Assurance Argument:
Criterion 1 - Mission

1 - Mission

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution’s mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution’s academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Wichita State University is to be an essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good.

— 1.A.1. —

Wichita State University’s most recent mission and vision statements emerged from a year-long process of discernment and planning. The process was initiated in fall 2012 by President John Bardo, who sought to engage all campus constituencies and the Wichita community in the planning effort.

A steering committee was appointed representing faculty, staff, students, and local business and civic leaders. The committee was co-chaired by Cindy Claycomb, professor of marketing in WSU’s Barton School of Business, and Ed O’Malley, CEO of the Kansas Leadership Center. Committee members conducted numerous public forums on campus and throughout the Wichita area. They collected input from a wide range of sources including but not limited to research, economic analyses, community profiles and internal plans from various WSU departments. This information was analyzed and summarized in a compendium of secondary data.

The strategic plan, implemented in three phases, represents a bold step forward for WSU, but is grounded in a historic close connection between the university, Wichita, and south-central Kansas. Fully implemented, the strategic plan formalizes WSU’s capabilities in applied learning, research, innovation and technology transfer, student life and academic excellence. The mission and plan were approved by the Kansas Board of Regents on June 19, 2013.

The concept of innovation is central to the strategic plan (see 1.B.2. and 1.D.1.) as presented to KBOR in January 2014. Emerging from the plan, the innovation university has come about as a way
to achieve the strategic plan's focus on applied learning and research by encouraging and advancing new ideas, or connecting them to existing concepts. Specifically it is designed to:

- Bring university researchers, students and industry together to share ideas that will drive change;
- Break down walls and move beyond traditional learning to provide real-world student experiences; and
- Foster an environment where risk-taking is encouraged.

— 1.A.2. —

**Academic Programs**

Following adoption of the university's strategic plan (Phase I), the vision and mission statements became the standards to chart a new course for the university while ensuring that WSU remains dedicated to the livelihood of those who call Kansas home. WSU's academic colleges/units (College of Education, College of Engineering, College of Fine Arts, College of Health Professions, Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College, Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Institute for Interdisciplinary Creativity, University Libraries) were tasked with clarifying and adopting strategies to support the overall mission.

Phase II of the strategic planning process involved each of these core academic units (with the exception of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Creativity, which is just now being formalized). During the 2013-2014 academic year, each college and department was tasked with clarifying and adopting strategies that supported the overall mission by developing its own strategic plans. Other areas of the university such as Career Development and Online Learning also became active in the strategic planning process and adopted goals developed for day-to-day operations.

As an essential educational driver WSU provides 58 bachelor and 57 graduate programs, with 77 percent of undergraduates and 55 percent of graduate students attending full-time.

The university mission is supported through local, national and international partnerships, and WSU students achieve success through such endeavors as the Cooperative Education and Work-Based Learning program housed in Career Development. Many students gain experiences through these educational opportunities and are provided paid positions with local employers, thus helping to stimulate the local economy.

Approximately 70 percent of WSU undergraduates remain employed in Kansas following graduation. WSU has one of the highest post-graduate employment rates in Kansas for those completing bachelor degrees in comparison to all other four-year Kansas universities. This demonstrates that the university is meeting part of its mission as an economic driver in the state, as well as a cultural driver with broad-based student opportunities. Likewise, WSU's international student population contributes significantly to the local diversity and economy when they choose to study here.

**Student Support Services**

WSU undergraduate and graduate students are provided support services that assist their academic
needs while maintaining a clear focus on the mission of the university. Support services include:

- **Academic advising** through each academic college;
- **OneStop for Student Services**, launched in 2014, a centralized physical and virtual location for assistance with admissions, financial aid, records and registration;
- **Housing** through the Division of Student Affairs;
- Freshman year success through the **Graduation Partnership**, a focus of the WSU quality improvement initiative;
- Basic health care through **Student Health Services**;
- Governance, support and advocacy through the **Student Government Association**;
- Various campus activities organized and managed through **Student Affairs**;
- Personal and academic counseling through college advising offices and the **Office of Student Success**;
- Career counseling, career workshops and **employment opportunities** through the Office of **Career Development** and the Cooperative Education and Work-Based Learning program;
- Health and physical fitness opportunities including intramural athletics through the **Heskett Center and Campus Recreation**; and
- **TRIO programs**, a set of federally-funded college opportunity programs that motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree.

