

Criterion Five—Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

Ball State University has used strategic planning for more than a decade to focus and guide its operations. The primary purpose of resource development is to accomplish the university's mission and objectives that arise from the strategic planning process and to prepare for the institution's future. *Strategic Plan 2001–2006* set forth basic operating principles that have been followed through the years, including: "University resources will be allocated in a manner that will carry out the mission of the university and the goals of the plan."

Subsequent strategic plans for 2007–2012 and 2012–2017 have been, and will continue to be, the guiding beacons for all efforts and initiatives of the university. The Ball State way is to develop a collective vision and mission and then create a strategic plan with strategies, goals, and performance objectives that are carefully implemented and assessed. All resources, structures, and processes are used as the institution pursues its mission and plans for the future.

In February 2013, the topic for the university's administrative retreat was how to plan initiatives to accomplish the 107 performance indicators of the 2012–2017 strategic plan. Some potential initiatives were discussed at the meeting, and all participants were asked to replicate the process within their respective units. Ball State is also in the early stages of a comprehensive campus master planning process that will be directed by an outside firm. Campus constituents will be engaged to provide information beginning in September 2013. The final report and recommendations are due in 2015.

The university's biennial budget request to the Indiana General Assembly illustrates how the university plans for the future. The 2013–2015 budget request document, presentations by the president, and campus master plan are available for review.

Core Component 5.A.

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

Resources are the lifeblood of a university, and Ball State procures, develops, and uses its fiscal, human, physical, and technological wherewithal to provide a high-quality educational experience and accomplish its strategic goals. Furthermore, resource planning for the future is

a continuous and integrated activity tied intricately to the institution's strategic planning goals.

Subcomponent 5.A.1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Ball State's financial resources are sufficient. Even with the economic downturn that began near the end of the previous decade, the university has been able to provide salary increases for employees every year except one, when the state government asked for a freeze (raises averaging 4 percent were arranged the following year). Human resources are very lean, based on benchmarking with other institutions, and Ball State has been recognized for efficiency in its operations. Yet the university continues to maintain the quality of the educational experience as student-to-faculty ratios remain low and most courses are taught by faculty, rather than graduate students, as explained below.

Ball State's technological infrastructure is second to none, and the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) initiative will enhance the university's operational systems to meet future needs. In addition, the physical assets of the campus are constantly reviewed and have undergone extensive modernization during the past 10 years in response to the institution's evolving needs.

Fiscal Resources

The university's annual operating budget is approximately \$300 million, and state appropriations for operations fund about 40 percent of this budget. All categories of state appropriations together represent approximately 25 percent of total institutional revenues. The state's appropriations include line-item funding to support Ball State's "The Entrepreneurial University" initiative to recruit high-quality students, provide an innovative curriculum, and promote economic development. The university also continues to rely on a variety of other funding sources, including tuition and fees paid by students, external support for research and scholarly activities in sponsored programs (grants, contracts, in-kind contributions, etc.), and private gifts.

Economic Challenges—Perhaps the greatest threat to resource planning is the volatility of external economic conditions. The 2007–2009 recession created financial challenges for Ball State, just as it did for higher education in general. As a state-assisted institution, the university has faced decreased financial support from the Indiana legislature. Overall, Ball State's annual compound growth rate in state appropriations was 0.3 percent since 2000–01, and it has dropped 6.1 percent since 2008–09.

In December 2009, the state cut its 2009–2011 biennial budget appropriation to higher education by \$150 million, and Ball State's portion was \$15.2 million. To meet this challenge, the university devised an internal campaign to inform and solicit input from all employees. The process was transparent, widely accepted, and helpful in finding cost savings. This plan to meet the target cuts "reflected Ball State's commitment to academic excellence and the need to invest in its future, while being mindful that the uncertainty of future appropriations demands careful cost containment."

The state's 2009 appropriation cut was followed by another reduction of 4.2 percent for the 2011–12 fiscal year. In response, the university found additional means for generating cost savings and instituted new revenue-generating initiatives. Two of these targeted international students and graduate students.

- **International enrollment**—The international student initiative through the 2007–2012 strategic plan focused on increasing enrollment from international origins to 5 percent of the total student enrollment, or approximately 1,000 students (see *2007–2012 Strategic Plan, Item 5*). The university has identified more than \$5 million to invest in this initiative. Fall 2012 tuition and fees revenue from all international students totaled \$6.5 million. The net revenue—which is the gross revenue minus the scholarships distributed—equaled \$4.7 million. The highest number of international students enrolling on campus in one year is 812, although it appears 2012–13 will be higher. This initiative will continue with the 2012–2017 strategic plan, which includes a goal of enrolling 1,000 international students.
- **Graduate enrollment**—The second revenue-generating initiative resulted from a complete restructuring of the university's tuition and fees. The specific initiative of interest here was increasing revenue from graduate student tuition. Prior to this process, tuition was the same for both graduate and undergraduate students, but graduate students paid a slightly higher per-course fee. The tuition restructuring significantly increased tuition for graduate students. Another part of this effort was the hiring of a graduate student recruiter, who was charged to increase graduate student enrollment.

The decision-making process used to identify these two revenue-generating initiatives and cost savings in other areas again placed the highest priority on protecting and enhancing the quality of Ball State's educational experience and moving forward in achieving the goals of the university's strategic plan. These international enrollment and graduate student recruitment initiatives also increased the diversity on campus, providing a richer experience for all students. Other diversity initiatives are discussed under Criterion 1, Subcomponent 1.C.2.

An additional challenge facing the university is the performance-based formula for funding established by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. The process takes 6 percent of the base budget in fiscal 2014 and 7 percent from the fiscal 2015 budget. This money is distributed back to the state institutions based upon each school's performance against the state-established metrics. For the 2013–2015 biennium, the significant factors affecting Ball State are the following (each factor includes only Indiana residents):

- increase the four-year graduation rate
- increase the number of students who graduate
- increase the number of at-risk students who graduate
- increase the number of graduates in specific STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields identified by Indiana Commission for Higher Education

The commission selected three years to use as the baseline and another three years to determine whether increases have occurred in each area. The factors above focus on quantity,

while Ball State's efforts have concentrated on increasing quality rather than quantity, even though *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ranked the university sixth for improvement in graduation rates among the nation's public research institutions between 2001 and 2008. This may result in an appropriation reduction of approximately \$11 million. Final decisions on the 2013–2015 biennium budget were not finalized as of April 15, 2013.

Favorable Factors—On a more positive fiscal note, Indiana has weathered the recession better than many states. The Hoosier State's gross domestic product (GDP) grew at a faster rate than the national average, tax receipts have increased, and a budget surplus exists. At the same time, the university's astute financial planning and performance was rewarded in November 2010 with a bond rating upgrade from A+ to AA- by *Standard & Poor's*.

The university has also been successful in obtaining private funding for strategic initiatives:

- **Ball State Bold**—The highly successful Ball State Bold capital campaign concluded after raising a record \$210.8 million in support of university programs. Bold was “the most ambitious and successful [development] campaign in the university's history.” The public phase of the campaign was kicked off in September 2008 and officially wrapped up on June 30, 2011.
- **Lilly V Grant**—From 2004 to 2009, Ball State benefited from a \$4.9 million grant from the Lilly Foundation. The purpose of the “Lilly V” grant was to fund science-based faculty and initiatives and especially to serve as seed money for new faculty in the sciences. This grant provided funding for start-up packages for new science faculty, which enabled the hiring of nearly all new science faculty during that time period. The university has since found other financial resources to provide needed start-up packages for new faculty.

Given the relative financial stringency of the recent past, Ball State continues to adhere to its goal of “maintaining the quality of the students' educational experience...[as] the highest priority in the decision-making process.” In an interview on December 21, 2011, Randy Howard, vice president for business affairs and treasurer, emphasized the importance of maintaining an excellent academic experience for students. According to Howard, resources to support academic and nonacademic operations are sufficient, but the university is “running in a very lean fiscal environment” in terms of higher education in the U.S. and in Indiana.

