to fully use PeopleSoft, as not all operating staff have computer terminals at their worksites. Human Resource Services is in the process of investigating the construction of kiosks for access to human resource information on NIU’s website, and has initiated extensive training concerning use of the Internet and PeopleSoft navigation and operations techniques for personnel who would need to interact with the new system as part of their job responsibilities. Approximately 1,600 employees have been trained to use the software.

**Use of the Internet**

The move to PeopleSoft has not been the only example of Human Resource Services using the Internet more aggressively. Much of the information necessary to be an informed and involved employee at NIU can be found on the Human Resource Services website. This information includes employee handbooks, news about Human Resource Services, the rights of individuals within the university, policies, procedures, forms, schedule
Insurance and Employee Benefits
Staff at NIU have several different retirement, life, and health insurance options. These are described in the Informational Documents section of the Human Resource Services website. The expense of insurance benefits is an ongoing concern for all NIU staff, and is also one felt by NIU retirees. Current employees are affected by increases in insurance premiums, co-payments, and coverage limitations. The Central Management System insurance program is revised every fiscal year. While the program is still competitive, premium and coverage cost issues are of significant concern to NIU employees. In addition the state has charged the universities for unfunded liabilities for the health insurance program, and NIU was required to pay its share of this cost in the current fiscal year, resulting in reduced resources that might be available for salary increases and program improvements.

The Insurance and Benefits Department in Human Resource Services is responsible for disseminating information and coordinating employee insurance procedures. Insurance plans and the companies that provide those plans are also found on the Human Resource Services website. The department offers insurance counseling and Central Management System insurance plan assistance to faculty and staff on a continuous basis. Along with the Employee Relations and Training Department they offer training and employee development sessions on a regular basis, and are available when requested to provide customized training to groups or individuals. Employee relations also provides extensive retirement planning/ counseling services to faculty and staff. Human Resource Services has set retirement planning and counseling services as a priority in its plan to serve the campus community. Training and counseling sessions pertaining to the State University Retirement System options, deferred compensation, and retirement planning for those approaching retirement, are held on a regular basis by Human Resource Services. A standing committee of the University Council, the University Benefits Committee, oversees the provision of insurance to NIU staff and makes specific recommendations about insurance coverage.

Training
Training and employee development services are important elements of the services provided by Human Resource Services. Virtual sessions are included on the website. More traditional styles of training are offered on a regular basis, and the time and place of those training sessions are announced every semester by newsletter, on the website, in the student newspaper, the Northern Star, and in the faculty and staff newsletter.
Skills training related to technology and computer applications, along with PeopleSoft navigation, are regularly provided. Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources also regularly provides compliance training related to NIU’s policies on non-discrimination, sexual harassment prevention, non-retaliation, and complaint procedures. The integration of specific departments in Human Resource Services has provided a more focused and organized effort of ongoing staff training and development. Training activities are announced widely and customized training arrangements are made depending on departmental or individual needs.

Additional examples of services provided by Human Resource Services include training, education, and counseling provided by the Employee Wellness and Assistance Office. The office provides services without charge to current employees, their families, and individuals who have retired from NIU. Counseling recommendations are made when necessary and the staff of the office can help with the identification of problems to inform the counseling process. This program is actually a series of programs designed around the major sources of stress that may arise in any individual’s life. It is an excellent resource for staff, and one that is often mentioned in newsletters to the staff.

The Operating Staff Services Department provides a central point of information, services, and functions for operating staff employees pursuant to the State of Illinois Statute and Rules of the State Universities Civil Service System. These services include the application and interpretation of civil service laws and rules, establishment of salary ranges, testing, classification, referral, recruitment, and the announcement of civil service employment opportunities at NIU. It should be noted that some operating staff classifications are covered within the scope of collective bargaining agreements and that these agreements also specify wages, hours and other terms of employment consistent with the rules of the civil service system.

A Human Resource Services Service Center also provides inquiry response and customer service to NIU’s faculty and staff. The center currently responds to over 160,000 inquiries per year. It provides basic information and is designed to efficiently direct contacts to designated specialists throughout Human Resource Services depending upon the nature of the inquiry.

Employee Development, Recruitment and Retention

All members of the campus community are committed to attracting and maintaining a diverse workforce, and Human Resource Services is involved in the following initiatives designed to assure a diverse and qualified workforce:
Development of enhanced recruitment methods
Development of search procedures and protocols
Implementation of the Affirmative Action Plan
Development and implementation of continuing diversity initiatives
Compliance training
Administration of faculty/staff exit surveys

**Compliance Services**

An evaluation of different responsibilities and procedures that pertain to compliance and risk assessment involves a very wide range of activities in Human Resource Services, which maintains responsibility for many areas subject to external laws, regulations, and audits. The level of public attention surrounding employment-related functions and the accuracy of personal transactions is quite high. Furthermore, many Human Resource Services processes are critical operationally. Elaborate systems of compliance, information system interface, and processing procedures have evolved to fulfill these many functions. Given the extensive and continuous nature of these responsibilities, few areas of the university have a comparable scope of issues pertinent to compliance and subject to potential external audits. Human Resource Services also serves as the official institutional liaison and maintains an agency relationship with several regulated state agencies including:

- Central Management Services
- State Universities Retirement System
- State Universities Civil Service System
- Illinois Department of Labor
- Illinois Office of the Comptroller
- Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board
- Illinois State Labor Relations Board

External auditors regularly audit several Human Resource Service functions including:

- Civil Service Employment Administration (SUCSS)
- CMS Health and Benefit Administration (CMS)
- CMS Reimbursement Procedures (CMS)
- Payroll Administration (Auditor General)
- Personnel Records and Files (Auditor General)
- State Employment Records Act Compliance (Auditor General)
- Tuition Waiver Administration (Auditor General)
- Unemployment Compensation Administration (Auditor General)

Additionally, Human Resource Services' response to complaints and investigations, and the maintenance of applicable non-discrimination,
harassment prevention, and due process procedures are subject to review by outside agencies including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Illinois Department of Human Rights. The administration of collective bargaining arrangements is also subject to review by external arbitrators and the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board or the Illinois State Labor Relations Board.

**Resources for the Staff: Fiscal Resources**

A recent decision by the State of Illinois passed the financing of state co-payments and costs related to health insurance down to the institution level. Contributions required resolving unfunded liabilities related to the State University Retirement System are also drawn from the higher education budget. This decision has imposed a significant burden on NIU’s resources, as these payments come directly out of the budget. This means that the discretionary funds once used for salary increases and the development of new programs to facilitate the work of the institution to advance in new directions are very limited.

A change outside the higher education system is the rapid development of the DeKalb metropolitan area. This development has caused the local cost-of-living index to increase more rapidly and to exist at a higher base rate than most other Illinois public universities. Therefore salary competitiveness for NIU is very tenuous as university budgets are traditionally incremented at constant levels throughout the state, with no resources presently available due to the existing fiscal crisis. From a recruitment perspective, the DeKalb area also presents increasing competition for quality staff as the region develops. NIU is the largest employer in DeKalb County, employing approximately 8 percent of the total workforce.

The challenges posed by the present budgetary situation have greatly stressed NIU and the effects, especially during the past three years, have been intense. Current budget shortfalls, and the ways in which they have been handled, are illustrative of the value NIU places upon its employees, protecting as many jobs as possible while retaining high quality undergraduate and graduate programming. At the same time, the need to withhold raises compromises the ability of NIU to maintain the high quality of the institution. It is a delicate balancing act.

**EVALUATION**

The faculty and staff of NIU demonstrate exceptional quality and productivity. The workforce is very committed and interested in advancing the status of the institution. A culture of merit and performance has evolved at NIU over a number of years. Merit-based salary increments and
performance evaluation programs have reinforced productivity and excellence.

The workforce and the institution are capable of responding quickly to new strategic events and priorities. NIU’s workforce statistics demonstrate an obvious trend of staff efficiency, especially when the number of programs, students, and the complexity of the university are considered. Compared to the other public universities in the state, NIU is lean in administrative and professional staff. Job content is a challenge perceived by many employees as job scope expansion has affected most positions at NIU during the previous decade.

Clearly, one of the strengths of the human resources at NIU is the growing diversity of the faculty and staff. NIU has taken steps to recognize and leverage this diversity as a strategic advantage to the institution. By virtue of its regional location and comprehensive spectrum of programs and disciplines, NIU is situated to demonstrate advanced approaches to diversity to reinforce the leadership potential of NIU in the region. However, improving faculty and staff diversity will continue to pose challenges for the university. While NIU has developed model programs maximizing the strategic role of institutional diversity since 1994, the resulting gains in diversity are often not sufficient to ameliorate concerns about the university’s commitment to the ideals of establishing a diverse workforce. In this regard, retention of a quality and diverse faculty and staff workforce will represent a continuing challenge. In addition, it would be anticipated that progress toward diversification is a function of open and new positions that can be filled. The present budgetary environment has placed some limit on opportunities to fill vacant positions, however, the university has been able to hire in key positions.

NIU has an active system of shared governance. This system results in a considerable level of dialogue and communication concerning policies and directions proposed by the administration. It has been a strategic priority to maintain an active employee relations environment at NIU. The culture of excellence noted above is highly correlated with an active employee-relations and shared-governance environment.

Potential weaknesses relate to the sheer level of complexity and potential of NIU, especially in concert with the region served, and the ability of the university to realize its full potential in this environment with the limited staff and resources that are available. As the region develops and grows, so will the competition for quality staff. Additionally, regional growth will continue to escalate cost-of-living differentials that diminish NIU’s salary competitiveness in real terms. Resources available to improve salary competitiveness are essentially non-existent in the current statewide
environment, creating a very definite salary competitiveness issue for NIU. The combined challenges of salary competitiveness and leanness of staff resources will continue to be of significant concern to all three major employment categories.

Salary compression, created by a tightening market for quality faculty and staff, will also pose challenges for NIU in the future. As NIU seeks to expand its influence in the region, the numbers of staff and the resources necessary to improve salary competitiveness must be increased. Every group is feeling the effects of the budget problems facing NIU and the State of Illinois – a strategic decision must be made to meet the desired growth patterns while maintaining the quality of service that stakeholders have come to expect.

