

Chapter 8 –Assessment

Making a Difference embodies the university's broad intention to ensure its continuous improvement through planning, execution, and assessment. But continuous improvement is not enough. Through shrewd strategy and skillful execution, Duke must achieve a rate of improvement greater than other comparable institutions; only in this way can we gain ground and ensure our position among the small number of institutions that define what is best in higher education, both nationally and globally.

Our assessment strategies will continue processes developed under *Building on Excellence*. The Board is an active partner in our assessment strategy, and regular discussions with the Board are essential. We will provide a comprehensive biannual assessment for discussion with the full Board in the fall of 2008 and in the fall of 2010. In addition, progress reports on specific planning goals and initiatives will be discussed as a regular part of the agendas of appropriate Board committees. Comprehensive updates on the sources and uses of funds to support the plan will be made at least annually. The Board of Trustees will also approve annual programmatic budget allocations and specific capital financing plans through established Board processes.

We expect the specific strategies and focused investments outlined in the plan to advance Duke's broad ambitions, and thus the assessment of the plan cannot be separated from our ongoing, overall assessment of our institutional health and progress. Assessment operates at many levels at Duke, from individual student course evaluations to broad institutional accreditation reviews. Several of these ongoing mechanisms will be of particular importance in assessing our progress as we implement the strategies of institutional improvement outlined in *Making a Difference*; we expect continued absolute improvement in all of them and notable relative improvement in relation to our peers in a number of them. Significantly, Duke's institutional self-study and external review for reaccreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a process that occurs every ten years, will take place over the next two and half years and will include a substantial focus on institutional assessment and improvement. The most significant university-wide assessment mechanisms are the following; in addition each school maintains data and undertakes analyses for self-assessment and professional accreditation and reports regularly to the Provost regarding the quality of graduate and professional schools' admissions.

- Since 1997, we have compiled strategic indicators at the request of the Board of Trustees to monitor institutional "vital signs" related to finances (endowment, sponsored research, and philanthropic support), faculty (size and composition, salary trends, faculty honors), and students (quality measures, applications, selectivity, yield, overlap, financial aid and survey satisfaction measures). This report was modified in 2004 to provide more detail at the individual school level.
- Since 2001, we have provided an annual report on the faculty to the Board of Trustees. This includes a statistical profile showing the size and distribution of

the faculty over time, demographics, age and tenure profiles, and turnover rates. The Provost uses this data as a foundation for remarks on faculty development. We anticipate that there will be an increase of faculty in a stage of their career in which they can exercise critical leadership in our departments, interdisciplinary units, and schools. In addition, we will be working with each dean to assure that the profile of faculty members in their units is well-structured to promote a vibrant culture with strong faculty leadership.

- The Trinity College Office of Assessment and the Trinity College Student Information System collaborate in an ongoing assessment of undergraduate teaching and learning. The Assessment Office tracks specific indicators and benchmarks on all students (such as grades and graduation with distinction, study abroad and mentored research experiences) and designs outcome assessment protocols for particular curricular or pedagogical experiences (such as Focus, research service learning, or certificate programs).
- Duke has an active survey research program in place through the institutional research group in the Provost's Office. The surveys are conducted collaboratively with other institutions through organizations such as the Consortium on Financing Higher Education and the Association of American Universities, which provides a comparative framework for Duke's findings. We have been surveying entering freshmen and graduating seniors annually for more than a decade, and we have also participated in periodic alumni surveys for many years. Recently we extended our survey program to graduate and professional students and to members of the faculty. Optional questions on these surveys can be targeted to enhance our understanding of whether we are achieving specific planning objectives.
- Every academic program at Duke is evaluated by external reviewers approximately every six years. These reviews are preceded by self-studies that are reviewed during the site visit. The reviews cover the intellectual coherence and quality of the undergraduate and graduate curricula as well as the quality and relevance of faculty research.
- The Provost provides for the Board of Trustees an annual "state of the schools" report that provides a comprehensive assessment of each school's leadership, program development and finances informed by all of the sources above as well as his direct experience with the appointments, promotion and tenure process.