Human Resources

Ball State's human capital is dedicated to carrying out the institution's mission. During the 2012–13 fiscal year, the university had 2,862 full-time employees, including:

- 949 full-time tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty members. About 70 percent of them are in tenure-line positions, and 30 percent are in non-tenure positions. About 90 percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty hold terminal degrees in their disciplines.
- 1,913 full-time staff and service employees in six categories: administrative staff, professional staff, technical/paraprofessional staff, clerical/secretarial, skilled crafts, and service/maintenance. The staff and service employee

population has been consistent over time and plays a significant role in supporting and facilitating Ball State's educational programs.

To deliver on its mission and strategic goals, Ball State maintains a low student-to-faculty ratio (16:1), and about 97 percent of classes are taught by faculty, not graduate students. In fact, tenured senior faculty teach many freshman courses. A number of faculty also serve a crucial role as mentors for interdisciplinary student teams in the university's signature immersive learning experiences. These experiences are discussed more fully in Criterion 1, Subcomponent 1.A.2. and Core Component 1.D.

The university's diligent efforts to manage its resources as efficiently as possible have been recognized by external organizations. In a report from the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, Ball State was recognized for generating a lower level of staffing per student than the average public university. In addition, the Goldwater Institute reported that Ball State's administrative growth rate was one of the lowest in the United States.

Physical Resources

Widely admired for its attractiveness and traditional collegiate feel, Ball State's 731-acre campus includes 106 academic, administrative, auxiliary, and residential buildings valued at more than \$1 billion. Eleven residence hall complexes and two apartment communities house about 7,550 students on campus. Ball State also has slightly more than 400 additional acres of research property and maintains two outreach centers in the Greater Indianapolis area—one at Meridian and Maryland streets downtown and one in the Saxony development in Fishers.

These physical resources are an essential component of the institution's strategic goals to "improve the university community's quality of life" (*Strategic Plan 2007–2012*, Goal 4) and "invest in an increasingly vibrant and integrated university community" (*Strategic Plan 2012–2017*, Goal 3). These goals focus on providing a vital and accommodating campus atmosphere—one that supports and enhances learning, scholarship, institutional effectiveness, and quality of life. To this end, Ball State is committed to the continuous development and expansion of the campus through construction of new facilities and renovation of existing ones.

Master Planning—Since the original campus core was laid out in 1922, Ball State has maintained long-term master plans for campus development. The most recent, the 1982 Rundell Ernstberger Plan, was updated in 1991 and 2001, and several projects are ongoing, in development, or in planning. As mentioned in the introduction for this criterion, the university is just beginning another major campus master planning process. Aligned with this will be a process to create an academic plan.

Over the years, expansion and growth have been accommodated primarily by acquiring land adjacent to and/or near the campus in a strategic, far-sighted manner. These acquisitions are made without state funding. The university has a reserve for further campus development that can fund the purchase of new land, but it most likely will be used for continuing the development of infrastructure on existing university property.

Since 2004, several presentations about the campus master plan have been shown to student and faculty groups. The most recent one was given to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

Strategic Support—Ball State’s building and renovation program is designed to support developments in teaching and technology, enhance campus safety and the physical environment, and promote a sense of community. During the past 10 years, the university has constructed or renovated more than 400,000 square feet of instructional facilities, increasing the total plant value by more than \$150 million. More than \$100 million has been invested in the renovation of existing facilities, with a majority of resources going toward classroom buildings.

One example of a new facility that supports teaching and emerging technology is the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, a \$21 million complex that serves four academic departments and houses Indiana Public Radio. With 75,000 square feet of classrooms, faculty offices, and studio suites—including a \$1 million postproduction complex—this facility advances transformative learning experiences by providing students and faculty with the latest media production and postproduction technology. In 2009, the facility won an Emmy Award for technical achievement. The building was dedicated by *CBS Late Show* host David Letterman, a Ball State alumnus, in September 2007. See a video about the [Letterman Building](#).

Other academic facilities built or renovated since Ball State’s 2004 accreditation include:

- Marilyn K. Glick Center for Glass (new)
- Music Instruction Building/Sursa Performance Hall (new)
- A. Umit Taftali Center for Capital Markets and Investing (new)
- Teachers College Building (renovation)
- North Quadrangle Building (renovation)
- David Owsley Museum of Art (renovation/expansion)
- Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Honors House (renovation)
- Applied Technology Building (renovation)

View photo galleries of these [academic buildings](#) and a video about the [Glick Center](#).

Other campus facilities constructed or renovated since 2004 include:

- Student Recreation and Wellness Center (new)
- Kinghorn and Park Residence Halls (new)
- DeHority, Studebaker East, and Johnson Residence Complexes (renovation)
- Woodworth Commons (renovation)
- L.A. Pittenger Student Center (renovation)
- McKinley, Riverside, and Neely Avenues (renovation)
- Scheumann Stadium (renovation)
- Briner Sports Complex (new)

View photo galleries of these [nonacademic buildings](#), [athletic facilities](#), and the [McKinley Avenue renovation](#) as well as [proposed facilities](#). See a video about

the [Student Recreation and Wellness Center](#) and the new [Unified Media Lab](#).

Meeting an objective in *Education Redefined: Strategic Plan 2007–2012*, the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, Student Recreation and Wellness Center, Park Hall, and DeHority Complex were designed in accordance with national Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards and have been certified by the U.S. Green Building Council. Certification is pending for Kinghorn Hall. LEED certification verifies that a building was designed and constructed using strategies that address such standards as sustainable site selection, energy and water efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

Among a number of other noteworthy achievements related to Ball State’s beautiful and efficient campus, three are deserving of special mention, and a fourth has received international attention:

Disability Access—For many years, Ball State has been a leader in accommodating the needs of students with disabilities. These efforts are coordinated and facilitated by the Office of Disabled Student Development. In 2010, the university was selected by [disabilityfriendlycolleges.com](#) as one of 75 colleges that exceed the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ball State was recognized for its “accessible shuttle service, adaptive physical education program, disability friendly residence halls and housing, academic mentorship and wheelchair repair service.”

Street Improvements—Renovation projects along McKinley, Riverside, and Neely avenues brought major safety improvements and beautification to the main travel corridors through the campus. New medians, sidewalks, traffic signals, and bus pullouts were installed to facilitate pedestrian safety and improve traffic flow. In addition, the university’s signature pedestrian crossing—the Scramble Light—celebrated a \$14 million facelift in November 2011. View a photo gallery of the [McKinley Avenue renovation](#).

Recreation Center—To improve the health and fitness of students, faculty, and staff, the \$40 million Student Recreation and Wellness Center opened its doors in August 2010 and recorded nearly 870,000 visits within its first year. The center received a 2012 Outstanding Sports Facilities award from the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association. The 400,000-square-foot facility includes a suspended track, arena football-size indoor turf field, five-court gymnasium, three-level fitness area, multipurpose activity rooms, food service, and gathering areas. The Outdoor Pursuits Center features a 35-foot rock climbing wall and offers clinics, equipment rental, and trips for outdoor activities such as whitewater rafting, forest backpacking, bike tours, climbing, and fishing. See a video about the [Student Recreation and Wellness Center](#) and view photos in a gallery of [nonacademic buildings](#) on campus.

The Student Recreation and Wellness Center provides facilities available to faculty as well as students and therefore contributes to the wellness initiative for employees, called Working Well, which “offers a variety of programs that help faculty and staff get and stay healthy—mentally, physically, and emotionally.” Services include wellness incentives, health coaching, campus walking maps, personal trainers, and nutrition consulting. In addition, smoking cessation programs are available through Health Education. Employees who smoke have a financial incentive to quit since Ball State now provides nonsmokers with a \$600 yearly reduction in

health insurance premiums.

Geothermal System—Ball State continues to be revolutionary and responsible by building the nation’s largest ground-source, closed-loop district geothermal energy system, benefiting both the economy and the environment. A few years ago, the university recognized that its four aging coal-fired boilers needed to be replaced but was unable to find new boilers within the budgeted amount. Other options were investigated, and based on the data and information received, the decision was made to install a geothermal system. When fully operational, the system will heat and cool 47 campus buildings and replace the boilers, saving \$2 million in operating costs annually and cutting the university’s carbon footprint almost in half.