The aging of the workforce is a threat over which NIU has little control, but attention to the issues surrounding retention of staff has long been a part of the plan of Human Resource Services on campus. Human Resource Services provides exemplary retirement planning and counseling services; this attention cannot be allowed to abate. The aging trend will be experienced by NIU simultaneous with that of higher education generally, therefore, NIU will need to leverage its resources toward continuing to meet its priorities for recruitment, retention, and customized creative arrangements for critical employees nearing retirement.

As the student population grows, the university will need to carefully consider the role of the instructor in the larger teaching and research environment. Instructors are a valuable resource; however, to continue building the reputation NIU now enjoys, the university cannot rely on influxes of instructors to teach in the undergraduate programs. The balance between tenured/tenure-track faculty and instructors must be addressed to ensure that the teaching and the research missions of the university are met, and the students are well served by an active and involved faculty.

NIU has many more opportunities than threats. A primary opportunity for this institution at this time is to respond to threats as they are identified and before they actually pose themselves as a reality. The regional dynamic is one of NIU's distinct opportunities, with the university's central location in the key northwest Chicago-area metropolitan development corridor. While the region offers more competition, it also offers considerably greater resources as compared to the location of most other public universities located throughout the state. The region offers considerable opportunities for NIU to recruit highly qualified faculty and staff. From an employee recruitment perspective, NIU offers a hybrid environment of a smaller town atmosphere, with big city and regional amenities easily accessible. The regional location is a significant value-added resource for the university, as
the sheer depth of resources available in the region offsets the competition factor.

Information technology software and enterprise resource planning systems will continue to play an increasing role in job content and the delivery of education. Basic technology competency is important for all faculty and staff at NIU, therefore, increased focus will need to be placed on organized training programs designed to ensure that current and new employees in most positions and classifications achieve basic technology competency. Additionally, the availability of more advanced software applications training will continue to represent a significant employee development priority in the future.

Opportunities that lie ahead for NIU’s personnel system include being a leader in the development of an integrated system of human resources. As more and more human resource functions are brought together and duplication eliminated, there will be cost savings to the university. The centralization of functions also creates the opportunity for more education of employees and may result in greater levels of participation by individual employees not often heard.

The clearest strength of the system is its ability to adopt processes and then adapt to change. The structure of Human Resource Services at NIU was changed following internal and external review. NIU is responsive to the changing needs of its employees and the changing environment of higher education. By involving all levels and types of employees in decision-making and policy setting activities, NIU maximizes the wealth of talent to which it has access. NIU continues to build on this talent through its support of development activities for all employees and rewarding of achievement at all levels.

Criteria Addressed
Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes:

c. qualified and experienced administrative personnel who oversee institutional activities and exercise appropriate responsibility for them
d. systems of governance that provide dependable information to the institution’s constituencies and, as appropriate, involve them in the decision-making processes

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness:
a. a current resources base—financial, physical, and human—that positions the institution for the future
b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships:

a. student, faculty, and staff handbooks that describe various institutional relationships with those constituencies, including appropriate grievance procedures
b. policies and practices for the resolution of internal disputes within the institution’s constituency
c. policies and practices consistent with its mission related to equity of treatment, nondiscrimination, affirmative actions, and other means of enhancing access to education and the building of a diverse educational community
d. institutional publications, statements, and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations, and its programs
The physical and financial resources of Northern Illinois University provide the environment in which the mission of the university is accomplished. This chapter includes a discussion of the major facilities and infrastructure, improvements to these facilities, a summary and analysis of the budgeting process and accounting procedures, and long-term trends in the allocation of resources.

THE CAMPUS

The campus of Northern Illinois University is located on the western side of the city of DeKalb. The campus is only a few miles north of Interstate Route 88 and just a short drive to the south of Interstate Route 90, providing easy access to the Chicago metropolitan area and the rapidly developing southern, western, and northern suburbs. The vast majority of NIU’s students come from the geographic area along both of the interstate corridors that mark the northern third of the state of Illinois, from Chicago on the east through Rockford on the west. These corridors continue to be the location of major business and residential expansion, seeking the ever-increasing services of a major university.

The campus occupies 756 acres and includes 58 major buildings. Included in this total are 298 classrooms with a total seating capacity of almost 14,000. Approximately 100 of these classrooms are technology-enhanced to aid instruction. There are also 180 class laboratories, serving students in majors in every college on campus. Since the last reaccreditation visit, several new facilities have been completed. Three of these new buildings had been approved and funded prior to 1994 but were completed and opened during this time: the Campus Life Building, the Engineering Building, and Faraday West.

The Campus Life Building opened in 1994. This new facility provides approximately 57,000 square feet of space including offices, meeting rooms, and activity spaces to house the Career Planning and Placement Center, Counseling and Student Development, the University Honors Program, Campus Programming and Activities, the Orientation Office, the Office of Assessment Services, the Student Association, and the office of the student newspaper, the Northern Star. The building is located in the center of campus to facilitate student access to the offices located there. The Engineering Building, a $40 million state-of-the-art facility, was opened in August, 1995. In addition to classroom and office space, the building houses 35 specialty laboratories and over 600 networked personal computers. The teaching and research of the Departments of Physics and Chemistry and Biochemistry were greatly enhanced with the opening of
Faraday West in 1995. This building includes additional classrooms, offices and laboratory facilities.

There were also several new campus buildings funded and completed since 1994. One of the most significant was Barsema Hall. A $20-million donation from Dennis and Stacey Barsema enabled NIU to build a cutting-edge facility for the College of Business. Opened in fall 2002, the 144,000-square-foot facility contains classrooms, offices, laboratories, a 375-seat auditorium, and an atrium-area cyber cafe. This technology-enriched facility enables students and faculty in the college to interact in formal and informal learning environments that promote team work and collaboration.

While many facilities on campus serve multiple programs, four new buildings on campus have more focused purposes. The first of these is the Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault. This building, located on the far-west campus, is approximately 21,000 square feet and contains much-needed space to house the faculty and staff engaged in conducting the center's multiple research projects. The center was constructed from the funds of a $2.7 million grant. The Campus Child Care Center opened in September 2000; this center provides day care for the children of NIU students and faculty, as well as a clinical site for practical learning experiences for students preparing for careers working with young children. Some features of the 16,000-square-foot facility include a large play and exercise area, a private nursing room, and two-way-mirrored observation rooms.

Two of NIU's newest buildings provide additional space for addressing diversity initiatives on campus. The Center for Latino and Latin American Studies was dedicated in 1999. The center is approximately 7,000 square feet and contains a computer lab, study areas, a library, meeting and conference rooms, and gallery area for art displays, including the works of NIU Latino students. Another new facility focused on NIU's diversity mission is the Center for Diversity Resources. This facility was also built through grant funding totaling $550,000. The 3,400-square-foot facility is intended to assist in increasing the diversity and training of NIU's workforce. It is located on the west side of campus adjacent to the Human Resource Services Building.

The newest and the largest of NIU's facilities is the Convocation Center. Opened in August 2002, this $36-million dollar multipurpose facility hosts many events for NIU, the DeKalb-Sycamore communities, and the region. The center is approximately 215,000 square feet with seating for 10,000 for events in the main arena. This facility enables the university to increase the size of some of its events, such as job fairs for NIU students, provides a
These new facilities have certainly enhanced opportunities for those programs that use them, and also benefit other programs and units on campus. For example, the move of the College of Business to Barsema Hall opened up space for the College of Health and Human Sciences in Wirtz Hall. Gilbert Hall, where the College of Health and Human Sciences was previously housed, is now available for use to alleviate crowding in other buildings.

In addition to the new construction on campus, there have been several significant remodeling and renovation projects on campus since 1994. One example is the major renovation of the second and third floors of Williston Hall to accommodate the needs of the Office of Registration and Records. The following represent a sample of the most significant remodeling and renovation projects on campus since 1994:

- Major expansion of Founders Memorial Library through a build-out of the basement
- Addition to the Campus Recreation Center, including a 6,000-square-foot cardio room (1995)
- Dining hall in Douglas Residence Hall (1994)
- Stevenson Complex Renovation (major multi-year residence hall renovation project)
- Foreign Language Multi-Media Instructional Laboratory
- Evans Field House (in process)
- Holmes Student Center (cafeterias, restaurants, ballroom)
- Altgeld Hall (in progress)
- Major renovations in Huskie Stadium, increased and improved seating, renovations to concessions and restrooms (1994-1995)

Like most campuses, parking is a challenge at NIU. In order to address this issue, the university has created additional new parking spaces throughout campus during the past several years. A new multi-level parking structure was constructed adding approximately 1,400 parking spaces on the central campus. The construction of the Convocation Center and its adjacent parking lots has provided students with additional parking options. There have also been major projects to resurface many of the parking areas, especially those closer to the center of campus. The university has also progressed in its plan to comply with ADA requirements, including the repair, replacement, or installation of elevators, and other projects related to accessibility. Several of these projects are currently under way.
Major Maintenance and Upgrades
NIU has also engaged in several other major maintenance and long-term planning projects. These projects include:

- Residence Hall Master Plan
- Altgeld Hall Centennial Renovation and Migration Plan
- Campus Storm Water Management Plan

The university seeks to use special funding opportunities to maximize the funds it has available for construction and renovation. An example of this is the artificial turf at Huskie Stadium, which was replaced at a cost of $1.1 million. The university received a state grant to help offset the cost of the turf because the turf base was made of recycled materials.

While the discussion above is not exhaustive, it does provide an indication of the range of projects and improvements that the university has undertaken in the last decade. A web page provides an update to the university community regarding some of the major projects currently under way.

Campus Grounds and Landscaping
The grounds department manages the maintenance of all of the campus' open spaces including ongoing site cleanup, snow removal during the winter, and summer weeding and mowing, as well as the planting and care of all campus flower beds and shrubs. The university employs a landscape architect to oversee landscaping replacement, renewal projects, and new projects. Contracted architectural firms are hired to undertake larger projects.

The campus has greatly benefited from the landscaping between Stevenson Complex, Douglas Hall, and the Grant Complex. The storm water project included re-landscaping the East Lagoon, enhancing the beauty of this highly visible area by the main university entrance. Within the last ten years, the main university entrance from Highway 38 was landscaped as was the gateway to west campus.