**Student satisfaction** with WSU’s student services staff was rated on the 2015 National Survey of Student Engagement at a mean value of 5.1 on a 7-point scale, where 1 is poor and 7 is excellent. Similarly, student satisfaction with other administrative offices was rated at 5.0 and academic advisers at 5.1. This information is measured on a biennial basis. In comparison to WSU peers, the mean value of satisfaction with student services staff was 5.0, satisfaction with other administrative offices was 4.8, and satisfaction with academic advisers was 5.1; WSU scored slightly higher on satisfaction with student services staff (5.1 compared to 5.0) and slightly higher on satisfaction with other administrative staff (5.1 compared to 4.8).

These data indicate WSU is in alignment with its peers in providing satisfactory student services. Likewise, through May 2016, close to 90 percent of students have been **satisfied with OneStop agents** in terms of their ability to solve student issues or provide appropriate next steps.

**Enrollment Profile**

From the perspective of WSU's mission to be an essential education driver and serve the greater public good coupled with its vision to be internationally recognized as the model for applied learning and research, the university community believes the profile of WSU’s **student body** should mirror the surrounding college-ready population. The university strives to achieve a population at least as diverse as the local community. **WSU students** come from a varied range of traditional and non-traditional backgrounds, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, socio-economic statuses and academic
abilities.

The majority of undergraduate students at WSU are white non-Hispanic (62.6 percent). The next two major categories of race and ethnicity are Hispanic (10.3 percent) and black non-Hispanic (5.4 percent). Asian non-Hispanic students and non-resident international students comprise the next largest set of students (7.0 percent and 7.3 percent respectively). By contrast, in Sedgwick County, Wichita's surrounding county, the white population (78.7 percent) is higher than the university's profile, as are the black (9.2 percent) and Hispanic (10.8 percent) populations (persons 18 years old and older, including those not eligible for college attendance). First-generation students account for more than 40 percent of the WSU undergraduate population — the highest among all Kansas public universities.

Ultimately graduating under-represented minorities is a concern for the entire WSU community, and is supported through college departments and advising offices, International Student Services, the Tilford Commission, Diversity and Inclusion, the President's Diversity Council, Counseling and Testing, Disability Services, Financial Aid and TRIO programs. WSU emphasizes increasing degree productivity among under-represented minorities as an ultimate outcome as illustrated in the university's performance agreement (item 4). (See 1.C.2.)

— 1.A.3. —

Budget planning at WSU is carefully regulated by the university’s own policy and by budgeting guidelines and schedules set forth by KBOR.

The strategic planning effort challenged all university departments to re-evaluate program direction and resource allocation in light of a new mission and new strategic goals. This included rethinking how fiscal resources are assigned. (See 5.C.1.)

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

— 1.B.1. —

Wichita State University makes its mission and vision statements widely available to many audiences. The statements are published through its main website, in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs, and in campus signage. With an average of 2.2 million unique visitors each year, the university website is the primary method for disseminating and documenting the WSU mission.

WSU's strategic plan includes the mission and vision statements, as well as key goals, plans and priorities. The plan document is readily available on the university website and is frequently presented in public forums by WSU's president, other university leaders, departments and programs. The plan has been summarized for wide, public dissemination in the booklet Real-World Ideas for Real-World Impact. Additionally, the mission and vision statements are articulated frequently through social media, newsletters (AY2015, 2016, 2017) university advertising, and in the WSU president's annual campus address every August (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016).

The mission is articulated further by programs and activities that have been and are being developed to carry it out. Mission, vision and core-value signage can be found in every major campus building and athletic facility.

All divisions, colleges, departments and programs support the mission's core responsibilities of innovation and applied learning. The support is carefully tracked through alignment between college and department goals, and the university's mission and vision. This is assured through a review process in which colleges must demonstrate close adherence to WSU's mission (see program review assessments, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and annual strategic planning assessments, 2015, 2016).

— 1.B.2. —

WSU works systematically to build its specific plans around the stated mission, vision, goals and priorities articulated in its strategic plan. Status reports on the strategic plan are issued by the president’s office (2015, 2016).
Based on results achieved through the university's strategic planning process, several tangible changes have occurred that can be seen through the construction and revitalization of several campus buildings.