Phase 1 went online in spring 2012, and the system was dedicated in conjunction with Ball State’s ninth Greening of the Campus international conference. The system has already saved the university more than \$1 million in utility costs. The ambitious project has attracted visitors from as far away as Turkey and Japan and has garnered national attention from *The New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Christian Science Monitor*, National Public Radio, the White House blog, and the General Services Administration blog. See a video about the [geothermal project](#).

Sustainability—The geothermal project exemplifies Ball State’s long-standing commitment to sustainability, which has been recognized by the National Wildlife Federation, International Sustainable Campus Network, Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers, and *Kiwi* and *Sierra* magazines. In 2010, the university received Second Nature’s Climate Leadership Award and the Hoosier Environmental Council’s Technology Innovator of the Year award. Ball State was the first public institution in Indiana listed in The Princeton Review’s guides to green colleges.

In addition, President Jo Ann Gora is one of the 12 founding members of the leadership circle who signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. Ball State has also hosted nine Greening of the Campus Conferences, which bring national experts to campus to discuss sustainability efforts.

Technological Resources

Ball State’s technological infrastructure is aligned well with the university’s strategic plan goals, the top one of which is to “provide distinctive, high-quality educational experiences.” Our high-speed wireless and wired networks link students, faculty, classrooms, labs, residence halls, and offices campuswide. While nearly 99 percent of students have their own computers, the university has one of Indiana’s largest libraries, which houses about 400 public-use computers. In addition, Ball State has its own public television and radio stations. More information about campus technology including infrastructure data, library data, and related websites is available in the *Ball State Fact Book*.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is the primary unit charged with providing and supporting technology, communication, information, and collaborative services to Ball State faculty, students, and staff in the pursuit of excellence in teaching, learning, and research.

Through its six subunits, OIT supports the university's mission by developing advanced infrastructure, promoting universal access to technology resources, providing support for the development of quality digital content, and offering programs to enhance the teaching and learning skills of faculty, students, and staff.

In keeping with the 2007–2012 strategic plan, which states that Ball State will “maintain best-practice use and innovative use of information technology in support of strategic directions,” OIT prioritizes projects that develop areas of innovation. Such recent projects include:

- **Information Technology Reorganization**—The information technology area has undergone major reorganization the past few years to focus on online learning, immersive learning, and emerging technology initiatives. Prominent examples include creation of the Emerging Technologies and Media Development subunit and the contribution of staff and resources to the iLearn initiative. Consolidation and standardization of resources also played a key role in creating the Unified Technology Support subunit, a one-stop support venue for all students, faculty, and staff. In addition, resources for all data, voice, and video communications have been combined into the Unified Communications group within the Information Technology Services subunit.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)**—Ball State initiated an aggressive implementation of the Ellucian Banner (formerly SunGard) system in fall 2010. This effort encompasses all academic and administrative functions of the university, from preadmission to alumni. This effort replaces Ball State's homegrown student systems and out-of-date financial and advancement systems, incorporating new business processes for workflow, analytics, document imaging, and several other ancillary systems and processes.
- **Information Systems Security**—The Information Systems Security subunit works to ensure the university's various systems are protected; will not be violated by tampering, illegal access, or destruction; and will recover from disasters. This subunit responds immediately to any possible security problems.
- **Vendor Partnerships**—Ball State has partnered with Apple Inc. for the past several years to offer discounted hardware and software to students, faculty, and staff. The university is also part of the Microsoft Corporation Enrollment for Education Services agreement (formerly the Microsoft Campus Agreement) for volume licensing of commonly used Microsoft software. Lenovo has also been a Ball State preferred partner for six years, offering discounted hardware to students, faculty, and staff.

Subunits within the Office of Information Technology include Emerging Technologies and Media Development, Hybrid Design Technologies, University Teleplex, University Libraries, Information Technology Services, and Unified Technology Support.

Emerging Technologies and Media Development—This subunit is primarily responsible for maintaining an awareness of emerging technologies that could be applied to education and rapidly implementing those technologies on an experimental basis. The entire unit is structured to operate in a collaborative manner with diverse skill sets all under one administrator. Additionally, Emerging Technologies is supported by Ball State's Digital Corps, an elite group of highly skilled student employees who work closely with the professional staff of this subunit. Together they have contributed to a wide variety of campus initiatives,

including pioneering mobile app development and online learning initiatives. View photos of the Digital Corps labs in a gallery of [academic buildings](#) on campus.

Two recent projects have supported efforts by the Board of Trustees and the Indiana legislature to move to a paperless environment. Both groups have been provided with iPads. For the Board of Trustees, all documents needed for meetings are loaded to the iPad. Digital Corps students are available to assist the users. The initiative with the legislature is a pilot project that could save the state millions of dollars in paper and printing expense as well as benefiting the environment. Ball State students created an application that allows lawmakers to view all legislation, follow updates, and watch committee hearings and sessions from an iPad or other mobile tablet. The state estimates the paper costs for a typical bill to be at least \$500,000. If successful, this initiative could eliminate the use of more than 130 tons of paper.

Hybrid Design Technologies—HDT supports the design and production of virtual, immersive, and interactive environments and develops innovative immersive solutions for cultural heritage, museums, arts, teaching, and learning. This subunit and Ball State's Institute for Digital Intermedia Arts (IDIA) engage artists, scholars, designers, educators, scientists, and technicians in exploring the intersections between the arts, science, and technology. Scholarly, creative, and pedagogical projects investigate virtual reality, human computer interface, visualization, and 3-D simulation. Projects are developed in partnership with international clients, investigating the forefront of discourse in emergent media design. View photos of the IDIA Simulation Lab in a gallery of [academic buildings](#) on campus.

University Teleplex—This multimedia resource for faculty, staff, and students provides technical support services such as video production, immersive learning opportunities, DVD development, web streaming, digital graphics, video-on-demand delivery to on- and off-campus locations via the web, distance learning via the Internet, engineering repair and system design, and audiovisual delivery and distribution. The Teleplex also includes the public broadcasting stations WIPB-TV and Indiana Public Radio, which serve communities throughout east central Indiana.

Consistent with Ball State's strategic goals, Teleplex staff collaborate with faculty, staff, and students to enhance excellence in undergraduate and graduate learning and to ensure Ball State is a best-practice institution in the innovative use of instructional and information technology. Strategies to solicit feedback on the initial self-study report draft included three webcast forums produced by the Teleplex using its state-of-the-art studios. View photos of the virtual studios in a gallery of [academic buildings](#) on campus.

University Libraries—Ball State's libraries provide students, faculty, staff, and community users with access to resources that satisfy informational needs related to and consistent with the university's teaching curriculum, research mission, and service programs. The main facility, Alexander M. Bracken Library, has more than five acres of assignable floor space (321,800 gross square feet) and provides access to about 2.3 million books, periodicals, microforms, audiovisual materials, software, government publication maps, musical scores, archival records, and other information sources.

With seating for more than 2,264 simultaneous users, Bracken Library includes 48 individual

scholar study carrels, five study rooms, 10 large and three small conference rooms, and numerous lounges. Videoconferencing capabilities are available in two of the large conference rooms. The library's story is told more fully in Criterion 3, Subcomponent 3.D.4. View a photo gallery of [Bracken Library](#).

A recent addition to the library, the Helen B. and Martin D. Schwartz Special Collections and Digital Complex, connects students and faculty to numerous digital media assets and special collections and serves as a digital newsstand, providing access to international media, broadcasts, podcasts, and multimedia. Smaller branch libraries are located in the Architecture Building and Cooper Science Complex. The latter serves the university's science departments with selected periodicals, dedicated online resources, monographs, and reference materials.

Information Technology Services—ITS provides vital behind-the-scenes support of applications, computing, development, e-mail, networking, operations, voice, and video conferencing services. This subunit's groups include Business Operations, Enterprise Computing Operations, Information System Services, ITS Special Services, and Unified Communications. ITS takes pride in collaborating with the campus community, using new innovative technologies to meet the university's strategic goals and objectives. ITS provides services to students, faculty, staff, and external businesses.