Holmes Student Center
At the time of the university's last self-study, both the residence hall and the Holmes Student Center dining operations reported to Finance and Facilities. In 1996, the five residence hall dining operations became part of Student Housing and Dining Services. These programs and services are now an integral part of the residence hall operations.

The Holmes Student Center Food Service operation has undergone significant changes during the last ten years. The premier project was the
complete, $800,000 renovation of the lower-level eating area of the Holmes Center during 2002. This area, now called the Center Café, has a modern motif with booths that provide Internet connections for laptop computers. In 1995 a McDonald’s franchise operation opened in this location; Pizza Plus was opened in 1998, followed in 1999 by the Coffee Corner. Over the last ten years, the use of the Café has increased significantly.

The Holmes Student Center continues to operate the Blackhawk Cafeteria, which is open for breakfast and lunch during the week, with a number of specialty stations. The cafeteria has large seating areas with a carpeted section overlooking the Huskie Den. There is also the more formal Pheasant Room, a smaller area with a large salad and luncheon buffet providing a more intimate and quiet setting for university employees, students, and visitors. In addition to eating and dining facilities, the Holmes Student Center includes the Duke Ellington Ballroom, the Carl Sandburg Auditorium, the Sky Room and other meeting spaces, a bank, a bookstore, a hotel and conference center, a recreation center, computer laboratories, gallery space, and several offices.

Future Plans
During the past ten years, the university purchased 230 acres of undeveloped farmland adjacent to the campus on its western edge. Master planning for the 230 acres is underway to provide a framework for the long-term growth of the university. Titled the Far West Campus Master Plan, this document is now in draft stage. The plan will be the basis for a new era of campus development. Highlights of the Far West Campus Master Plan concepts are the establishment of:

- Research and Development Districts
- Residential District
- Commercial District
- Storm Water Management Retention District
- Integrated Transportation and Infrastructure Systems

NIU is looking to the future and planning for a rational expansion of its campus to meet the needs of the university’s programmatic growth. The Center for the Study of Family Violence and Sexual Assault, along with the Convocation Center, serve as the cornerstones for future growth in the newly designated research and development district.

Many additional projects are in the university's plans for the coming years. Major renovations are planned for a number of academic buildings: Stevens, Gilbert, Wirtz, Reavis, Montgomery, Zulauf, and Watson Halls. Improvements to roofs and ceilings, asbestos abatement, enhanced heating and air conditioning systems, energy efficient windows, and ADA compliance
are elements either underway or planned for the coming years. Improving campus signage and campus roadways that have deteriorated beyond routine maintenance are also priorities for the university in the next decade, e.g., building identities, pedestrian directional signs, campus directory units, and informative or commemorative elements. Lastly, NIU has requested funding for a new Computer Science and Technology Center. This new facility would offer students a unique learning environment, having an extensive infrastructure to accommodate a broad range of the equipment necessary to develop a nationally competitive program. It would also have the potential for industry and professional certification programs, custom learning labs, and classes for corporations as well as individuals.

TRANSPORTATION

NIU continues to meet the demands of the university community for safe, efficient, and economical transportation. Numerous safety initiatives have been enacted, including classroom and hands-on skills training and refresher courses for the professional drivers. In 2001, following a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration consumer advisory, transportation services removed all 15-passenger vans from general university use.

The flexibility to respond to changing demands, the ability to keep costs and charges below those of commercial rental agencies, and a low rate of turnover in departmental personnel are some of the strong points of the transportation unit. There have been some challenges as well. A reduction in staffing has increased the workload on each individual, has forced the outsourcing of some repair services, and has resulted in an accompanying significant increase in the costs of contracting charter buses.

There are opportunities to explore and develop improved safety and services for students, faculty and staff. Environmental concerns can be addressed through the use of alternative fuels, such as soy-diesel fuel, higher octane ethanol-blended fuel, the use of electric/gasoline hybrid vehicles, and the potential use of a research/demonstration fuel cell project in conjunction with Argonne National Laboratory. A transportation services web presence, with the potential for online reservations, is also being considered.

Transportation services receive no direct appropriations. All revenue is derived through services provided by the unit. One of the concerns is that budget reductions could impact the travel plans of faculty and staff, thereby negatively impacting the revenue streams of this unit.
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

In 1994, the Department of Environmental Health and Safety had three employees: the director/safety officer, an industrial hygienist, and a secretary. Since that time, several changes have taken place to improve the university’s response to health and safety related issues on campus. Currently there are nine full-time staff members to address the expanded responsibilities of the department. An asbestos coordinator is responsible for maintaining a database of the locations of asbestos on campus and coordinating asbestos removal projects. A chemical safety coordinator is responsible for working with various academic department members and assessing the facilities to ensure proper storage and removal of chemical waste. The department also has specialists in bio-safety, radiation, meteorology, and safety. There are also several campus committees that routinely meet to discuss issues and expand opportunities to promote and provide a safe campus environment. Research-related committees (discussed elsewhere) have a safety component to ensure the safety of the researcher, research subjects, the community, and the environment.

In 2002, the National Weather Service named Northern Illinois University as the first "storm ready" university in the country. This collaborative campus effort and resulting protocols enhance the safety of students, faculty, and staff through early identification and warning of severe weather. Disaster planning has expanded from campus emergency plans to an ongoing program that includes the DeKalb County Health Department’s participation in the development of a county-wide bio-terrorism response plan.

The previous self-study indicated the need to develop a plan to provide procedures for reclamation and elimination of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) on campus. That plan is now part of the standard operating procedure for the refrigeration shop of the physical plant. Any unit tagged for disposal has the CFCs reclaimed by refrigeration shop personnel and are reused on campus in other units. This process is in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

There continues to be a need for increased collaboration and communication between multiple levels of campus units to further enhance the effectiveness of this environmental health and safety unit. The university is taking steps to update the campus emergency disaster plan, coordinate the planning and installation of additional emergency call boxes, and increase the evacuation signage in campus buildings.
PUBLIC SAFETY

Over the last decade, the Department of Public Safety has increased its staff from 42 to 56 full-time employees. The department has developed a professional agency that focuses on prevention and services to provide a safe, healthy environment for students. Programs and training have resulted in a variety of specialized abilities within the department that improve communication and services throughout the campus. The campus has been actively engaged with the Department of Public Safety in continuing to expand its leadership in helping students learn in a safer environment. Since September 11, 2001, there has been a conscientious effort to assess the campus and provide the necessary resources in order to maintain a proactive level of defense and an ability to respond to the challenges identified in today's world.

Campus police officers are certified emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and squad cars are equipped with automated external defibrillators. This capacity allows first responders to provide for the medical needs of students, faculty, and staff.

The department has initiated residence hall community safety centers. Police officers staff the centers, providing opportunity for open dialogue and a wide range of preventive activities and services to students. Students are encouraged to recognize their responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that increases safety and maintains a healthy atmosphere for others.

In FY99 the department and several campus offices joined in securing a U.S. Department of Justice grant to fund activities and resources to address violence against women. The department organized and trained a group of officers for a Violence Response Team, and has secured equipment necessary to improve prevention of and response to these types of crimes.

In FY00 the department organized and trained a group of officers as a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), which includes a member from the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. In addition, the officers on the team are trained in special weapons and tactical response, as well as explosives detection and response. The team has a bomb-sniffing dog and x-ray scanner for use in the detection of explosive materials. In 1993, when bomb threats or suspicious packages were discovered, buildings were evacuated for lengthy periods of time, forcing the interruption of vital educational programs. In 2003, these types of searches are conducted more efficiently, and produce substantially less disruption. In the future, all team members will be certified paramedics, expanding the types of medical services provided to students, staff, and faculty.
The department’s safety call-box system plays an important role in providing a safe environment to students. Currently, there is a proposal to replace the existing system with an upgraded version that will handle the projected needs for the next 20 years. In order to enable appropriate action, the university has also worked hard to enhance women’s understanding of the importance of reporting crimes, in compliance with the Clery Act. Subsequently, due to the success of the awareness program, crimes reported by women during the past few years have increased.

As is the case with national security post-9/11, the ability to provide campus safety requires continuing threat analysis to identify potential areas at risk and to develop appropriate responses. The university must find ways to provide the necessary equipment and resources for increased levels of defense and response to domestic and foreign terrorism.

All of these coordinated efforts reflect NIU’s commitment to creating a safe environment for students. Prevention and education programs in addition to the hiring of more police officers have assisted the university in advancing this goal. The Department of Public Safety and other campus units with responsibility for the oversight of student activities compile the university’s crime statistics using the definitions from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. The overall trend in the total number of offenses at on-campus, non-campus, and public property sites has shown a significant decrease from 2000 to 2002. In 2000 the total number of offenses was 101, in 2001 the total number was 96 offenses, and in 2002 the total number was 57 offenses. No discernable pattern was noted in the arrest statistics for alcohol, drug or weapons violations for the most recent three-year period. In 2000, a total of 86 arrests were reported. The number of arrests increased to 172 in 2001, but decreased to 95 in 2002.

**CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE**

Eight large infrastructure projects totaling more than $12 million were completed between 1994 and 2002: a chiller project, an electrical project, a water line and storm water project, fuel tank removal, a residence hall landscaping and site improvement project, and two street projects. These projects have not only increased the comfort and convenience of the members of the campus community, but have also addressed safety, environmental, and cost-cutting concerns.

Over $1 million has been spent on heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning capital projects over the last 10 years. There have also been some automation projects that allow these systems to be monitored from the Heating Plant. These automation projects are essential because while
new buildings have been opened in the past ten years, no additional staff have been hired. A number of ongoing, smaller infrastructure plumbing and steam system projects were also completed over the last ten years.

In 1993, a steam conservation program was initiated. Almost 100 new steam-operated condensation pumps were installed along with the necessary piping to return condensed steam to the Heating Plant. This steam conservation program decreased the amount of heat, chemicals, and fresh water needed to produce the quantity and quality of steam required. Steam traps were added as were many pressure-regulating valves. This program resulted in steam being distributed more efficiently and at a lower cost.

In several of its infrastructure projects, NIU has taken advantage of performance contracting projects that have proven to be financially beneficial. In a performance contract there is no capital outlay to fund the project. Instead, energy and operational savings are guaranteed by the contractor that funds the project. The contract includes the finance charges for up to ten years and shifts the technical and financial risks from the university to the contractor. One performance contract was used to upgrade the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and associated controls for the Convocation Center in 2002, by installing new variable-frequency drive and controls for chilled water pump motors. A second performance contract was used with the installation of the new outdoor air-damper assemblies for air handling units in DuSable Hall.