The innovation university plans offer unprecedented opportunities to serve the public good by allowing educational opportunities through partnership with the community, business and faculty. This, in turn, provides students with abundant applied learning and research opportunities. WSU's National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR), which has a 30-year history of working with industry and university organizations such as Ennovar (the new Institute of Emerging Technology and Market Solutions), the Applied Psychology Research Institute and the Human Performance Lab, are taking the lead. New endeavors emerging as part of the innovation university initiative, such as WSU Ventures, the Ideas Lab and Shocker Startup, demonstrate a keen awareness of the importance of education, economic development and cultural growth inherent in WSU's mission.

Seven goals drive the university's current strategic plan and further articulate the WSU mission.

1. **Guarantee an applied learning or research experience for every student by each academic program.** Work is just beginning to guarantee an applied learning or research experience for every student. As a baseline, 2015 data indicate 40 percent of all degree programs currently provide this experience. In 2016, the strategic planning steering committee operationalized plans to guarantee this experience for all students. WSU's program for undergraduate research grants is one example of how applied research is promoted. Sixty-seven undergraduate research grants have been awarded to students since FY 2013. Another example of how students may gain an applied learning or research experience is through construction of the engineering experiential building with a maker space where faculty, staff, students and community members will have the opportunity to work with practitioners in their fields to test ideas and gain real-world experience. (See 1.A.1. and 1.D.1.)

2. **Pioneer an educational experience for all that integrates interdisciplinary curricula across the university.** Innovative new programs such as the Honors Baccalaureate, an interdisciplinary degree, are early evidence of the university's commitment to this aspect of its mission. A new master’s degree in innovation design aligns not only with the university’s research focus, but the innovation university. It is housed in the new Institute for Interdisciplinary Creativity.

3. **Capitalize systemically on relevant existing and emerging societal and economic trends that increase quality educational opportunities.** The university’s online expansion represents a commitment to increase quality educational experiences for non-traditional learners with 16 program offerings. Developing just-in-time academic programming can be found in the College of Health Professions' for-credit badge in public health.

4. **Accelerate the discovery, creation and transfer of new knowledge.** Innovation, research and entrepreneurship have always been at the forefront of university initiatives. After all, two WSU college students started Pizza Hut in 1958. WSU Ventures was formed in 2014 as the epicenter to encourage technology transfer at WSU. Intellectual property disclosures have doubled and span across multiple university departments (19 in 2014 to 41 in 2015). Patent applications have nearly doubled (seven in 2014 and 20 in 2015). Licensing agreements have increased significantly (one in 2014 and six in 2015).

5. **Empower students to create a campus culture and experience that meets their changing needs.** Students are empowered to be change agents and advocates for themselves and their peers through such means as service on university committees, on-campus employment, climate and other survey feedback, and the Student Government Association. With more than 200 student
organizations to choose from, students can focus on special interests or causes that hold value for them or create a new organization if their needs are not met with a pre-existing organization. One student-led change initiative involved renovations to the Grace Memorial Chapel to be inclusive of a variety of faith practices, rather than being predominately suited to Judeo-Christian faiths.

6. Be a campus that reflects — in staff, faculty and students — the evolving diversity of society. WSU is committed to diversity among faculty, staff and students in ways that reflect the community around the university. WSU is the most racially diverse public university in the state, with 15.3 percent of its student body (as of Fall 2015) consisting of under-represented minority students. Recent hiring in the College of Engineering, for example, continues to expand in quality with 12 new faculty members in 2015, five of whom are women and two are Hispanic. The President's Diversity Council and offices of Equal Employment Opportunity (2014, 2015), Tilford Commission, and Diversity and Inclusion are committed to improvements in this area.

7. Create a new model of assessment, incentive and reward processes to accomplish our (WSU) vision and goals. Faculty are re-evaluating tenure and promotion guidelines to better align with the university mission. The first step was the recent passage by the Faculty Senate of the UniSCOPE scholarship model. The rationale for this model is that the current system for recognizing and rewarding faculty scholarship shows preference for rewarding basic research and teaching over other forms of scholarship. Goal 7 calls for a new model that supports an understanding of other forms of scholarship and how they can be effectively integrated into the promotion and tenure process. WSU faculty believe scholarship must be understood broadly enough to adequately address the needs of the professions and the public. The next step is for all WSU colleges to revisit and redesign their tenure and promotion polices around the UniSCOPE model.

— 1.B.3. —

WSU sets goals and objectives based upon its stated mission, vision and values. Further, individual colleges, departments and other units build goals and objectives to support the larger university goals. In this way, the mission, vision and values serve as crucial foundational documents.