Unified Technology Support—UTS offers a variety of services that align with its theme "Help, Learn, Fix, and Create." Major components include:

- **Concierge Desk** with knowledgeable and courteous full-time and student staff in the Tech Center inside Bracken Library
- **Desktop support** with local service providers (LSPs) to assist faculty and staff with their university-owned computer equipment and network connections
- **General computer and specialty labs** available for students, faculty, and staff to use for on-campus computing
- **Hardware repair services** for faculty, staff, and student computers
- **Instructional classroom support services** for faculty incorporating technology into classrooms. Faculty, staff, and students can check out audiovisual equipment and laptops through Equipment and Projectionist Services
- **Technology HelpDesk**, a single point of contact for students, faculty, and staff with problems or questions about technology-related issues
- **Technology Store**, which provides information and assistance with computers, software, and other technology products

Subcomponent 5.A.2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

Ball State's educational purposes are adequately funded, and the university does not allocate

resources to noneducational purposes to the detriment of its academic objectives. Ball State budgets its programs in accordance with provisions in the university's strategic plan, and funds are allocated to existing programs in response to objectives developed by units throughout the institution.

The 2007–2012 strategic plan established an emphasis that Ball State would adopt an “entrepreneurial approach to learning, scholarship, and civic engagement.” The first goal of the 2012–2017 strategic plan is to “provide a distinctive educational experience, from undergraduate to graduate, traditional to online, where theory and knowledge are tested through practical application.”

In practice and by definition, Ball State has no noneducational purposes. All of the vice presidential areas—academic affairs; business affairs; student affairs; enrollment, marketing, and communications; information technology; and university advancement—directly or indirectly support the academic purposes of the university. Likewise, the Ball State University Foundation, while a separate entity from the university, also supports the institution's educational objectives.

The university also maintains the Ball State Innovation Corporation, a technology transfer unit within the Sponsored Programs Office, but the activities of this unit in commercializing intellectual property developed by Ball State students, faculty, and staff are closely aligned with the institution's academic purposes.

Ball State established a plan to systematically put money into a reserve fund to protect the university in times of economic difficulty. That practice enabled the university to weather the economic downturn of the past decade without impacting the educational mission. The university also imposed a partial hiring freeze for nonacademic positions. Positions that were vacated could be filled but increased rationale for the need for the position was required plus an analysis of alternative means to accomplish the responsibilities of the position. This practice continues today. Initiatives supporting the goals, objectives, and performance indicators in the strategic plans receive priority for funding. The Ball State Bold capital campaign and external grants provide funding to enhance many aspects of the university's academic mission.

Subcomponent 5.A.3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.

The mission statements and goals in the three strategic plans that have guided Ball State since the university's last accreditation review have been realistic in consideration of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities. In the 2007–2012 strategic plan, four specific initiatives were outlined:

- offering relevant immersive learning opportunities to each undergraduate student
- attracting, retaining, and enrolling a more selective and diverse student body
- increasing the number of nationally recognized faculty and academic programs
- promoting a vibrant and supportive campus atmosphere

Immersive Learning

While the results of these initiatives are ongoing, the strategic plan has enabled Ball State to pursue clarity of purpose and avoid distraction and disruption to its long-term aims. For example, 1,019 immersive learning projects (interdisciplinary student-led teams with a faculty mentor developing tangible solutions to problems for community partners) were undertaken between 2007 and 2012, with the involvement of 16,416 students. In the view of the university's officers, administration, and faculty, these immersive learning opportunities differentiate Ball State from other colleges and universities. The full immersive learning story is told under Criterion 1, Core Component 1.D. Learn about some of these projects in the university's [Chronicles videos](#) and [immersive learning website](#).

Academic Profile

For the second initiative, the university has raised the academic profile of its undergraduate student body by increasing the percentage of freshmen participating in the Honors College (8 percent) and admitting more students who earned the Indiana Academic Honors Diploma or its out-of-state equivalent in high school (now more than 63 percent). The recruitment of more highly qualified and better prepared students has resulted in improved retention rates for Ball State students, with the university now retaining nearly 80 percent of its freshmen.

National Recognition

Ball State also continues to show progress in achieving national recognition for its faculty and academic programs. Several programs—including architecture, educational leadership, entrepreneurship, and nursing—continue to enjoy national rankings after several years in the spotlight, while other programs—accounting, finance, landscape architecture, music, theatre, journalism, and telecommunications, to name a few—have earned recent national recognitions. Ball State has been recognized by *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and The Princeton Review for the effectiveness of its programs. At the same time, the university's initiative in geothermal energy technology has attracted national and international attention from the scientific community.

Vibrant Campus

Finally, Ball State has made great strides in its objective to promote a vibrant and supportive campus environment. The university has renovated or is in the process of renovating several residence halls, including a new home for Honors College students. New construction has included two more residence halls and the long-needed Student Recreation and Wellness Center. Funds for these projects are managed separately from the academic budget. Ball State has also continued to modernize its athletic facilities through philanthropic gifts, including renovations to the football stadium—renamed Scheumann Stadium in honor of Ball State alumnus John Scheumann, a former football player and benefactor of the university—and construction of the Briner Sports Complex for women's soccer, field hockey, and track and field. View a photo gallery of these [athletic facilities](#) and proposed [athletic complexes](#).

Next Steps

The university is building on the accomplishments of its 2007–2012 strategic plan with

the 2012–2017 plan, developed through a lengthy process and with the input of hundreds of individuals from the campus and community. Details of the new plan are provided under Core Component 5.C. Its four overarching goals are:

- provide distinctive, high-quality educational experiences
- become a recognized leader for educational and disciplinary innovation
- invest in an increasingly vibrant and integrated university community
- advance Indiana through student engagement and faculty expertise

Subcomponent 5.A.4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.

Ball State's hiring process requires minimum qualifications for all positions, and background and reference checks are performed for all new appointees. National searches are conducted for all faculty and other key positions. The vast majority of tenure-line faculty—about 90 percent—hold terminal degrees, and many have years of experience in their disciplines. More details about faculty credentials and the hiring process are provided under Criterion 3, Subcomponent 3.C.2. Once employed, faculty, professional staff, and other personnel have a variety of training options available both on campus and externally.

University Human Resource Services offers a robust training program that provides opportunities for employees to build skills specific to their job responsibilities. Its Learning and Development educational sessions are geared toward professional and staff employees but are open to all employees and students. Topics include problem solving, using Excel, grant writing, and training employees.

Roll Out the Red

Occasionally, special programs and projects are instituted for training across the scope of the university on fundamental issues. In 2008–09, for example, Ball State implemented an intensive training program, Roll Out the Red, under the overall coordination of University Human Resource Services. The program focused on improving customer service in the university's various units. Comments from external constituents such as parents and members of the local community had indicated that Ball State's customer service effort needed improvement. Randy Howard, vice president for business affairs and treasurer, stated: "We targeted this area and developed the Roll Out the Red program. This involved training all employees of the university in customer service concepts." Roll Out the Red training materials continue to be used in the training sessions for new staff and service employees.

Faculty and Professional Personnel Development

Faculty and professional personnel also have a wealth of training opportunities. Orientation for new faculty and professional personnel includes a training session focused on faculty/student interactions from the Roll Out the Red initiative. In addition, most first-year faculty members are paired with experienced faculty mentors who meet with them throughout their first year on campus and help to orient them to university policies and practices. Other resources and programs are available to help faculty members enhance their teaching:

Educational Excellence—Faculty who wish to obtain specialized training to improve their teaching may work closely with Ball State’s Office of Educational Excellence (OEE). This office publishes a faculty development newsletter, hosts webinars where faculty may observe a particular educational innovation in use at other colleges and universities, and sponsors workshops and seminars to help faculty adapt educational technology to the classroom, such as an ongoing series in which faculty learn how to use iClickers in their teaching. OEE also helps to foster dialogue between faculty who are searching for new and innovative ideas and concepts that will help them improve their teaching.

Interactive Learning Space—The new Interactive Learning Space (ILS) Initiative trains and supports faculty to change their pedagogy to a more collaborative format facilitated by a learning environment that provides state-of-the-art teaching technologies. Training takes place in two classrooms on campus that are equipped with the new technologies. Additional classrooms will be established with any of the technologies deemed successful in increasing student learning as a result of the research conducted in the training classrooms. Only faculty trained in the use of the technologies will be allowed to teach in any of these classrooms.