Additional performance contracting opportunities being considered for potential energy savings include:

- The final phase of the west chiller plant project to include Stevenson Complex, Grant Complex, the Recreation Center
- Construction of a thermal energy storage system to operate with the west heating plant
- The replacement of single pane windows in campus buildings
- Reduced water consumption through the replacement of current water closets, urinals, sinks, faucets, and showerheads in nine buildings on campus

There are several major heating, ventilation, air conditioning, plumbing, and water projects proposed for the future. These include a campus chilled water production and distribution project (estimated at $8.0 million); campus roadway repairs (estimated at $3.4 million); electrical distribution systems (estimated at $3.6 million); Montgomery, Reavis, and Watson Halls heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system replacement (estimated at $5.3 million); elevator rehabilitation and renovation (estimated at $1.4 million); and campus water supply plan and modifications (estimated at ...
$7.0 million). These are major, general revenue infrastructure projects dependent upon the approval of Illinois Board of Higher Education capital development funds.

**Electrical Infrastructure**

There have been a number of important projects completed within the last ten years, including the renovation to the Glidden electrical substation. There was a major failure in 2001 in the Carroll Avenue electrical substation which caused electrical outages primarily in Neptune Residence hall. Temporary repairs were made at the time and the permanent repairs are scheduled for December of 2002. NIU used two performance contracts for lighting replacement projects, including the installation of new lighting fixtures, lamps, ballasts, ceiling systems, three-way switches in classrooms, exit signs, and lenses, and the replacement of incandescent lamps with compact florescent lamps.

The electrical wiring infrastructure throughout campus is past its life expectancy. Mechanical-room electrical service for temperature, motors, and motor control centers need continual repair and upgrading. Upgrading the electrical wiring infrastructure will become a top priority over the next few years. Substations in each building should be overhauled, and systems should be regularly tested and lubricated. Currently, repairs and maintenance are done as outages occur. In the fall of 2002, emergency repairs were completed in all of the student rooms of A and B Towers of the Grant Complex including checking the neutral wires and replacing the receptacles and distribution panels on each floor. The same repairs are needed for C and D Towers.

**Summary**

While a number of infrastructure projects have been completed in the past 10 years, more are needed. The number of large projects could be greatly reduced by funding an ongoing preventive-maintenance plan for the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, electrical, and plumbing systems, and for roadways. Situations are complicated by the fact that the replacement parts for 40-year-old systems are no longer available; consequently, many of the large infrastructure repairs are done in response to breakdowns. A funded preventive maintenance plan would allow for careful future planning so that similar projects could be grouped and related projects could be sequenced properly. A preventive maintenance plan would prevent costly and unsafe breakdowns and extend the life of the replacement systems. The electrical infrastructure is in need of immediate attention. The repair of tunnel systems is also critical for the safety of the personnel who do electrical and piping repairs, asbestos abatement, and water removal.

The past 10 years at NIU have been a period of significant new construction.
The past 10 years at NIU have been a period of significant new construction. Additionally, university resources have been devoted to fund smaller projects that enhance or complete larger, new construction projects. There has been considerable future planning for the west campus and far west campus as described in the master plan documents. There now needs to be an in-depth infrastructure assessment providing a schedule not only for continuing maintenance of new systems, but also for the replacement of old systems. These maintenance and replacement programs will necessarily demand a corresponding increase in architectural, engineering, heating plant, and physical plant staff.

The new buildings have resulted in new parking areas, but there are still many campus roadways that are crumbling, especially those serving the residence halls. Some repairs along the residence hall bus routes were done in summer 2000, but the adjoining roads must now be completed. Elevators need to be installed in those residence halls that are not yet compliant with ADA regulations. There are academic residential programs that should be available to all students, but will not be until elevators are installed in four facilities: Lincoln, Douglas, and Neptune East and North.

The door-access infrastructure in the residences halls needs to be updated. Student room doors still have key-cores that are very costly to replace when keys are lost, and security is compromised while the replacements are made. These residence hall room locks should be converted as soon as possible to card swipe access systems in which the NIU OneCard can be used to open the doors of student rooms. If a card is lost, the card and entry codes can be quickly and inexpensively replaced.

It is also recommended that the Division of Finance and Facilities conduct the same type of assessment for bond revenue buildings that is done for general revenue buildings. A certain percentage of the funds generated should be reserved to fund a preventive maintenance and infrastructure replacement program for bond revenue buildings.

REGIONAL FACILITIES AND SITES

NIU Hoffman Estates
In August of 1992, NIU opened the doors on its new 46,000-square-foot Hoffman Estates Education Center. Now known as NIU Hoffman Estates, this facility is a major component of NIU’s efforts to meet the increasing demands for higher education in the western and northwestern suburbs of Chicago. NIU built the center on land donated by Sears, Roebuck, and Co. and the Village of Hoffman Estates on a site adjacent to the Sears Merchandise Group Headquarters. The center is an example of the type of initiative with which NIU has met the decreasing levels of state funding.
over the past few years. Through the use of innovative financing, rental charges to non-NIU users, and course delivery fees charged to students taking various credit and noncredit courses at the site, NIU was able to construct the Hoffman Estates facility without the use of state funds.

NIU Hoffman Estates is in the Prairie Stone corporate area, located directly off of Interstate Route 90. The center features 14 classrooms (four tiered classrooms, six flat classrooms, four executive training rooms), seven conference/breakout rooms (four breakout rooms, three seminar rooms), three computer laboratories, a small library, a 250-seat auditorium, and an attractive atrium. Extensive audio-visual and computer-projection equipment is available throughout the facility, and most rooms can be easily reconfigured into a number of different seating arrangements, allowing for a wide variety of presentation and student-engagement styles. The facility has a complete conference center staff, lobby and reception area with a receptionist, professional support, facsimile capabilities, copiers, a librarian, and computer director and technician. There is parking for 175 vehicles in the main lot, with additional parking available in the Sears lot across the street. In addition to the over 35 eating facilities within 10 miles of the center, on-site event catering can be arranged.

NIU Hoffman Estates has been a success ever since it opened. Approximately 85 percent of its students attending classes are graduate students. Programs currently available at NIU Hoffman Estates include baccalaureate degrees in general studies and nursing, and master’s programs in business administration, nursing, computer science, and education. Additional graduate and undergraduate course work is offered in the visual arts, communication, gerontology, physical education, public administration, engineering, and engineering technology.

Demand for instructional facilities at NIU Hoffman Estates remains high, with almost every evening and weekend instructional room booked for credit courses. Most rooms are used during the day for either credit courses or professional training/conference rental activities. The location of NIU Hoffman Estates is one that serves a steady stream of students who want to continue their education with high-quality programs but who are limited in their ability to travel to NIU’s main campus due to job and family responsibilities. Currently NIU Hoffman Estates serves more than 4,000 students annually, offering more than 80 classes per semester. Additional funds are being sought to expand NIU Hoffman Estates, adding over 50,000 square feet of space to accommodate academic, continuing education, workforce training, and development needs.
**NIU Rockford**

In December 1990, Arthur Weaver donated 10 acres of land on East State Street in the city of Rockford to NIU for the purpose of future construction of a regional center for the local community. Although it took five additional years to secure the state funding and build the facility, NIU Rockford was able to open its doors to students in August 1995. Since that time, a number of baccalaureate and master’s degree programs have been offered at NIU Rockford, and partnerships have been created with local colleges and businesses to significantly expand the higher education offerings available to the people in the Rockford area.

**NIU Rockford** is located on one of the main streets of the city of Rockford, approximately two miles from Interstate Route 90. The 40,000 square foot facility can accommodate groups of up to 250 people in a variety of rooms ranging from 300 to 3000 square feet. NIU Rockford has two tiered classrooms, five executive classrooms, four seminar rooms, three dining areas, one computer laboratory, a resource center, a 250-seat auditorium, and a two-story atrium. Each meeting room is equipped with a state-of-the-art presentation system, including ceiling mounted video/data projectors, a smart podium with a computer and DVD player, slide and overhead projectors, and plug-ins for portable computers. Full office facilities with facsimile and copy machines are also available. There is parking for 350 vehicles in the main lot. Numerous restaurants, hotels, and entertainment facilities are located nearby, and the facility offers on-site catering.

Undergraduate degrees currently available at NIU Rockford include those in child development, community health, computer science, general studies, industrial technology, and nursing. Master’s degrees offered at the facility are those in business administration, education, industrial management, and public administration. Also offered on-site are credit and non-credit courses. NIU Rockford also houses a tenant, the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a grant-supported training program for the manufacturing community that assists with the implementation of continuous improvement programs (e.g., ISO 9002).

**NIU Naperville**

The university opened its newest regional center, NIU Naperville, in fall 2002. Located in the rapidly developing technology corridor along Interstate Route 88, NIU Naperville is a 113,000-square-foot facility featuring modern classroom design, meeting and breakout room facilities, and the application of instructional technologies. This center continues NIU’s commitment to supporting both traditional and non-traditional students’ academic goals within the southwest suburbs of Chicago, as well as serving the training needs of both corporations and individuals.
NIU Naperville has twelve classrooms (tiered, flat, seminar, conference, and breakout), two computer laboratories, a small library, a 180-seat auditorium, and a 4,500-square-foot multipurpose special events room. Extensive audio-visual and computer-projection equipment is available throughout the facility, and most rooms can be easily reconfigured into a number of different seating arrangements to accommodate a variety of class and meeting needs. The facility has a complete conference center staff and full-time technical staff, as well as a reception area with a receptionist, facsimile services, and copiers. There is also a parking facility for 550 vehicles. Numerous restaurants are located within a five-mile radius of the facility, and several hotels are within walking distance. Full catering services can be arranged on-site.

NIU Naperville has grown, in just a few short years, into one of the most popular regional learning locations for NIU’s students. NIU Naperville currently hosts a number of degree programs, primarily those at the master’s level: business administration, computer science, education, and public administration. The site is also extremely popular for off-campus courses in a number of disciplines, both undergraduate and graduate. NIU is currently considering bringing a number of additional programs to the facility, including programs offered by the Colleges of Business, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Engineering and Engineering Technology.