The mission — to be an essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good — links WSU closely to the communities of Kansas and the Midwest region. It suggests inter-reliance between the surrounding community and the university, engaging business, industry, civic and government leaders to ensure that critical educational, cultural and economic needs of the surrounding community, region and state are met. Examples of how WSU links to its constituents include WSU South, West, and Old Town locations. WSU strives to offer educational and programmatic venues appropriate to the groups near these locations. Old Town is a natural fit with the university’s mission to be an essential provider of educational services to Wichita. A number of its community-focused organizations are located there (or slated to be by 2017) including:

- KMUW Wichita Public Radio;
- Center for Management Development;
- Center for Economic Development and Business Research;
- Community Engagement Institute;
Center for Combating Human Trafficking;

College of Health Professions' Training and Technology Team; and

Physician Assistant and Physical Therapy graduate degree programs.

The focus of the guiding vision — that WSU be internationally recognized as a model for applied learning and research — is on serving students through an educational program designed to equip them to be ready to lead and engage on day one after graduation, in an ever-competitive global marketplace. This advantage is fostered through the Office of Career Development and employer-based learning opportunities in an innovation university.

Honesty, integrity, personal responsibility, collegiality, knowledge creation and education are universal values that always have underscored the culture at WSU. To accomplish the university’s strategic plan, the following values were adopted to guide the university’s planning and priorities: (1) seizing opportunities; (2) success for all stakeholders; (3) diversity of culture, thought and experience; (4) adaptive approaches; (5) teamwork; and (6) positive risk-taking.

These values call for a continued close working relationship between university faculty, staff and administration. This is evidenced by the way the university’s mission, vision and values were developed in a community-wide effort, and the way in which various colleges and departments have continued to develop goals to support them.

Further, the values emphasize WSU’s entrepreneurial spirit in its approach to innovation, commitment to inclusion, and readiness to work creatively at addressing needs and opportunities that will benefit citizens in the Wichita area, Kansas and the Midwest region.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

— 1.C.1. —

Wichita State University’s mission — to be an essential educational, cultural, and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good — establishes a clear role for the university in a diverse society. The mission implies that building and sustaining a multicultural society is one of the university’s priorities. WSU addresses this priority by welcoming broad diversity that will foster collaboration and grow innovation, reaching out not just locally but nationally and internationally.

Further, WSU is committed to developing a campus community that reflects the diversity of its surrounding city and region as stated in Goal 6 — to reflect the evolving diversity of society — of the seven goals (see 1.B.2.) listed in WSU’s strategic plan. In turn, those goals influenced the university's core values of seizing opportunities; success for all stakeholders; diversity of culture, thought and experience; adaptive approaches; teamwork; and positive risk-taking.

One example of how WSU is addressing its role in a multicultural society is the recent establishment of the President's Diversity Council, an advisory and leadership team responsible for developing, overseeing and monitoring university-wide efforts to achieve WSU's commitment to diversity as a core institutional and educational value. Its mission is to promote collaboration and communication by bringing together representatives from constituency groups to actualize diversity goals and objectives. As such, the primary responsibilities of the President’s Diversity Council are to:

- Facilitate the coordination of campus diversity efforts and encourage collaboration among groups working on diversity issues; and
- Serve as a consultative body for the president on diversity issues.

Documentation of the council's work can be found in its minutes and includes activities such as university diversity open forums and participation in the strategic enrollment process. An LGBTQ climate study was conducted in 2015, which is now being used to inform the university, such as the need for single-occupancy restrooms and other types of programming. Other projects in the works include conducting a baseline university-wide climate survey fall 2016.

— 1.C.2. —

WSU has developed benchmarks to guide its work to develop greater student diversity, drawing on the Kansas Board of Regent's Foresight 2020 goals (see also WSU priority matrix). To date,
percent of WSU undergraduate students are identified as under-represented minorities; that's an increase from 13.2 percent in 2010. Increasing the number of undergraduate certificates and degrees awarded to under-represented minorities is a priority goal for WSU as outlined in the performance agreement reported annually to KBOR. From an expected baseline of 258 annually, 301 were awarded in academic year 2014 and 302 in 2015.