In thinking about broad-based institutional assessment, we believe that five key areas – faculty quality, student quality, student experience, Duke's role as a regional, national and global citizen, and Duke's standing in the wider world need – must be addressed, bringing to bear all of the assessment tools at our disposal. The fundamental assessment questions for each of these five areas are framed below together with key assessment strategies and some specific near term benchmarks we hope to achieve as we implement

the strategies in *Making a Difference*. The strategies and investments (both in programs and facilities) outlined in *Making a Difference* as well as in the individual school plans should help us move forward in all these areas. These plans include new departures but are built on a solid foundation of ongoing activities whose quality we are committed to sustaining and improving.

Faculty Quality

Are we improving the quality of our faculty as inspired teachers who develop the best capacities of our students and creative scholars who make substantial contributions to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge that not only advance particular disciplines but also help address the multidisciplinary challenges of the real world?

Assessment Strategies:

- Ongoing analysis of faculty demographics, including racial and gender diversity, age structure, and tenure rates.
- Examination of teaching records, including student course evaluations, as part of the AP&T process and as part of the annual performance review process.
- Student survey satisfaction with the quality of instruction, accessibility of faculty, and their overall Duke experience.
- Faculty climate surveys.
- Teaching feedback from departmental reviews.
- Examination of research and scholarship achievements as part of the AP&T process and as part of the annual performance review process.
- Success in attracting sponsored research support.
- Success in winning foundation and other fellowship support.
- Notable publications.
- Election to national academies and other faculty honors.

Key Expectations for this Planning Period:

- At least 75% of faculty hires will be in fields of strategic importance outlined in *Making a Difference* or the plans of the school, with a substantial number of appointments facilitated financially by the Faculty Enhancement Initiative. These faculty hires will reflect the strategic importance of interdisciplinary knowledge in the service of society. The remaining hires are anticipated to meet emerging priorities that will arise at the university and school levels.
- An increase of 25 in the number of faculty from under-represented groups.
- Increase the number of nationally and internationally recognized artists on the Duke faculty, both resident and visiting.
- Growth in externally sponsored research administered by the federal government at a rate greater than the budgetary expansion of each program.
- An increase in the rate at which Duke faculty members are elected to national academies.

- An increase of the number of faculty who receive national competitive fellowships and international awards.
- Improved support for interdisciplinary and translational teaching, research, and scholarship.
- Improved alignment of our faculty evaluation and reward systems with actual performance of our faculty in priority areas of teaching, research, and service.
- Significant improvement in the quality of classrooms and other teaching facilities.

Student Quality

Are we bringing to Duke the students – undergraduate, graduate, and professional – most capable by virtue of their intelligence, character, ambition, and diverse backgrounds of taking best advantage of a Duke education and of contributing to the Duke community, both as students and as alumni carrying Duke’s legacy to the wider world?

Assessment Strategies:

- Tracking the qualifications of applicant pools, admitted applicants and enrolling students. For undergraduates, this means an emphasis on Reader Ratings scores and the growth in the number of students with special talents (e.g., the arts) as identified in our admissions strategy. For graduate and professional students, each school is charged with identifying and tracking the qualifications assessed in their admissions processes germane to their student populations and reporting these results regularly to the Provost.
- Application volume, selectivity and yield for all students.
- Academic performance at Duke for all students.
- Undergraduate students’ non-academic activities and engagements at Duke.
- Each school will track student activities related to our strategic goals of civic engagement and knowledge in the service of society.
- Short and long-term commitments after graduation, including career placement and development and/or further education.
- Socio-economic, ethnic, gender and other forms of diversity in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional student bodies.
- Student survey perceptions of campus climate for diversity, community involvement, and extra-curricular activities.

Key Expectations for this Planning Period:

- Key admissions indicators of student quality and competitiveness will improve in all schools of the university.
- At the undergraduate level, Duke’s yield will improve overall and improve in competition with peer schools. We expect similar yield improvements across the graduate and professional schools.
- Duke will maintain or improve the socio-economic, ethnic and international diversity of its undergraduate, graduate and professional student bodies and in

the case of the undergraduate population, increase the numbers of students identified as having talents that make special contributions to the community.

- Duke will double its commitment to international need-based aid for undergraduates.
- An increase in the rate at which graduate students are awarded national fellowships.

Student Experience

Are we providing our undergraduate students with a genuinely transformative experience whose benefits include not only professional attainments but also deepened understanding and broadened curiosity across the many domains of human experience and endeavor as well as greater self-confidence, integrity, maturity, and a passion for making a difference? Are we providing our graduate and professional students training that ensures deep grounding in their disciplines and the ethical principles that guide them, preparation for professional practice and leadership, and opportunities to participate fully in the community life of their schools, the wider university and the Durham community?