Since its opening, demand for classrooms and meeting facilities at NIU Naperville has been high. Most classrooms are reserved every evening and weekend for credit courses. The center is busy during the daytime with professional training activities and meetings. NIU Naperville also houses Business and Industry Services, a university training, consulting, and quality assurance unit, as well as the North Central Regional Education Laboratory, which is dedicated to providing high-quality, research-based resources to educators and policymakers in seven Midwest states.

**Lorado Taft Field Campus and NIU Nature Preserves**

The Lorado Taft Field Campus (the former Eagle’s Nest Art Colony), located near Oregon, Illinois, is a 141-acre multipurpose education center. The peaceful environment of the field campus lends itself to informal interaction while focusing on the task at hand. In addition to university and non-university conferences, workshops, meetings, and retreats, more than 7,000 children and teachers from the NIU service region attend the environmental education program each year. This residential program ranges from two to six days in length and provides schools with significant opportunities to expose their students to the natural world. Additionally, more than 4,000 people attend various conference programs at the Lorado Taft Field Campus annually, primarily on the weekends and during the
summer. Programs attract NIU groups and departments, as well as high school, youth, and adult groups of all kinds.

The Lorado Taft Field Campus contains three dormitories, 10 classroom/meeting spaces, a dining hall, and a library to service its clientele. The campus has a full-time staff of 27, and operates 24 hours a day as a residential center. In addition to the Lorado Taft Field Campus, NIU manages three nature preserve areas: Boyle Prairie, Burch Woods Preserve, and Pine Rock Preserve, totaling an approximate 200 additional acres of preserve area. All are located between DeKalb and Oregon, Illinois.

EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES

The physical plant and related facilities at NIU currently are both capable and adequate to accomplish the educational and research missions of the university. The recent commissioning of new facilities such as Barsema Hall and the Convocation Center coupled with significant improvements to the campus infrastructure and the continued efforts for future improvements have presented the university with a unique opportunity to better serve its constituents. NIU has also made rapid progress in the area of transportation infrastructure as reflected in the investments made in the road, street, sidewalk, and parking improvements. These are well supported and served by improvements made in campus transportation and public safety departments.

New facilities such as the 113,000-square-foot, $20 million facility at Naperville added to the facilities in Rockford and Hoffman Estates have supplemented NIU’s capability to better serve its off-campus constituents. Effective partnerships with community colleges will further supplement NIU’s ability to serve off-campus constituents effectively.

Clearly the needs for future expansion of the campus and its services and programs will outweigh available current resources. As a result, the institution must continue the delicate balance between identifying and mobilizing additional resources and setting priorities for in the allocation of such resources.

INTERNAL BUDGET DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

NIU operates on two types of funds: appropriated and non-appropriated. Appropriated funds come from the state general revenue tax base, and the non-appropriated funds come from a variety of sources: tuition and fees, room and board charges, grant and contract awards, gate receipts from athletic events, sales from auxiliary operations, and the sales and services of certain educational activities. In FY03, the operating budget’s composition
is 34.7 percent from appropriated funds and 65.3 percent from non-appropriated funds.

**Operational Funding - Appropriated and Non-appropriated Funds**

Legislation enacted during the summer of 1996 reclassified income funds from appropriated to non-appropriated. University income funds are the revenues generated primarily from tuition and fee collections. This change has had a significant impact on university operations, as these funds are now retained locally. Prior to local retention of the income fund, the university had to wait one year to adjust its spending authority in relation to enrollment. The availability of income fund resources in the same year in which they are generated allows a more immediate response to instructional program needs and student demand. More precisely, NIU can respond more quickly to changing enrollment patterns, using available income funds to employ additional faculty if enrollment increases beyond projected levels. Furthermore, the university is allowed to conservatively invest these funds according to NIU Board of Trustee regulations and state laws, rules, and regulations.

The general revenue appropriation in FY00 was the first lump sum allocation to universities by the Illinois General Assembly. The enactment of the lump sum appropriation eliminated the need to request line-item transfers from the state, largely due to the flexibility provided by the local retention of the income funds. The university continues to record expenditures and budget at the detail object-line level as external reporting is still required at that level. Expenditures from appropriated funds are subject to state guidelines.

Non-appropriated cost centers are subject to many of the same guidelines as those operating with appropriated funds. Several departments, such as printing services, transportation, telecommunications, computing, and building maintenance, are operated as sales and service units that bill internally for goods/services.

**Budget Process**

There are two separate budget processes that overlap: the process to request appropriated operating funds for the next fiscal year and the internal budget development of the operating cost centers.

The process to request appropriated operating funds is based upon an incremental approach. That is, the current year’s base budget is the starting point and new funds are requested for cost increases, new or expanded programs, and operating new buildings. Cost increases cover items such as salary increments, general price increases, utilities, and library materials.
New or expanded program budget requests include both academic and administrative priorities.

The appropriated budget request process begins approximately 17 months in advance of the start of the fiscal year with the Illinois Board of Higher Education adopting the budget development schedule. Two months later, the higher board issues broad parameters for the development of the operating and capital budget recommendations for the next fiscal year, and communicates specific state-level budget priorities to institutions.

Once the higher board’s guidelines are known, university officials develop institutional recommendations for the operating budget request guidelines. The appropriated budget request starts with the preceding year’s base. The budget guidelines indicate the amount of incremental funds to be requested to fund cost increases, new or expanded programs, and operational costs of new buildings. These recommendations are presented to the Board of Trustees for modification and adoption 11 to 12 months in advance of the new fiscal year.

Once approved, the higher board’s budget request tables can be completed. The budget request submission to the IBHE is due in three parts: July 1, September 1 and October 15. As a supplement to the higher board’s budget request, the university must respond to a list of Technical Questions. Responses are due September 1, September 15, and October 15.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education officials come to campus in September or October to meet with university officials. This provides an opportunity for the institution to communicate its priorities and areas of concern, and to show the members of the IBHE staff recent changes to the campus and point out specific needs. Typically, the higher board strives to have their draft recommendations, referred to as the “discussion budget,” completed by November 1. This allows the university the opportunity to review the draft recommendations and provide feedback to the higher board prior to them making their final recommendation to the governor. This process gives the university the opportunity for additional input. The IBHE issues its budget recommendation to the governor in early December. In late December, the Illinois State Legislature sends each institution questions and tables to complete that supplement the budget request. The responses are due in late January. The Illinois General Assembly may request additional information throughout the legislative session.

In early February, the governor’s budget recommendations are made public. The budget is then drafted as a state appropriation bill and begins its journey through the legislative process. In early April, the legislature appropriation hearings take place at the Capitol. At the hearings, the
The budget process at NIU for all funds is linked to the overall planning process of the institution. The internal budget development process for all funds begins in early spring, prior to the start of the new fiscal year. This is a consultative process where a budget request for each and every cost center is prepared and reviewed. The vice presidents have the authority to reallocate budget authority to fund institutional priorities.

Non-appropriated budgets also tend to be built on an incremental basis. The same cost increase guidelines for salary increments and utilities established for the appropriated budget apply to non-appropriated budgets. The biggest difference is that the budgets are also based upon the revenue stream. Expenditure budgets will be adjusted according to revenue estimates.

During each fiscal year, numerous internal budget reviews occur for both appropriated and non-appropriated cost centers. This is a consultative process where every cost center’s budget report is reviewed and compared to the actual budget. As a result, all levels of management are aware of the budget position.

**Capital Budget Process**

There are two ways in which the capital budget is funded at the university. One is through the State of Illinois for academic and related facilities. The second is through the Board of Trustees’ authorization to issue revenue bonds for non-instructional facilities. The capital budget for the university follows essentially the same process as that of the appropriated funds operating budget request. The major difference is projects that are financed by revenue bonds do not require legislative approval. Two types of appropriated capital funds are requested: regular capital and capital renewal. The regular capital projects are major projects while the capital renewal projects are significantly smaller in scope and cost.

Capital projects are related to the university mission, and address safety issues or improve the quality of life for students, faculty and staff, including...
infrastructure and ADA compliance. Over the last 15 years, three master plans have been developed for the campus: the Sasaki Report, the North Forty Master Plan, and the Far West Campus Master Plan. These plans provide direction to capital planning for many years to come. For example, the newly developed Far West Campus Master Plan is a 50-year plan.

Typically, capital funds are appropriated directly to the Capital Development Board (CDB) on behalf of the university. To provide additional oversight to projects managed by the Capital Development Board, a university employee who has facilities planning expertise is assigned to each project. This arrangement has been extremely beneficial as the board project managers are working on numerous projects across the state and they only visit campus periodically. The daily presence of a university employee overseeing the project has helped to keep projects on track.

**Long-Term Trends**

In order to analyze the long-term trends in resource allocation at NIU, the records of revenues and expenditures contained in the university's annual reports for the fiscal years ended on June 30, 1991 and June 30, 2001 were compared. The process was repeated for the major administrative subdivisions of the university.

From June 1991 to June 2001, the Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U) went from 136.0 to 178.0. This translates to a 30.88 percent decline in purchasing power. In the period reviewed, appropriations of state funds declined from 42.8 percent to 36.8 percent of total revenues. The state appropriation revenue category is the only revenue source that did not keep up with the consumer price index. Increases in tuition and fee revenues, from 21.8 percent to 25.6 percent, partially offset the decline in state appropriations.

Expenditures have increased across all significant categories. The most notable increase in expenditures is debt service payments. The percent changes among expenditure categories were insignificant. Some of the percent changes may be due to reorganizations and reporting methodologies. For example, while it looks like institutional support expenditures increased and physical plant expenditures decreased, the net change combined is a 0.3 percent decrease.