Sample initiatives to recruit, retain and graduate more under-represented minorities include:

- **Spanish services** through Office of Admissions personnel who oversee recruitment of ethnic minorities, with an emphasis on under-represented minorities;
- **Multicultural visit programs and other ethnic minority outreach programming**;
- Deploying recruitment representatives to schools in highly diverse Kansas communities such as Wichita, Garden City, Dodge City and Kansas City;
- Increasing recruitment **scholarships** for under-represented minorities (URM);
- Adding **retention scholarships** for disadvantaged students transitioning to their second, third and fourth year; and
- **Transition programs** for first-generation students and services through the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (see below), including a lavender graduation recognition for LGBTQ and ally students.

WSU has several offices and programs dedicated to increasing and addressing human diversity, as well as supporting the diversity of faculty, staff and students, including those listed herein.

- The **Office of Diversity and Inclusion** (ODI) has a new, more prominent campus home in the newly remodeled Rhatigan Student Center. The ODI seeks to cultivate and sustain an inclusive campus that strives for academic excellence by creating an environment that educates, empowers and mobilizes WSU students, campus and community. It creates and maintains connections with various groups on and off campus, and co-sponsors their events to provide the WSU community wider variety and better quality in multicultural programming.

- The **Office of Disability Services** (reports to the Office of Special Programs, see below) annually serves approximately 400 students with various disabilities. The office provides students, parents and faculty with a wide range of resources designed to help people with disabilities integrate into the campus community and succeed in their academic efforts.

- A new **Title IX office** (and coordinator) was established in 2016 to increase awareness of and compliance with Title IX regulations. The Title IX coordinator is a member of the President’s Diversity Council (see also 2.A.).

- The University Libraries **Gordon Parks digital collection** showcases the artistic versatility of a prolific African-American artist and Kansas native son who achieved success as a poet, novelist, composer, film director, pre-eminent documentary photojournalist and fashion photographer. The bulk of the material documents the last three decades of his life and career. The Gordon Parks Papers formally opened to the public as part of the university’s fall 2012 celebration of the centennial of Parks’ birth. Use of the collection is incorporated into English 101 writing assignments. The WSU Ulrich Museum of Art holds a permanent collection of
Gordon Parks' photography work.

- The Office of International Education is primarily responsible for all aspects of interaction with international students and scholars, providing two main areas of service: (1) support and assistance necessary to achieve personal, educational and professional goals; and (2) assurance of institutional compliance with U.S. immigration regulations that govern students’ visa status. In addition to serving international students, scholars, faculty and staff, International Education serves domestic students through its Study Abroad program.

- Led by the Office of Academic Affairs, the Tilford Commission (named after late Graduate School dean Michael Tilford, a statewide promoter of diversity) is a campus-wide group of faculty, staff, and administrators dedicated to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in all areas of the university community. The commission hosts faculty and staff development events, leads efforts to diversify curriculum and helps coordinate efforts across campus to address diversity-related issues. The commission is the primary entity on campus that advocates for and promotes the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and staff. Recent success is illustrated in the College of Engineering with the hiring of 12 new faculty members in 2015, five of whom are women and two are Hispanic.

- The Office of Special Programs administers 12 wholly or partially federally-funded TRIO and GEAR UP programs that provide comprehensive services to low-income, first-generation students, ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities from sixth grade through college graduation. WSU is a leader among other universities in the number of TRIO programs, several of which have been on campus for 50 years, including programs focusing on preparing students for careers in math and science, the pursuit of graduate education, veteran transitions, returning adult transitions, and students with disabilities. When combined, WSU’s TRIO programs serve an average of 2,900 students annually, with GEAR UP programs serving an additional 4,350 students.

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The institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution’s educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

**Argument**

**— 1.D.1. —**

Wichita State University embraces its role and obligation to serve the greater needs of the Wichita community and the citizens of Kansas, as well as surrounding states, the nation and the world. The university meets its mission to serve the greater public good primarily by successfully preparing graduates who will contribute to economic and social progress at home and abroad. Hence, WSU’s undergraduate and graduate programs make a substantial impact on the public good. Further, WSU’s longstanding efforts in research, innovation and entrepreneurship serve to improve the human condition and advance social and economic progress.

Goal 3 of WSU’s strategic plan places special emphasis on the university’s obligation to serve the public good through education: capitalize systemically on relevant existing and emerging societal and economic trends that increase quality educational opportunities. Through this goal and the mission itself WSU ensures it meets this criteria.

The following examples illustrate WSU's commitment to the public good.