Integrated Learning Institute—Another new faculty development initiative is iLearn: Integrated Learning Institute, which “serves the instructional design and technology learning needs of faculty members developing and teaching online or blended courses.” This unit assigns an instructional designer to work with a faculty member on either the development of a new online or blended course or the redevelopment of an existing course. Technology specialists are available to provide training, and media specialists can develop digital assets needed for the course. iLearn also completes a quality control check of all online courses prior to them becoming available for student use. Each course is evaluated using a rubric developed from Quality Matters.

Subcomponent 5.A.5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Ball State’s budgeting process encompasses all vice presidential areas: academic affairs; business affairs; student affairs; enrollment, marketing, and communications; information technology; and university advancement. Budgets are monitored at the departmental level as well as the vice presidential and university levels. Variances in budgets are investigated, and appropriate actions are taken.

Each of Ball State’s vice presidents has a staff member responsible for budgetary matters who works closely with the Office of University Budgets. These individuals monitor the vice presidents’ budgets and track their expenditures. Each academic college also has a finance and budget director, who is responsible for monitoring and tracking budgeted expenditures. These college directors report directly to the university’s budget office. Monthly financial reports are available online to review transactions and compare year-to-date balances to budgeted amounts.

Budget Development

Each year, the university’s budget plan is developed using, among other factors, projected

enrollment, projected state appropriations, and projected external funding levels. In 2003, the budget process was made more transparent and inclusive by providing the college deans an opportunity to formally present their annual needs and requirements to the provost and vice president for academic affairs and the director of university budgets to establish a budget plan for their respective colleges for the upcoming year.

Although the college deans no longer make formal presentations, a template has been established that the deans and other administrators in the Division of Academic Affairs use to make budget requests. This process has resulted in the fulfillment of many previously unmet needs. In addition, the provost and the other vice presidents formally present their needs and requirements to the president.

The budget process for 2010–11 and 2011–12 was modified from prior fiscal years because of significant midyear reductions in state appropriations.

Budget Process 2010–11

On December 22, 2009, President Jo Ann Gora sent an e-mail to all Ball State employees titled “Budget Update and Planning Process,” which described the reduction in state funding proposed by the governor for the 2010–11 fiscal year and encouraged faculty and staff to participate in the budgeting process by submitting suggestions to an e-mail account established specifically to receive budget-related comments (budgplan2010@bsu.edu). The president also provided the link to a website created to provide updates on the process. Students were encouraged to submit suggestions through the Student Government Association website. Each vice president was also tasked with brainstorming ideas for systematic reductions in expenses or growth in revenues in their own areas or across the campus. A deadline of January 29, 2010, was set for all suggestions and submissions. Based on the comments submitted, 20 categories were identified by the President’s Cabinet for further consideration.

A campuswide forum was held on February 17, 2010, to explain the background issues, define Ball State’s strategy, propose a timeline, and present the categories of expense reductions or revenue enhancements being considered. The university’s strategy included three primary goals:

- preserve the educational experience of students
- maintain the momentum of the strategic plan
- recognize that people are the key to these goals

After further deliberations by the President’s Cabinet and discussions with various governance committees, the collective bargaining unit, and other campus groups, 11 specific areas of reductions in expenses and/or increases in revenue were selected for further consideration. A second campuswide forum was held on March 16, 2010, to discuss these recommendations.

Several of the proposals provided savings and/or increased revenues for future years. In addition to these recommendations, decisions were made by the president and the vice president for business affairs and treasurer—in consultation with the responsible areas

on campus—as to the proposed changes for salaries and wages, health care costs, utility costs, student financial aid, and funding for strategic plan initiatives. It was decided that student tuition, which had been approved on a two-year basis in the prior year’s budgeting process, would not be changed to address the state funding reduction.

The final budget plan was recommended to Ball State’s Board of Trustees on March 19, 2010, for action on certain individual items, and the board approved the plan on May 7, 2010.

Budget Process 2011–12

Ball State received a reduction in state funding again in the 2011–2013 biennium. Due to this cut and the uncertainty of the state appropriation amount until the legislature adjourned on April 29, 2011, the university’s 2011–12 budget process was slightly altered from a normal year. The vice presidents, including the provost and vice president for academic affairs, were asked to provide specific details of how they would cut their 2011–12 budgets by an additional 2 percent. The vice presidents were also asked to present two programs/projects/needs most important to their area that were unfunded or underfunded.

The vice presidents met with their direct reports to formulate plans for budget reductions and/or reallocations within their areas or departments. Recommendations approved in the previous year that provided savings or increased revenue in 2011–12 were rolled into the budget plan. Each vice president reviewed these items to verify that savings were still achievable and to make any necessary changes. All of the budget proposals were presented to the president, vice president of business affairs and treasurer, associate vice president for business affairs and assistant treasurer, and director of university budgets, who discussed them and developed a budget plan incorporating the proposals that related to the strategic plan and merited funding.

In addition to the vice presidents’ proposals, discussions relating to other critical funding issues—including student tuition and fees, salary and wages, health care, utilities, and so on—were held based on data received from throughout the campus, and decisions were made as to the appropriate changes to include in the budget plan. The 2011–12 budget plan was presented to Ball State’s Board of Trustees on June 16, 2011, and was approved at that meeting.

Summary: Core Component 5.A.

The past 10 years have seen decreases in state support for Ball State. In response, the university has become more efficient and has been recognized nationally for efficiency. Initiatives were undertaken to increase revenue—recruiting more international and graduate students, restructuring tuition and fees, and raising private funds through the Ball State Bold capital campaign. The budget development process has become more transparent, and efforts have been made to put more resources into scholarships to help offset tuition increases for students with the greatest needs.

Despite financial challenges, the university has maintained the quality of the education it provides. It has kept a steady number of faculty by making personnel cuts in other areas, generally by not filling or delaying the filling of a position when an employee leaves. Most classes are taught by faculty rather than graduate students.

Ball State has a beautiful, well-maintained campus. Numerous new buildings have been constructed, and others have seen major renovations. This is true for academic buildings, residence halls, athletic venues, streets, and other facilities. In keeping with the university's commitment to sustainability, all new buildings and renovations have been completed with the goal of gaining LEED certification when possible. Access to all parts of campus for students with disabilities has been a priority for many years.

Under the leadership of the vice president for information technology, the university is nearing completion of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation for all university systems. For more than two decades, Ball State has been a leader in the use of technology in teaching and the development of a technology infrastructure that includes emerging media and state-of-the-art production facilities.

Ball State has gained increased recognition at both the state and national levels regarding the quality of the institution. The 2012–2017 strategic plan will lead the university to increased effectiveness, especially in providing students with a high-quality education and impacting the state of Indiana.

Core Component 5.B.

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

Ball State University's governance and administrative structures facilitate the leadership and support needed to accomplish the institution's mission and strategic objectives. At the top, the university is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees appointed by the governor of Indiana. The board is made up of two Ball State alumni, one full-time student, and six members appointed at large. Appointments are for four-year terms. Board members and their positions and biographies are available online.

The Board of Trustees hires the university president, to whom it delegates the day-to-day administration of the institution. The President's Cabinet consists of the senior management team, including:

- vice president for academic affairs (provost)
- vice president for business affairs (treasurer)
- vice president for enrollment, marketing, and communications
- vice president for information technology
- vice president for student affairs
- vice president for university advancement
- vice president and general counsel
- associate vice president for governmental affairs
- director of intercollegiate athletics

Information about these officers and organizational charts showing Ball State's administrative structure are available to the public on the university's website.

As a state-assisted institution, Ball State also maintains substantial and significant relationships with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (ICHE) and the Indiana General Assembly. Ball State joins Indiana's other public colleges and universities as a member of the State Transfer Articulation Committee (STAC), which was established several years ago by state statute and is coordinated by ICHE. STAC develops policies and procedures for several state initiatives such as the Course Transfer Library, the new statewide general education core, and college credit for Advanced Placement (AP) scores.

Subcomponent 5.B.1. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.

The principal entity responsible for formulating educational policy at Ball State is the University Senate. Its constitution is published in the *Faculty and Professional Personnel Handbook*. Following the constitution is a description of the Ball State University Council and Committee System as prepared by the Governance System Task Force, approved by university faculty and the University Senate, and adopted by Ball State's Board of Trustees on December 17, 2004.