In closing, the university annually reviews its budget and reallocates funds to address institutional priorities. Overall, the financial status of the university has been relatively stable over the time period reviewed. The declining percent of state appropriations is a significant concern for NIU.
FINANCIAL RESOURCES

State and Student Funding
The period 1992 through 2002 saw significant increases in both direct state
appropriations in support of university operations and tuition and fees as
shown in Table 21. State appropriations in support of university operations
increased $32,895,000 or 39 percent. State appropriations for capital
purposes are in addition to these amounts. Tuition and fees increased
$31,152,000 or 67 percent. The balance in funding between these two
categories changed from 64 percent state appropriations versus 36 percent
tuition and fees in 1992, to 60 percent state appropriation versus 40
percent tuition and fees in 2002. Over the past 25 years there has been an
even more dramatic shift. In 1977, the balance was 77 percent state
appropriations versus 23 percent tuition and fees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Direct State Appropriations¹ In Support of University Operations</th>
<th>Tuition &amp; Fees¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>83,625,000</td>
<td>46,786,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>80,217,000</td>
<td>52,455,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>83,731,000</td>
<td>54,096,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>88,589,000</td>
<td>56,942,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>91,537,000</td>
<td>58,073,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>94,467,000</td>
<td>60,441,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>96,971,000</td>
<td>64,969,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>101,460,000</td>
<td>68,593,000</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>105,934,000</td>
<td>70,882,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>111,286,000</td>
<td>77,523,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>116,520,000</td>
<td>77,938,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹In dollars

Two important things happened in 1996. First, the NIU Board of Trustees
was established. For 19 years prior to that, a Board of Regents had governed
NIU with responsibility for not just NIU, but also Illinois State University
and Sangamon State University. Although there is no evidence that
appropriations increased as a result of the separate governing boards, NIU
now receives undivided board attention to address its financial and other
needs. Secondly, the General Assembly legislated changes that enabled all
Illinois public universities the ability to collect, retain, and invest all tuition
and fees, rather than depositing them with the Illinois State Treasurer. This
provides much greater budgetary and operational flexibility for the
universities.
Debt Funding
The university issued debt several times during the review period in order to finance facilities not provided by state funds. In 2001, Moody’s Investor’s Service upgraded the university’s bond rating from A3 to A2, with a stable outlook. The new rating was based on a favorable student market position and balanced operations. A strong bond rating lowers the interest rate NIU pays on debt issued. In August 2001 the university issued $76 million in revenue bonds, primarily to refund bonds then outstanding, and therefore save on interest to be paid in the future. This particular refunding had a present value savings of 4.2 percent, with a total savings of $4.4 million.

Audit Procedures
The university is audited annually. A copy of the annual audits and statements of the University’s financial statements are available upon request from the Assistant Controller, General Accounting Office, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois 60115.

Other
In order to facilitate the management of financial resources, NIU purchased and installed a financial system and a human resource/payroll system. Together, these systems process annual revenues and expenses, each of which total approximately $375 million and are accounted for in 3,500 cost centers. Both implementations were on time and within budget. The systems use current technology, and updates are provided on an ongoing basis by the vendor.

The financial climate in the last two years has changed considerably in the state of Illinois, as it has throughout the nation. In FY02 the state of Illinois cut appropriations for all state agencies, including public higher education, as a result of state revenue shortfalls. Additionally, for the first time, public higher education was asked to fund a portion of health insurance costs.

During FY03, state agencies, including universities, were faced with multiple rescissions. NIU’s share of the rescissions was $3.2 million, most of which became permanent cuts in the base budget. The base budget rescissions, coupled with unfunded requirements related to health insurance and utilities, resulted in a net decrease in the NIU operating budget of approximately $22 million. With over 75 percent of the appropriated and income fund budget devoted to personnel, many faculty and staff searches were frozen and/or terminated, although layoffs were not necessary. Reductions were made in virtually all units of the university. The FY04 budget reflected these base budget reductions. The economic recovery appears to be coming more slowly to Illinois than to some other states. This, coupled with a state-level deficit that still needs to be covered, has
created a scenario in which mid-year rescissions may occur. Through the budget and planning processes presented previously, plans are being developed to address these additional reductions in state support. Primary guiding principles include minimizing both the impact on educational opportunities for students and layoffs of current personnel. Additionally, the governor has recently signed legislation that guarantees a flat tuition rate for four years once a student begins full-time enrollment at an institution. This “truth in tuition” legislation will create some additional challenges in the budget process.

EVALUATION

The overall evaluation for finance and facilities at NIU in the last 10 years is mixed, but generally favorable in many aspects of the university's operations. Throughout the 1990s, the university experienced growth in both its revenue streams and in the increase and improvement in its facilities. These changes enabled NIU to provide opportunities to an increasing number of students. The construction of major new facilities and remodeling of some of the older facilities has lessened the space constraints and greatly enhanced the learning environment. An independent Board of Trustees and the retention of the income fund have enabled the university to respond more quickly to immediate needs, and provided considerable budgetary and operational flexibility. External funding has increased dramatically over the last ten years, and there is a positive outlook on the potential of future external funding activities.

On the other hand, NIU has deferred maintenance needs of almost $82 million; this impacts the effectiveness of some of the instructional facilities. This is further impacted by the costs of using current technology in both teaching and research and artistry. Enrollment is increasing, which challenges the overall physical, instructional, and other resources of the university, but supplements the university's revenue through tuition dollars. The reduction in state financial support constricts the ability to maintain and operate both new and older facilities as well as the ability to provide for the increasing number of students with a decreasing number of tenure and tenure-track faculty. Enrollment management will become increasingly critical, not only to match the number of students to university resources but also to allocate those resources internally to departments and programs with greatest demand. The challenges will be significant; however, the university has the history, reputation, quality programs, personnel, and processes to confront these challenges.
Criteria Addressed
Criterion Two: The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

  h. a physical plant that supports effective teaching and learning
  i. conscientious efforts to provide students with a safe and healthy environment
  k. a pattern of financial expenditures that shows the commitment to provide both the environment and the human resources necessary for effective teaching and learning.
  l. management of financial resources to maximize the institution’s capability to meet its purposes

Criterion Four: The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

  a. a current resource base—financial, physical, and human—that positions the institution for the future
  b. decision-making processes with tested capability of responding effectively to anticipated and unanticipated challenges to the institution
  d. plans as well as ongoing, effective planning processes necessary to the institution's continuance
  e. resources organized and allocated to support its plans for strengthening both the institution and its programs.

Criterion Five: The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

  h. oversight processes for monitoring contractual arrangements with government, industry, and other organizations
Northern Illinois University has met the five criteria for reaccreditation, as well as the 24 General Institutional Requirements. The preceding chapters have addressed the institution’s mission; its organizational structures and planning processes; academic programs and support services; physical, fiscal, and human resources; viability as an institution of higher education; and the integrity of its practices and relationships.

CRITERION ONE

The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

The teaching, research and artistry, and service missions of NIU are well-developed and consistent with the missions of comprehensive universities. Through its print, broadcast, and electronic communications the public is well-informed of NIU’s programs and goals. Decision-making processes within the university include planning initiatives at the executive, administrative, and management levels, and a strong system of shared governance.

CRITERION TWO

The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

NIU has a strong governance structure, made even stronger since the university gained its own Board of Trustees. As part of ongoing internal evaluations, the university has reorganized its administrative units to address effectively the purposes of the institution. The shared governance structure insures that appropriate constituencies are involved in decision-making; faculty predominate in curricular and personnel matters. The institution assures that its faculty have appropriate credentials, and there are sufficient numbers of faculty in each academic unit to meet the educational needs of students. Professional and operating staff provide services that support the university’s mission. Through both university-wide and college-specific units, academic- and student-support structures are provided to meet the needs of a very diverse student population.

NIU’s physical infrastructure has improved over the last decade with both the addition of new facilities and upgrades of existing ones. A very conscious effort is made to provide a safe and healthful environment for all
students, faculty, and staff. The institution’s libraries, laboratories and studios, and resource centers provide important facilities for teaching, learning, research, and artistry. NIU has also made substantial investments in technology to support its overall strategic operations; to enhance its educational, research and artistry, and service and outreach missions; to facilitate communications between and among university constituencies; and to provide access to information, resources, and services for students, faculty, and staff. The university manages its fiscal resources prudently, engages in appropriate oversight of its budget expenditures, and allocates resources to its highest priorities.

CRITERION THREE

The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

The undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs of NIU are clearly defined, coherent, and academically rigorous. The university seeks external validation of the quality of its degree programs eligible for accreditation through their review by professional accrediting agencies. Well-established processes are in place to create new degrees programs; to add, delete, and modify curricular offerings; to review systematically the structures, processes, and outcomes of the university’s degree programs; and to assess students’ achievement of learning outcomes. All degree programs have students enrolled in them, and the university awards degrees to only those students who have fulfilled the academic requirements to earn them.

At the undergraduate level, the general education program promotes an examination of diverse perspectives of inquiry and values, and serves as the foundation for study in the academic majors offered by the university. All undergraduate degree programs are designed to ensure that students achieve the university’s baccalaureate objectives: effective habits in logical thinking, communication and quantitative skills, an understanding of and the ability to use modern technology, sophisticated practices in using resources, mature interpersonal behavior in various settings, and those unique skills necessary for their area of in-depth study. Academic- and student-support services support students in the achievement of their educational goals.

Graduate and professional programs build on the knowledge and skills students acquire at the undergraduate level, and are clearly distinct from baccalaureate degree programs. The curricula of the university’s graduate and professional programs provide students with advanced disciplinary knowledge and skills. A key feature of graduate and professional education at NIU is the engagement of students and faculty in research or artistry appropriate to their disciplines. Faculty and/or students contribute to the creation, application, and transmission of knowledge through scholarly
writing, presentations, performances, and artistic displays in appropriate venues. Faculty teaching in graduate and professional programs must have appropriate academic credentials and experience; in order to maintain graduate faculty status, they must remain productive in their areas of research or artistry.

The faculty and staff have historically been very engaged in service to the university, their professions, and a wide variety of civic, community, and service organizations. The university's commitment to service is further validated through its longstanding efforts to meet the learning needs of individuals ranging from young children to older adults, its consultation and project development initiatives, and engagement in the development of public policy. In recent years, NIU's outreach mission has been strengthened and focused through the creation of the NIU Outreach unit.

**CRITERION FOUR**

The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

Northern Illinois University's evolution from a 19th century teacher's college to a 21st century comprehensive, research university is testament to its resilience in continuing to fulfill its mission and to serve the changing needs of its service region. Under the direction of the NIU Board of Trustees and the leadership of the president and the executive officers, the university engages in ongoing planning processes that position NIU to meet its future. These planning processes ensure that NIU will remain an institution of choice for students, that its reputation for high-quality academic programs will be sustained, that its research and artistry programs will continue to enrich the lives of Illinois citizens, and that its engagement with external constituencies will continue to create dynamic synergies that benefit both the university and the region well into the coming decades.