Assessment Strategies:

- For graduate and professional students, each school is charged with identifying and tracking the metrics germane to their student populations and reporting these results regularly to the Provost.
- Student survey results related to learning outcomes
- Alumni survey results related to career and life-satisfaction and civic engagements.
- Opportunities for and participation in mentored research experiences.
- Balance of student choice across the curriculum.
- Database on student activities.
- Student engagement outside the classroom.

Key Expectations for this Planning Period:

- Increased participation of undergraduates in mentored research experiences.
- Increased opportunities and participation of undergraduates in interdisciplinary learning experiences.
- Greater participation of undergraduates in arts-related coursework and activities.
- More responsible student behavior as evidenced by greater adherence to the Duke Community Standard and fewer breaches of academic and social policies.
- Improved undergraduate housing through redevelopment of Central Campus and renovations of West Campus quads. It is also anticipated that there will be significant new housing for graduate and professional students on Central Campus.
- Increased opportunity for graduate and professional students to develop satisfying mentoring relationships and identify faculty role models

- Greater opportunities for all students to engage faculty outside the formal classroom settings.
- Increased participation of all students in community service and service/learning opportunities.
- Increased opportunity to use advanced technologies in classroom experiences and assignments.
- Improved space for student interactions and activities and for campus cultural activities on West Campus through renovation of the West Union Building, the Bryan Center and Page Auditorium.
- Competitive graduate stipends with peer institutions.
- Creation of a Graduate Student Center.

Duke as a Regional, National and Global Citizen

Is Duke as an institution setting and living up to the highest possible standards as an employer and citizen of the wider communities – regional, national, and global – of which it is a part not only in the scope and impact of its teaching and research but also in its investment in Durham community and in its administrative practices, environmental stewardship, and fiscal integrity?

Assessment Strategies:

- Number and quality of substantial local (e.g., Duke-Durham Partnership), regional (e.g., Cooperation and cooperative ventures with the UNC System and with UNC-CH, NCCU and NCSU), national (e.g., National Lambda Rail Project) and international (e.g., the Graduate Medical School in Singapore) partnerships and engagements involving, teaching, research, service, and the arts.
- Leadership positions of Duke administrators in national professional organizations.
- LEEDS certifications and environmental impact data trends.
- Minority business contracting.
- Internal/external audit findings.

Key Expectations for this Planning Period:

- Successfully endow the Duke-Durham neighborhood partnership.
- Develop significant collaborative programs with North Carolina Central University.
- Assume a leadership role in defining and initiating the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis.
- Substantial increase in Duke's international reputation as measured by international assessments.
- Substantial growth in the number of cooperative overseas ventures by its individual schools and the University as a whole.

- Substantial research, education and service outcomes from a broader range of substantive collaborations with institutions in other countries.

Duke's Standing in the Wider World

Is Duke receiving the recognition and support it deserves based on its real achievement and future plans both in terms of regional, national, and international recognition and in terms of more tangible support from parents, alumni, foundations, corporations, and government agencies?

Assessment Strategies:

- News clipping and other media-monitoring studies.
- National rankings.
- Duke commissioned opinion surveys.
- Philanthropic and corporate support (both number of contributors and dollars contributed).
- Membership in the alumni association.

Key Expectations for this Planning Period:

- Increased levels of respect for, and confidence in, Duke as an institution both nationally and internationally.
- Media reliance on Duke faculty expertise for background and commentary on national and international issues.
- Continued growth in philanthropic and corporate support to the university.
- Improved national rankings for schools, departments, and programs.
- Improved viability and visibility of interdisciplinary structures, scholarship, teaching, and translational research and engagement.

Making a Difference sets an ambitious agenda of aspirations supported by specific strategies and programmatic and capital investments. The planning process this document embodies will surely make a difference in the life of the university, focusing our resource allocations and management actions on achieving those aspirations. Duke has the vision, leadership, and resources to succeed and thus deepen our capacity for making a difference in the broader sense – of sustaining productive faculty careers, of providing transforming educational experiences to our students who will go on to be ethically grounded individuals, outstanding citizens and leaders in their professional fields, and, through the work of our faculty, students and administrators, devoting our efforts to improving the lives of the regional, national, and global communities of which we are a part.