Ball State has two other representative bodies: the Staff Council, elected by nonacademic staff members, and the Student Senate. Both groups select their membership according to procedures set forth in their constitutions, and they may establish committees or boards and delegate certain responsibilities to them. The Staff Council and the Student Senate also make recommendations on matters of concern to the appropriate council or committee or to the Office of the President. The Ball State University Governance System Policy Formation Flow Chart is available on the university's website.

At the time of Ball State's last accreditation self-study for the Higher Learning Commission, the portion of the University Constitution concerning governance was under review. It must be understood that the overall constitution had not been revised to any major extent for 20 years. The main reason for the change was a concern that the structure at the time did not provide for faculty voice to be heard sufficiently. The governance changes to the constitution involved the following:

Responsibilities—It was clarified that the governance system's responsibilities dealt with academic matters and that financial matters were not included in its purview.

Term Limits—Term limits were imposed on all senators. No one can hold the position for more than three consecutive two-year terms. This was the most extensively discussed change and passed after rigorous study and debate. Another change took away voting privileges from ex-officio committee members. The process of change and enactment of the constitution took more than two years. All constituencies were represented in the process. The process outlined in the last self-study was followed.

New Councils—Three new councils were created to share the bulk of the governance work: University Council, Campus Council, and Faculty Council. It was felt that this new structure provided a better balance among the constituencies than the previous system.

- Campus Council consists of two faculty members, two professional personnel, nine students, and various specific administrative personnel on an ex-officio basis. Its responsibilities include student activities, safety, and ethics and standards.
- Faculty Council consists of 49 regular and two contract faculty members, the chairs of the Campus Council and University Council, and the university's provost. Its responsibilities include academic freedom, promotion and tenure, and salaries and benefits.
- University Council consists of 18 general and specific professional personnel, seven faculty members, and five students. Its responsibilities include assessment and academic research, international, and master planning, and intellectual properties.
- New technology committees under the Faculty Council and the University Council were added to provide a broad base of technology understanding and advice.

Subcomponent 5.B.2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Ball State's nine-member Board of Trustees provides oversight for the total operation of the university, including all educational, financial, legal, and fiduciary matters. As stated in Ball State's *Faculty and Professional Personnel Handbook* since October 17, 1968, the Board of Trustees "reaffirms its commitment to the university community and the citizens of Indiana to provide optimum educational opportunity for all students of the university." Specifically, the Board of Trustees has the following duties:

- manage, control, and operate Ball State
- borrow money, issue bonds, and let contracts
- prescribe conditions for admission
- grant degrees and issue diplomas or certificates
- set fees, charges, fines, and penalties
- define the duties of and provide compensation for university faculty and staff
- receive and administer all donations, bequests, grants, funds, and property that are given or provided to the university
- possess all the powers in order to effectively operate the affairs of Ball State (see Criterion 2, Subcomponent 2.C.1. for a list of recent board actions)

The Board of Trustees is represented on Ball State's Accreditation Steering Committee by Hollis Hughes, board president, and Barbara Phillips, the board's assistant secretary. In a recent interview, Phillips noted that the university's previous accreditation report mentioned communication issues between the Board of Trustees and the president. She said those issues have been corrected, and communication is now good with the administration, faculty, and staff. In addition to frequent contact and information from the president, each board member meets with other members of the Ball State community. Face-to-face meetings

also occur at university commencements, board retreats, and regular board meetings.

According to Phillips, the Board of Trustees has been very involved in the university's strategic planning activities, including the development of the 2007–2012 strategic plan, updates on the plan's progress, and the organization and development of the 2012–2017 strategic plan. She also noted that the board has been environmentally green, using digital media for all communications—including iPads at meetings—in support of the university's sustainability efforts.

The board receives information about campus units through presentations made at each board meeting. Details are provided under Criterion 2, Subcomponent 2.C.1. The members of the board have continued to carry out their responsibilities with dedication and loyalty and in a completely professional manner to fulfill their pledge to provide optimum educational opportunity for all students of the university.

Subcomponent 5.B.3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff, and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Frequently, collaboration among university administration, faculty, staff, and students in handling academic issues is a hallmark of higher education. Ball State's internal governance structure facilitates these collaborative efforts. Two recent examples illustrate this point. The two projects began from conversations at Faculty Council and University Senate meetings. The establishment of two project teams originated from informal follow-up conversations between the university's provost and the chair of the University Senate. Creation of the two work groups was iterative, mostly by e-mail exchanges. Details of the projects follow:

Education of the Future

The first project was the development of the Education of the Future Task Force. This group was cochaired by Ball State's vice president for information technology and a faculty member. Other team members included faculty and professional staff experienced in technology in the classroom. Students were also involved. The group's charge was to examine current circumstances in higher education and how Ball State can continue to be a leader. Specifically, the task force was asked to:

- examine and summarize in more detail the recent major changes in the world and what will likely happen in the near future
- explain how will these changes affect undergraduate education
- enumerate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats specific to Ball State
- define how an undergraduate education from Ball State should be delivered in 10 years
- suggest a path that will lead the university toward that 2020 vision to serve as input for the next strategic planning process

The provost and the University Senate chair observed and participated in discussions with

the task force. After considering more than 25 different references and consulting with campus constituencies, the group produced a final report titled *Education of the Future*. The task force's recommendations are being implemented and incorporated into the university's 2012–2017 strategic plan.

Goal 2 of the 2012–2017 strategic plan states that Ball State will “become a recognized leader for educational and disciplinary innovation” (see *Strategic Plan 2012–2017*). Work in this area is substantially under way with the Interactive Learning Space initiative discussed in Subcomponent 5.A.4. The university administration holds an annual retreat to address specific topics of importance to the institution. One year the topic was the future of education.

Academic Rigor

The subject of the second project was initially called “grade inflation.” This was an item of discussion by several University Senate committees for several years. In 2011, after much national and local press on the subject, the provost and the senate chair again established a team of administrators, faculty, staff, and students to examine what is now called “academic rigor.” The generalities of this project revolve around the following questions: Is the education Ball State provides rigorous, and does the university maintain academic quality? How can we improve, and how can we adapt traditional measures to an evolving educational environment?

Team members were jointly selected by the administration and governance representatives. The specific charge to the group was to:

- assemble the appropriate data for Ball State
- assess Ball State's performance in maintaining and improving academic rigor
- provide recommendations to the university's faculty and administration

This team was also expected to review the following items:

- **Grade trends:** Is grade inflation real? To what extent is it explained by our better-qualified students or by our liberal course repeat policy?
- **Hours of study outside of class:** We know that today's students study fewer hours than most of us did. Is that a problem? What can we do about it?
- **Use of “extra credit”:** Some faculty give “extra credit” for cocurricular activities such as attendance at lectures or visits to museums. Is that appropriate? What are alternatives?
- **Writing proficiency:** Writing continues to be very important for graduates in most fields. Are we preparing students well? Is our current assessment tool appropriate/adequate?
- **Other related factors:** How do we ensure rigor on nontraditional learning environments such as study abroad, field study, immersive learning, or online education? What are the Higher Learning Commission's accreditation requirements?

The team began deliberations in spring 2012 and submitted a final report in January 2013.

Summary: Core Component 5.B.

Ball State is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees that understands its roles of responsibility to provide fiscal oversight and approve university policies. Faculty have responsibility for the curriculum through the University Senate and other shared governance structures. Members of the Board of Trustees expect the administration to handle the daily operations of the institution, but they are informed about campus units through presentations made at each board meeting, frequent contact and information from the president, encounters with other members of the Ball State community, and other gatherings.

Core Component 5.C.

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

Ball State University has used the strategic planning process for more than a decade to guarantee the institution has a clear and well-defined direction with the means to achieve its goals. The conclusion of *Education Redefined: Strategic Plan 2007–2012* illustrates the complete planning cycle, including its systematic and integrated nature.

Strategic Plan 2007–2012

In January 2005, a 26-member task force composed of faculty members, students, administrators, and professional staff from across the campus began the process of creating a new strategic plan to become effective as *Strategic Plan 2001–2006* concluded. The task force was charged with devising a plan that would enhance Ball State’s distinctiveness and guide the university’s direction and growth while maintaining a focus on undergraduate learning. The archives of *Education Redefined: Strategic Plan 2007–2012* include the agendas and minutes of the strategic planning process.