**CRITERION FIVE**

The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

Institutional governance structures, processes, expectations, and practices are clearly delineated in the policies of the NIU Board of Trustees, the Constitution and Bylaws, academic and business manuals, catalogs, handbooks, and/or numerous print and electronic publications and communications prepared and distributed by the university. NIU undergoes audits conducted by internal and external entities to ensure that its business functions and academic processes are consistent with best practices in
institutions of higher education. Legal instruments ensure that the scope of
the university's relationships with external entities is clearly elucidated.

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Mission
1. It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board
   and made public, declaring it is an institution of higher education.

The NIU Mission and Scope Statement has been adopted by the NIU
Board of Trustees. The mission statement is publicly available through the
university's website. This mission statement acknowledges the commitment
of the university to the teaching of graduate and undergraduate students, as
well as for lifelong education for the citizens of the northern Illinois region.
It also asserts the role of the members of the university community in the
expansion of knowledge through research, scholarship and creative
endeavors, and service to communities.

2. It is a degree-granting institution.

Northern Illinois University offers the following degree programs:

- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Bachelor of General Studies
- Bachelor of Music
- Bachelor of Science
- Bachelor of Science in Education
- Doctor of Audiology
- Doctor of Education
- Doctor of Philosophy
- Educational Specialist
- Juris Doctor
- Master of Arts
- Master of Accounting Science
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Fine Arts
- Master of Music
- Master of Physical Therapy
- Master of Public Administration
- Master of Public Health
- Master of Science
- Master of Science in Education
- Master of Science in Taxation
**Authorization**

3. It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.

Effective January 1, 1996, Northern Illinois University was reauthorized under its new Board of Trustees (ILCS 685/ 30-5). The object of the university, under the Northern Illinois University Law, is as follows: “... to offer such courses of instruction, conduct such research and offer such public services as are prescribed by the Board of Trustees or its successor, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of the Board of Higher Education Act.” Under the Powers and Duties section (ILCS 685/ 3-45) the Board shall have the power “To issue upon the recommendation of the faculty, diplomas to such persons as have satisfactorily completed the required studies of Northern Illinois University, and confer such professional and literary degrees as are usually conferred by other institutions of like character for similar or equivalent courses of study, or such as the Board may deem appropriate.”

4. It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.

Northern Illinois University, a public institution, is by definition an instrumentality of the State of Illinois. The university’s charter affirms its status as a public institution.

**Governance**

5. It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.

According to the Northern Illinois University Law (ILCS 685/ 30-10, “There is hereby created a body politic and corporate which shall be styled the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University (hereinafter called the Board), and which shall operate, manage, control, and maintain Northern Illinois University in accordance with the rights, powers and duties now or hereafter vested by law in that Board.”

6. Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.

The NIU Board of Trustees consists of seven members appointed by the governor and one student trustee elected by the NIU student body. According to the Northern Illinois University Law, “Members of the Board
shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reasonable amounts for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties...No member of the Board shall hold or be employed in or appointed to any office or place under the authority of the Board, nor shall any member of the Board be directly or indirectly interested in any contract made by the Board, nor shall he be an employee of the State or Federal Government” (ILCS 685/30-20)

7. It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

“The President is the chief executive officer of the University. The President shall be appointed by the Board and shall be directly responsible to the Board. The Board prescribes the duties of the President, contracts with the President and, for good cause, can remove the President. The President shall have the authority and responsibility, within the framework of policies established by the Board for the organization, management, direction and general supervision of the University and shall be held accountable by the Board for the effective administration and management of the institution.”

8. Its governing board authorizes the institution’s affiliation with the Commission.

The principles and practices of internal governance at the university are delineated in the Constitution and Bylaws, which the Board of Trustees affirmed. Among the tenets of the constitution is the “...authority to establish its educational and academic policies.”

Faculty

9. It employs a faculty that has earned from accredited institutions the degrees appropriate to the level of instruction offered by the institution.

NIU faculty teach in programs at the baccalaureate, master’s, specialist, and doctoral levels. Of the university’s full-time instructional staff and faculty, 75 percent hold doctoral degrees, 24 percent hold master’s degrees, and 1 percent holds baccalaureate degrees. All members of the full-time faculty in the College of Law hold the Juris Doctor (J.D.). The Graduate Council Professional Standards Committee reviews and recommends for approval each department’s criteria for graduate faculty membership. The minimal requirement for graduate faculty membership is a doctoral degree or performer’s certificate from major schools of art or music.

10. A sufficient number of faculty are full-time employees of the institution.
In the fall 2003, 928 instructors and ranked faculty were full-time employees of NIU.

11. Its faculty has a significant role in developing and evaluating all of the institution’s educational programs.

According to the Constitution and Bylaws, faculty are to predominate in campus shared governance, especially related to the curriculum and educational programs. The voting members of curricular bodies at the department, college, and university levels are faculty. Faculty review and modify existing curricular offerings and approve new ones including courses, minors, certificates of undergraduate and graduate study, emphases, specializations, concentrations, degree programs, and the undergraduate general education program.

In addition to the committees in which the purview is exclusively curricular, there are several other college- and university-level committees whose missions are focused on educational program issues including but not limited to program review, student reinstatement, academic policies and standards, the honors program, and program assessment. These committees include:

- Academic Planning Council
- Academic Reinstatement Committees
- Admission Policies and Academic Standards Committee
- Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
- Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment
- Educational Services and Programs Faculty Advisory Committee
- General Education Committee
- Graduate Council
- Honors Committee
- International Programs Advisory Committee
- University Assessment Panel
- University Outreach Advisory Committee

Educational Programs

12. It confers degrees.

NIU confers degrees at the baccalaureate, master’s, specialist, and doctoral levels, and the Juris Doctor (J.D.).

13. It has degree programs in operation, with students enrolled in them.

All degree programs offered by Northern Illinois University have students enrolled in them. The university received authority from the Illinois Board
of Higher Education to offer the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree program in 2002; the program will admit its first class in fall 2004. The Master of Science degree program in Finance was deleted in 2001; no new students have been admitted to the program, however students already enrolled in the program will be able to complete it.

14. Its degree programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and are based on recognized fields of study at the higher education level.

The degree programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and are based on recognized fields of study. These criteria have been affirmed in the degree approval process and are reaffirmed through the program review and curricular processes.

15. Its degrees are appropriately named, following practices common to institutions of higher education in terms of both length and content of the programs.

The degrees offered by NIU are named in manners consistent with naming practices within the disciplines. All baccalaureate degrees require a minimum of 120 semester hours of course work. All master’s degree programs require the completion of a baccalaureate degree and a minimum of 30 semester hours of course work. In doctoral programs, students must earn a minimum of 90 hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. These requirements are consistent with practices in institutions of higher education.

16. Its undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement consistent with the institution’s mission and designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry.

NIU’s undergraduate degree programs include a coherent general education requirement designed to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry. The general education program includes requirements in core competencies: communication, English, and mathematics; and in distributive studies in four areas: the humanities and arts, science and mathematics, the social sciences, and interdisciplinary studies. The general education program is consistent with the university’s mission to “…meet the needs of students for liberal, professional, technical, and lifelong education.”

17. It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution’s mission and appropriate to its educational programs.
Admissions policies are included in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 14-26), and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (pp. 15-20). In addition to the requirements for admission to the university, the criteria for enrollment in limited admissions programs at the undergraduate level are specified (pp. 17-24). At the graduate level, students must be admitted to the Graduate School (pp. 15-20). Additional requirements for graduate degrees (pp. 31-35) are published, and program-specific requirements are included in the department section of the catalog.

18. It provides its students access to those learning resources and support services requisite for its degree programs.

Northern Illinois University provides a wide range of learning resources and support services to assist all of its students. Students have access to learning resources that include but are not limited to library collections, reference services, the Internet, adaptive technologies, laboratories and studios, equipment and instruments, computers, software packages, and media. The university also provides students with an extensive set of support services including advising; tutoring; supplemental instruction; counseling; accommodation for learning disabilities, and hearing and visual impairments; cooperative education; and career planning.

**Finances**

19. It has an external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency at least every two years.

Northern Illinois University is audited by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency annually.

20. Its financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs.

NIU appropriates its resources in a manner that allows the institution to meet its mission. Approximately 70 percent of the university's budget is appropriated to support instruction, and academic- and student-support services.

21. Its financial practices, records, and reports demonstrate fiscal viability.

According to the Financial and Compliance Audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002, the university's economic outlook indicated fiscal viability. Student enrollments are strong, with increases in projected tuition revenue. The university anticipates continued revenue from sponsored projects, and the NIU Board of Trustees and administration are committed to continuing the university's strong financial position to support the missions of

22. Its catalog or other official documents includes its mission statement along with accurate descriptions of its educational programs and degree requirements, its learning resources, its academic and non-academic policies and procedures directly affecting students, its charges and refund policies, and the academic credentials of its faculty and administrators.

The NIU Mission and Scope Statement (URL) is included on the NIU website. Excerpts of the mission statement that are relevant to specific audiences are also included in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (p. 9) and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (p. 7).

The listing of the education programs and degrees offered at NIU are presented in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 11-12), and in the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (pp. 9-11). General degree requirements for undergraduate degrees (pp. 27-36) and graduate degrees (pp. 31-35) are included in the respective catalogs, and within the department information for the academic units that offer the degree programs.

Learning resources are summarized in the section on university services sections of the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 61-65) and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (pp. 49-53). The 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog also includes a description of additional units specifically related to scholarly activities of relevance to graduate students (pp. 46-48).

Academic policies and procedures directly affecting students are included in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 40-48) and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (pp. 21-30). For those departments having additional academic policies and procedures, information is included in department sections of the respective catalogs, and in the section on teacher certification requirements (pp. 37-39 in the Undergraduate Catalog, and pp. 36-38 of the Graduate Catalog). Additional policies and procedures that may affect students directly or indirectly are published in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. Non-academic policies and procedures are published in the Student Judicial Code.

Fee and refund policies are printed in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (pp. 49-52) and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (pp. 39-42).
The academic credentials of the faculty are printed in the department sections of each of the respective catalogs. The credentials of the university’s administrators are included in the 2003-2004 Undergraduate Catalog (p. 298) and the 2003-2004 Graduate Catalog (p. 263).