- WSU's innovation university initiative further demonstrates the university’s commitment not only to being a provider of educational programs, but also an economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good. The innovation university will include:
  - An Experiential Engineering Building, supporting WSU’s vision of being internationally recognized for applied learning and research, that includes engineering laboratories and a maker space, and provides extensive technological resources that can be accessed by students and the public to develop innovative new ideas and test concepts;
  - Partnership buildings, constructed with non-state funds by entities that will lease space to develop new products and services while integrating the talents and expertise of WSU students and faculty;
  - A law enforcement training center with the Department of Criminal Justice;
  - A new home for the W. Frank Barton School of Business; and
— Infrastructure to support student housing, hotels and eating establishments.

- **WSU Ventures** demonstrates the university’s commitment to public service and engages in three primary activities: protecting and licensing of WSU inventions; connecting industry with WSU researchers; and linking WSU researchers and technologies to start-up potential with investors and entrepreneurs.

- **Ennovar** emphasizes education, emerging technology, experiential learning, evolutionary research, exploration and engagement. Ennovar employs close to 40 engineering, communication and graphic design students, and is committed to strengthening WSU’s reputation in research and technology to drive the economy of Kansas.

- According to a National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development survey, WSU ranks 36th among all U.S. universities in overall industry-funded research and development expenditures. WSU ranks first in industry-funded aeronautical engineering R&D expenditures, and is located in a metro area where these funds are most significant relative to the size of the local economy.

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1.D.2. —

WSU is one of six state universities governed by the Kansas Board of Regents. As a state research university, WSU adheres to policies set forth by KBOR that prevent the generation of financial returns for investors or the Regents, and the support of external interests not allowed by KBOR policy.

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1.D.3. —

WSU and its key constituencies across south-central Kansas are actively engaged with each other in growing and transforming the university. This has included broad community involvement in helping develop and shape WSU’s mission, vision, values and goals.

The engagement continues in the development of WSU’s innovation university, an effort that involves the business community, civic and government leaders, and other members of the local community.

Historically, WSU’s academic programs and faculty have been engaged in local industry and community programs, providing expertise and service. Examples include:

- Research and expertise through the [National Institute for Aviation Research](#) to the local aircraft manufacturing industry;

- [Dental and speech-language-hearing services](#) provided by the College of Health Professions, often to local underserved populations;

- [Industry research](#) and specialized training in entrepreneurship, management development, real estate, airline quality and other areas through the W. Frank Barton School of Business;

- [Arts and creative industry](#) training through the College of Fine Arts;
Training to local school districts, including Wichita public schools, the state’s largest and most diverse school district, through the College of Education; and

The summer program in Puebla, Mexico, an opportunity for students, teachers and other interested individuals to study Spanish, gain the invaluable experience of living in another country and earn college credit toward a degree or teacher certification.

These examples provide a small sample of the magnitude of the university’s community engagement with external constituencies. WSU maintains ongoing, dynamic relationships, business and international exchanges, and consultations with community, city, state and federal governments; corporate and educational leaders; and professional and civic organizations that reflect the university’s commitment to serving the greater public good. Through these relationships WSU can increase the quality of its academic programs through mentorship, internships and employment.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

Summary

The history of Wichita State University is built upon big ideas and a faculty, staff and student body who turn them into reality. For this reason, the university set out to create a bold new strategic plan — one that capitalized on WSU's uniqueness in a way that would leave a lasting impact on students, the city and the region.

WSU fulfills Criterion 1 through a new mission and strategic plan that allows for better alignment with existing university activities. The strategic plan is aspirational and demonstrates that the university's pioneering spirit is alive and well. It is clearly articulated, and at its heart is a mission statement that indicates the university's desire to chart a new course for higher learning while it remains dedicated to serving as lifeblood to the region and doing its part to provide the highest quality of life possible to area residents.

While WSU seems to have met Criterion 1, the university's future is not without challenges.

- Because of the swift adoption and implementation of the new mission and strategic plan, communication has been a challenge. Improved communication between administration, faculty, staff and students would help facilitate better understanding of the strategic plan and ways in which plan implementation can occur within optimal time frames. New monthly newsletters and annual updates by the president are meant to alleviate this issue.

- WSU has not yet achieved the diversity that it strives for among its student body, faculty or staff. The recent establishment of the President's Diversity Council to achieve WSU's commitment to diversity as a core institutional and educational value is a step in the right direction. The council's mission, to promote collaboration and communication by bringing together representatives from constituency groups to actualize diversity goals and objectives, will likely lead to a more diverse campus in the future.

Sources

There are no sources.