The final iteration of the plan included refined mission and vision statements, strategies, four goals, and more than 100 performance objectives. With a wide array of objectives, everyone on campus had a role in “Education Redefined.” Progress was measured and reported each year in the following documents:

- *Year One Progress Report: A More Distinctive University*
- *Year Two Progress Report: Building on Our Momentum*
- *Year Three Progress Report: Strategic Plan at Midterm*
- *Year Four Progress Report: Demonstrating Our Value in a Changing World*
- *Year Five Progress Report: Moving Toward the Next Level of Distinction*

In addition to the annual progress reports, the university posted on its website a Strategic Plan Progress Metrics chart tracking the level of achievement for each performance objective. The right-hand column of these reports indicates how each performance indicator was aligned with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education’s strategic plan, titled *Reaching Higher*. The 2012–2017 strategic plan is also aligned with the commission’s new strategic plan, *Reaching Higher, Achieving More*.

Strategic Plan 2012–2017

Ball State's strategic planning process resumed in early 2011 as a university-wide task force began its work to develop a new plan for the next five years. The task force structured the planning process and evaluated the 2007–2012 plan and its outcomes. During summer and early fall 2011, input was gathered from more than 20 groups and approximately 450 individuals, and the task force analyzed and interpreted the data from those stakeholders at the end of 2011.

The first version of *Strategic Plan 2012–2017* was presented to the university's senior academic and administrative personnel in February 2012. During the spring, the draft was shared with a variety of other groups on campus, including student leaders. As the draft was edited, the different iterations of the plan were posted on the university's website, and feedback was continuously solicited. Concurrently, appropriate staff members were preparing performance indicators for each outcome measure in the draft plan. As was done with the previous plan, the final performance indicators will be used to track the new strategic plan's progress over its five-year implementation.

A draft of the 2012–2017 strategic plan, *Education Redefined 2.0: Advancing Indiana*, was presented to the Board of Trustees on October 17, 2012. The plan was approved by the board at its December 14, 2012, meeting, and the first progress report was published in spring 2013.

Subcomponent 5.C.1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

Ball State's resources are allocated to support and enable faculty, staff, students, administrators, and other stakeholders to accomplish the institution's mission and strategic plan objectives. Based upon budget requests and input from all campus units, the university's administration prepares an annual proposed general fund budget for the institution that is ultimately approved by the Ball State Board of Trustees. This process allows units to propose continued and new activities that are aligned with the university's mission and strategic planning goals.

Another aspect of this planning process took place during the 2013 administrative retreat, which focused on developing initiatives to meet the performance indicators in the 2012–2017 strategic plan. During the day-and-a-half-retreat, university administrators brainstormed and selected potential initiatives and then began the planning process for some of those initiatives. Each individual was charged to replicate the process in his or her own unit. Resources will be allocated to selected initiatives. As a follow-up and to maintain the momentum gained during the retreat, the agenda for one of the regular Council of Deans meetings included initiatives proposed by each of the units represented.

The vision included in the 2007–2012 strategic plan stated Ball State would be “a national model of excellence for challenging, learner-centered academic communities,” and that commitment is continuing with the 2012–2017 strategic plan's vision to be “relentlessly focused on learning outcomes.”

An example of how Ball State allocated resources in line with its vision and mission is President Jo Ann Gora's decision in 2004 to forgo the usual presidential inauguration event and invest the money that would have been spent into scholarships for outstanding students. She also challenged others to provide what were called Inauguration Scholarships, which provided \$25,000 for each student selected. With gifts from private donors, a total of 25 Inauguration Scholarships were awarded. The scholarships were announced during a ceremony at the Indiana Statehouse.

The Inauguration Scholarships became a model for the Bold Celebration Scholarships, a project of the Ball State Bold capital campaign. Rather than hold a lavish end-of-campaign celebration, donors contributed funds for 55 scholarships awarded to outstanding students. Scholarships, each worth \$40,000 over four years, were presented at the Indiana Statehouse in March 2011.

Funding Sources

University resources specifically allocated for strategic initiatives are available from various sources. In recent years, expense reduction and reallocation in the general fund budget have provided funds for strategic plan activities. Substantial resources are also available for strategic plan purposes from the recent Ball State Bold capital campaign, which raised more than \$210.8 million in private gifts. For example, 133 new endowed scholarships—many of them merit based—were created through the campaign to help the university attract high-quality students. The Ball State University Foundation encouraged participation in the establishment of the endowed scholarships by matching the gifts made by faculty members up to \$25,000. Other campaign contributions are available to foster immersive learning and attract nationally recognized faculty.

This was only the third capital campaign in the history of the university, with the previous two having \$40 million and \$90 million goals, respectively. Given this past, a goal of \$200 million was very ambitious and became even more challenging with the downturn in the U.S. economy that occurred just after the public phase of the Bold campaign began. Even under the worst circumstances, widespread support for the university was demonstrated by the institution's ability to not only meet but substantially exceed the goal.

Fiscal Challenges

A more difficult task is adapting resources to strategic objectives during times of unexpected fiscal stringency. In 2009–10, for example, the Indiana legislature and the governor instituted reductions in existing funding for the state's public universities. Ball State, of necessity, was forced to implement a \$15.2 million reduction in its overall operations. In response, "utilizing an open process that enabled every employee to participate, the university implemented a plan that met the target over the remaining 18 months of the biennium. The final plan reflected Ball State's commitment to academic excellence and the need to invest in the future, while being mindful that the uncertainty of future appropriations demands careful cost containment." For more on this process, see Subcomponent 5.A.5.

Describing the fluidity of the current fiscal environment, Randy Howard, vice president for business affairs and treasurer, observed, "We are challenging each potential objective to

make sure that the limited resources being used are being put to the area that will move Ball State forward farther.”

Subcomponent 5.C.2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

Metrics for all of Ball State’s strategic plan objectives are established and monitored periodically by the university’s senior administration. Solutions are proposed for objectives that are not being met and/or where improvements could be made. For example, Randy Howard, vice president for business affairs and treasurer, noted that the university has become more sensitive to the issue of persistence toward graduation—a special interest of state legislators—and the university has instituted special measures such as awarding a Completion Scholarship to students who graduate within four years and reducing tuition for summer courses, among other actions.

For more details about Ball State’s initiatives to improve retention and degree completion rates, see Criterion 4, Subcomponent 4.C.3.

Strategic Assessments—In addition to the strategic plan metrics discussed under Core Component 5.C., numerous other assessments conducted on campus are connected to Ball State’s strategic goals and objectives. For example, the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey has been used to assess the experience of tenure-track faculty members. In April 2012, the task force charged by the university’s provost to review the results of the 2010–11 COACHE survey presented its observations and recommendations on five issues: expectations for achieving tenure, salaries, work-life issues, scholarship support, and mentoring. In addition to a careful review of the 2010–11 data, the task force considered the recommendations made following the 2007–08 administration of the COACHE survey and a 2009 report on mentoring for junior faculty members.

Ball State’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) also administers a number of surveys to students and other campus constituencies in an effort to better understand the areas in which the university is succeeding or needs improvement. The following surveys are posted on the OIE website:

- MAP-Works (first-year students, sophomores, and transfers)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Senior Survey
- Alumni Survey
- Graduate Exit Survey
- Coalition on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey of Tenure-Track Faculty Members
- Orientation
- Workplace Environment Survey
- Time to Degree Summary Report

Transfer Initiatives—As a result of the 2012 MAP-Works survey and other data sources, Ball State has implemented a number of new initiatives for retaining transfer students. Examples include the hiring of a transfer coordinator in the Office of Admissions and four Transfer Student Ambassadors who work with new transfer students. Based on the MAP-Works data, half of the ambassadors focus on programming and assistance for first-year transfers, and the others assist advanced transfer students. Also as a result of the data and the task force recommendations, the university has developed earlier opportunities for transfer students to connect with Ball State’s Career Center during orientation.

Subcomponent 5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspective of internal and external constituent groups.