23. It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.

Accreditation and affiliation statuses are reported in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Accreditation and affiliation information is also listed on the NIU website. These accreditations include:

- Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
- American Bar Association
- American Psychological Association
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International
- Commission on Accreditation/Approval for Dietetics Education
- Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy
- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Commission on the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs
- Council on Education for Public Health
- Council on Rehabilitation Education
- National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences
- National Association of Industrial Technology
- National Association of Schools of Music
- National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration
- National Association of Schools of Theatre
- National Collegiate Athletic Association
- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
- National Schools of Art and Design
- The Higher Learning Commission
- University Council for Educational Administration

24. It makes available upon request information that accurately describes its financial condition.

Copies of Northern Illinois University’s audited financial statements are available upon request from the Assistant Controller, General Accounting Office, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois, 60115.
REQUEST FOR REACCREDITATION

Northern Illinois University requests continued accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as indicated on the Statement of Affiliation Status. The university requests no change in its affiliation status.
APPENDIX A

SELF STUDY COMMITTEES
SELF STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE

Jan Rintala, Chair
Linda Sons, History/Governance
William Goldenberg, Mission/Planning
Robin Moremen, Student Services
David Wade, Undergraduate Programs
Nancy Long and Gordon Shneider, Graduate/Professional Programs
Ron Carter and Dan Gebo, Research/Artistry
Jenny Parker, Outreach Services
Michael Gonzales, Academic Support
Susan Deskis, Libraries/Galleries/Museums
Jim Lockard, Technology Support
Heidi Koenig, Human Resources/Services
Promod Vohra, Finance/Physical Facilities

Virginia Cassidy, Ex-Officio
Craig Barnard, Ex-Officio
Donna Askins, Ex-Officio
Phyllis Pleckham, Secretary
SUBCOMMITTEES

History/Governance
Chair: Linda Sons, Mathematical Sciences
Membership:
- Rich Becker, Biology
- Judy Burgess, International Training Office
- Nolan Davis, Office of the President
- Glen Gildemeister, Regional History Center
- Dan Griffiths, Biology
- David Kyvig, History
- Wilma Miranda, Educational Psychology and Foundations
- Rita Reynolds, Graduate School
- Sue Willis, Physics

Resource Personnel:
- Anne Kaplan, Administration and University Outreach
- J. Ivan Legg, Office of the Provost
- Virginia Cassidy, Office of the Provost

Mission/Planning
Chair: William Goldenberg, Music
Membership:
- Jeanne Isabel, Clinical Lab Sciences
- Heather Hardy, English
- Lois Self, Communication
- Rick Ridnour, Marketing

Resource Personnel:
- J. Ivan Legg, Office of the Provost
- Virginia Cassidy, Office of the Provost

Student Services
Chair: Robin Moremen, Sociology
Membership:
- Bert Simpson, University Programming and Activities
- Ellen Anderson, Career Planning and Placement
- Stacy Allie, External Affairs, Athletics
- Margie Cook, University Programming and Activities
- John Sweeney, Campus Recreation
- Michael Coakley, Student Housing and Dining Services
- Kathy Hotelling, Counseling and Student Development
- Amy Havasi, Health Enhancement
- Dan Weilbaker, Marketing
- Rick Clark, University Programming and Activities
- Sandi Kuchynka, Health and Human Sciences
Resource Personnel:
  Gary Gresholdt, Student Affairs
  Michelle Emmett, Student Affairs
  Robert Wheeler, Office of the Provost

Undergraduate Programs
Chair: David Wade, Management
Membership:
  Diann Musial, Educational Psychology and Foundations
  Kelly Hall, Communicative Disorders
  Joel Stephen, Mathematical Sciences
  David Changnon, Geography
  Jay Wagle, Marketing
  Mary Pritchard, Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences
  Jule Scarbrough, Technology
  Bob Self, English
  Sally Conklin, Counseling, Adult and Health Education
  Michael L. Mazzola, Foreign Languages and Literatures
  Leroy Mitchell, CHANCE Program
  Diana Swanson, English
  Gary Baker, Chemistry and Biochemistry
  Sandra Stegman, Music
  Fred Smith, Liberal Arts and Sciences

Resource Personnel:
  Bob Burk, Admissions
  Rich Holly, Visual and Performing Arts
  Diane Jackman, Education
  Don Larson, Registration and Records
  Sharon Miller, Health and Human Sciences
  Bill Talon, Business
  Promod Vohra, Engineering and Engineering Technology
  Robert Wheeler, Office of the Provost

Graduate/Professional Programs
Co-Chairs: Nancy Castle, Communicative Disorders; Gordon Shneider, Law
Membership:
  Jon Carnahan, Chemistry and Biochemistry
  Karen Cole, Teaching and Learning
  Terry Bishop, Management
  Gerald Aase, Operations Management and Information Systems
  Lynn Neeley, Management
  Parviz Payvar, Mechanical Engineering
  Greg Waas, Psychology
  Michael Peddle, Public Administration
Jim Thomas, Sociology
Laurie Zittel, Kinesiology and Physical Education

Resource Personnel:
David Graf, Business
Harold Kafer, Visual and Performing Arts
Romaldus Kasuba, Engineering and Engineering Technology
Frederick Kitterle, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Carla Montgomery, Graduate School
Leroy Pernell, Law
Shirley Richmond, Health and Human Sciences
Christine Sorensen, Education
Jerrold Zar, Graduate School

Research/Artistry
Co-Chairs: Ron Carter, Music; Dan Gebo, Anthropology
Membership:
Paul Bauer, Music
Carol DeMoranville, Marketing
Jim Erman, Chemistry and Biochemistry
Larry Gregory, Art
Sue Ouellette, Communicative Disorders
Sherilynn Spear, Allied Health Professions
Susan Vogel, Literacy Education

Resource Personnel:
David Graf, Business
Harold Kafer, Visual and Performing Arts
Romaldus Kasuba, Engineering and Engineering Technology
Frederick Kitterle, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Murali Krishnamurthi, Faculty Development
Carla Montgomery, Graduate School
Leroy Pernell, Law
Shirley Richmond, Health and Human Sciences
Linda Schwarz, Office of Sponsored Projects
Christine Sorensen, Education

Service and Outreach
Chair: Jenny Parker, Kinesiology and Physical Education
Membership:
Deborah Booth, Visual and Performing Arts
Barbara Burrell, Public Opinion Laboratory
Mark Cordes, Law
Kathy Gilmer, NIU Hoffman Estates
Dan Hamil, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Brigid Lusk, Nursing
Brad Pietens, Education
Promod Vohra, Engineering and Engineering Technology
Brian Vollmert, Business Outreach
Harry Wright, Business
Carol Zar, Center for Governmental Studies

Resource Personnel:
Anne Kaplan, Administration and University Outreach
Promod Vohra, Engineering and Engineering Technology
Kathryn Buettner, State and Federal Relations

**Academic Support**
Chair: Michael Gonzales, Center for Latino and Latin American Studies
Membership:
Monique Bernoudy, Student-Athletic Support Services
Dan Bingley, Co-operative Education/Internship Programs
Sue Doederlein, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Shevawn Eaton, ACCESS
Fran Giordano, Counseling, Adult and Health Education
Laverne Gyant, Center for Black Studies
Nancy Kasinski, Center for Access-Ability Resources
Lori Marcellus, Business
Lina Ong, International Training Office
Rick Orem, Literacy Education
Brad Peters, English

Resource Personnel:
Cary Groth, Intercollegiate Athletics
Deborah Pierce, International Programs
Robert Wheeler, Office of the Provost
Admasu Zike, Office of the Provost

**Libraries/Galleries/Museums**
Chair: Susan Deskis, English
Membership:
Bill Bursuck, Teaching and Learning
Trudy DeWaters, Nursing
Peggy Doherty, Art Museum
Charletta Gutierrez, Operations Management and Information Systems
Nestor Osorio, University Libraries
Jeff Parness, Law
Jennie VerSteeg, University Libraries
Ann Wright-Parsons, Anthropology

Resource Personnel:
Harold Kafer, Visual and Performing Arts
John Austin, Law Library
Arthur Young, University Libraries
Technology and Technological Support
Chair: Jim Lockard, Education
Membership:
- Radha Balamuralikrishna, Technology
- Steve Builta, Education
- Kim Hensley, Information Services
- Keith Lowman, Media Services
- T.J. Lusher, University Libraries
- Jody Newman-Ryan, Communicative Disorders
- Cindy Phillips, NIU TEL Telecommunications
- Michael Rothamer, Testing Services
- Carol Scheidenhelm, Faculty Development

Resource Personnel:
- Wally Czerniak, Information Technology Services
- Jerry Gilmer, Testing Services
- Frederick Schwantes, Office of the Provost

Human Resources/Services
Chair: Heidi Koenig, Public Administration
Membership:
- Karen Baker, Diversity Resources
- Bobbie Cesarek, Intercollegiate Athletics
- Sara Clayton, International Programs
- Deb Haliczer, Human Resource Services
- Malcolm L. Morris, Law
- Mary Munroe, University Libraries
- Gene Roth, Counseling, Adult and Health Education
- Dave Rusin, Mathematical Sciences
- Andy Small, Chemistry and Biochemistry

Resource Personnel:
- Steve Cunningham, Human Resource Services
- Anne Kaplan, Administration and University Outreach

Finance/Physical Facilities
Chair: Promod Vohra, Engineering and Engineering Technology
Membership:
- Madan Annavarjula, Business
- James Barr, Finance and Facilities
- Abby Chemers, Budget and Planning
- Jeffrey Hecht, Educational Technology, Research and Assessment
- Ada Hetland, Nursing
- Elizabeth Kay, Physical Therapy
- Robert Miller, Finance
- Deb Pettit, Public Safety
- Linda Tillis, Housing and Dining Services
Resource Personnel:
Anne Kaplan, Administration and University Outreach
Frederick Schwantes, Office of the Provost
Eddie Williams, Finance and Facilities
APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS
DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

President

Vice President for University Advancement

Administrative Assistant

NIU Alumni Association Board of Directors

NIU Foundation Board of Directors

Office of Alumni Relations

Office of Publications

Office of Special Events

Office of Development