Ball State’s planning process is comprehensive, involving the entire institution. It begins with the senior administration approving a format to be used by each member of the President’s Cabinet to make a presentation of funding, personnel, and other compelling issues in their areas of responsibility. Once the format is determined, the vice presidents ask their direct reports to present issues within their areas to support the request. This process ensures budgets are being developed more from the bottom and rolling up in the organization.

The results of these meetings and presentations form the basis for strategic funding for the next year’s budget. Ultimately, the new university budget delineates how each initiative will be addressed and the related funding. This approach allows all areas within the university to have a voice in the process.

The university’s planning process also considers the views of external constituencies. In addition to parents and students, three very influential constituencies are the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the Indiana General Assembly, and the State Budget Committee.

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

This commission is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to:

- define the educational missions of public colleges and universities
- plan and coordinate Indiana’s state-supported system of postsecondary education
- review budget requests from public institutions and the State Student Assistance Commission
- approve or disapprove for public institutions the establishment of new programs or expansion of campuses

The commission is a coordinating agency that works closely with Indiana’s public and independent colleges. The commission is not a governing board, but it is extremely important and has substantial influence. This body reviews university budget requests and makes a biennial recommendation on higher education funding to the State Budget Committee.

Indiana General Assembly

The state legislature's perspective of higher education is a much-considered element in the university's planning process. Making college more affordable and improving college completion rates are two significant objectives of the legislature. To assist in this effort, Ball State has established the Completion Scholarship for students who finish their degrees in four calendar years or less. This scholarship is a \$500 tuition credit.

In addition, Ball State is developing and implementing a Student Success Plan. As part of this initiative, all freshmen who have declared a major will create a graduation plan before the end of their first semester. All other students will follow the same process. These plans will be entered into the new DegreeWorks system so students can use them each semester when preparing to register. Other details of the Student Success Plan are being developed.

State Budget Committee

Every other year, Ball State's president presents the university's biennial request for state operating and capital appropriations to the Indiana legislature's State Budget Committee. This presentation emphasizes how the budget request and the goals and outcomes of the university's strategic plan support Indiana's broad strategic directions for higher education.

Subcomponent 5.C.4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

Subcomponent 5.C.5 Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Ball State plans on a comprehensive basis, reflecting internal and external realities while preserving the flexibility necessary to respond to unforeseen situations. As a matter of routine, Ball State considers a number of assumptions during its budget building process. They include such factors as:

- size of the freshman class
- student retention rates
- tuition rates
- state appropriations
- employee salary increases
- employee health care costs
- utility expenses

Sensitivity analyses are run based on these assumptions to determine their impact on the overall budget. From these analyses, the university examines possible changes in the budget assumptions and what "trade-offs" would result. This process leads to an examination of areas where the evaluation of metrics has shown improvements could be made. For example, Ball State has become more sensitive to the issue of student persistence toward graduation

within four years, a special interest of the state legislature. As a result, the university has instituted a Completion Scholarship for students who graduate within four years and has reduced tuition for summer courses, among other actions. For more details about Ball State's initiatives to improve degree completion rates, see Criterion 4, Subcomponent 4.C.3.

Ball State's planning process also anticipates other emerging considerations such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization, and these are incorporated into the strategic planning. For example, education is an increasingly significant contributor to globalization as people of different nations, cultures, and religions come to know more about one another. In response to this reality, the university's two most recent strategic plans have included goals related to nurturing and promoting a collaborative and vibrant campus community that reflects the diversity and connectivity of the world:

- **Strategic Plan 2007–2012**—Goal 1, Objective A called for the university to “attract, enroll, retain, and graduate a more selective and diverse student body.”
- **Strategic Plan 2012–2017**—Goal 1, Objective 7 continues this focus: “Be a university that attracts a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.”

Another example of how the university anticipates change is in its adoption of hybrid schedules, which allow on-campus students, most of whom are digital natives, to take online courses. This initiative is one of several changes that resulted from the tuition restructuring process.

Summary: Core Component 5.C.

In 2012, Ball State closed a successful strategic plan and began another one. In each case, the planning process included representatives from all areas of the campus. The results of this process are goals and objectives with measurable performance indicators that provide strategic direction for the university and the basis for budget allocation priorities. Yearly reports of progress on each performance indicator were part of the 2007–2012 strategic plan, and these will continue with the 2012–2017 strategic plan. The progress results are used in decision making.

All planning processes anticipate changes in technology, demographic shifts and globalization, and the fiscal environment. The university's relationships with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the Indiana General Assembly, and the State Budget Committee increase its ability to respond to the changing environment.

Core Component 5.D.

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

Following the strategic planning process, Ball State University monitors and reviews its progress in accomplishing the institutional goals and objectives it has established. This review is done for both internal and external purposes and ultimately assists the university in fulfilling its mission.

Subcomponent 5.D.1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

Within the institution, Ball State's vice presidents are responsible for producing annual reports detailing the accomplishments and status of their divisions. For the most part, these reports are based upon the annual reports of the subunits in each vice presidential area. Consequently, these annual reports are used throughout the university to review and present progress toward meeting institutional goals and objectives.

For example, the provost and vice president for academic affairs asks the deans on campus to provide annual reports for their colleges, and typically the deans ask their departments to do the same. The reports include the status of ongoing initiatives identified by each unit and the development of long-term initiatives. These tangible outcomes are expected to be in line with the strategic plan and mission/vision statements of the university and the respective colleges and departments. Individual faculty members also submit annual reports on their activities. This reporting process facilitates organizational and personnel performance reviews at all levels.

In addition, a number of internal performance assessments are conducted through Ball State's Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). Some of these are described in Subcomponent 5.C.2. Externally, accreditation is one means for academic performance review. All academic units also participate in a university-level assessment that includes external reviewers every five years. These unit accreditation and review processes are discussed in detail in Criterion 3, Core Component 3.A.

Subcomponent 5.D.2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Ball State uses a variety of means—internal and external, ongoing and ad hoc—to identify ways to improve the performance and productivity of the institution and its component parts.

One example involves online education, where enrollment growth was a priority in *Strategic Plan 2007–2012*. After review, the emphasis was shifted to enhancing the quality of online instruction in *Strategic Plan 2012–2017*. The university's Future of Higher Education Task Force and Growth in Online Education Task Force participated in this review. Both task forces indicated a need for academic leadership in the online and blended learning initiative in order to ensure academic rigor, high-quality course design, and fully integrated assessment of student learning outcomes.

At the recommendation of the Growth in Online Education Task Force, Ball State became a member of the nationally recognized Quality Matters program and participates in a national consortium of best practices in online course design. Since fall 2012, all of Ball State's online courses have been assessed through a peer-review process using the Quality Matters rubric, the most widely used benchmark of postsecondary online course design in the U.S.

iLearn: Integrated Learning Institute was created to ensure students receive the same innovative, creative, and effective instruction in online courses as they experience in campus classrooms. Through iLearn, skilled instructional designers help translate the content of on-campus courses into rich and active, learner-focused online classes or blended courses (online plus face-to-face instruction). They also provide guidance in developing teaching and learning strategies and specialized applications using instructional technologies. A number of technology specialists provide training with online learning tools and build or support unique web or digital assets for online courses.

Through iLearn, Online Faculty Fellows assist their colleagues in online and blended teaching techniques, share their expertise and/or research, develop and lead faculty training, discuss ways to improve online teaching and course development, provide one-on-one mentoring, and participate in professional development activities.

Summary: Core Component 5.D.

The past 10 years have seen many changes at Ball State, from obvious ones involving campus buildings and infrastructure to the university's expanding reputation within the state of Indiana and the nation. More than 50 programs have received national rankings or recognitions. The institution's Carnegie classification changed to research university, high research activity (RU/H). In 2011, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Ball State eighth among "up-and-coming" colleges and universities, joining the ranks of institutions "that recently made the most promising and innovative changes in the areas of academics, faculty, student life, campus, or facilities."

The university has assessment systems to measure student learning outcomes as well as progress in strategic plan initiatives. These tools are used to evaluate curricula, policies, and procedures, and changes made are data driven. Ball State is boldly positioned to continue its evolution to provide high-quality, application-based educational experiences that fundamentally change students and others who participate in the process.