North Central Association
Accreditation Self-Study Report 2009

Prepared for
the Higher Learning Commission of the
North Central Association of Colleges and
Secondary Schools

Accreditation Visit
November 1–4, 2009
Acknowledgments

This self-study report is the culmination of more than ten years of organizational assessment conducted by UALR. These assessment efforts involved the active participation of UALR administrators, faculty, staff, students, and external constituencies, all dedicated to ensuring the excellence of the University. The result is a comprehensive, thoughtful evaluation of UALR at this point in time, even as it continues to grow and evolve. The self-study report presents the University’s accomplishments of the past decade, discusses ways in which the University is and is not effectively accomplishing its mission, and identifies emerging institutional goals.

There are many people who contributed to the success of the self-study process and to the writing of this report document; indeed, too many to name. However, there are several people who deserve special thanks.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Distinctiveness

A member of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR)\(^1\) is distinguished by the strength of its demonstrated commitment to and partnership with external communities and constituencies. UALR is committed both to educating tomorrow’s global citizens and to dedicating its research and service resources to advance economic prosperity, social and physical well-being, educational development, and cultural vitality in Central Arkansas.

UALR is a partnership university ready to join with government offices and agencies, and with community organizations and groups to solve problems. As such, UALR focuses on challenges faced by people living in the metropolitan Little Rock area and throughout the state. UALR accomplishes its mission through excellence in teaching, research, and service.

Excellence in Teaching

The first and foremost priority of faculty and administration is teaching. One hundred percent of respondents in recent, separate faculty surveys ranked teaching as their most important job duty. The philosophy of teaching articulated by the UALR Academy of Teaching and Learning Excellence\(^2\) reflects that of the institution:

[The] educational experience needs to entail more than what might be called the transmission model of teaching. From such a model, professors often assume, “[I]f we tell students, we've taught students.” The transmission model is teacher-centered implying that the teacher holds all knowledge. If, however, we become learning-centered in our teaching, and we put the focus on the students, we become student-centered. This shift encourages us to think about ways we can understand how students learn... we must develop a new way of thinking in which students and teachers are co-constructors of the learning experience... We also believe with John Sexton (President of New York University), as quoted in Ken Bain’s book *What The Best College Teachers Do*, that all faculty must become part of a teaching community for the entire enterprise of learning, scholarship, and teaching.

Captured in this philosophy is the belief that learning, scholarship, and teaching are integral, interwoven components of the educational experience, where faculty use their scholarship and service to enhance their pedagogy in order to engage in a learning partnership. At UALR, this philosophy is a core value, demonstrated by the commitment of faculty to enhance their pedagogy through continued education and

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1. http://ualr.edu/
2. http://ualr.edu/teachingacademy/
training and by outcomes assessment data that show students are acquiring the level of knowledge and skills they need to be successful, personally and professionally.

But as important as the learning experience is, it must be accompanied by a recognition of the diversity and needs of student learners. In his inaugural address (2003), Chancellor Joel E. Anderson said,

First, a comment on the students we serve… many of them [are young], recent high school graduates. And many of them are well beyond the traditional college age, coming to college later for the first time, or returning after an absence, often with job and family responsibilities to discharge along with their studies. Many must pursue their quest for a degree on a part-time basis. A large majority of them commute. A third of them are minorities and a majority are women.1

Therefore, the University is committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to both traditional and non-traditional students of all sorts: students who are older; students who transfer from other colleges and universities; students who are minorities or women; place-bound students; commuting students; students who hold jobs and have families; students who are enrolled part-time; and sometimes, students who are all of the above. The University is committed to providing learning environments that meet the needs of all students. This commitment is manifested in the wide range of programs and resources UALR provides for its diverse student body.

A discussion of the ways in which UALR addresses effective teaching and student learning is provided in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization.”

**Excellence in Research**

The role of research at UALR has changed over the past decade. In 2000, UALR moved into a research university category in the Carnegie Foundation’s national classification of institutions of higher education.2 Today, the University’s position as a leading research institution in Arkansas is confirmed by the Role and Scope statements recently adopted by the University of Arkansas System (UA System) Board of Trustees (2006) and the Arkansas State Higher Education Coordinating Board (2008).

UALR faculty engage in a remarkable range of both basic and applied research—from examining Arkansas in the Civil War—to studying giant pandas—to creating robots that can assist persons with disabilities—to developing laser-activated nanotubes that can fight cancer. More and more during the last decade, the research conducted by UALR faculty has gained national and international attention.

The same can be said of the research conducted by UALR students, whose work has received accolades from an international audience. To integrate research and teaching, UALR has taken deliberate steps to include both undergraduate and graduate students in research projects with faculty and to develop undergraduate and graduate research projects, adding an enriching component to the educational experience.

While the growth in the role of research at UALR has generally been viewed as a positive development by the campus, the community, and the state, it also has resulted in some growing pains for the institution. As faculty have grappled with revising the University’s Tenure and Promotion document, discussions about what research is, how its merits should be measured, and the weight it should play in tenure and promotion decisions have been lively. It is likely that these discussions will continue over the next few years as the University adapts to its enhanced role as a research institution and becomes more comfortable with the notion of “both/and,” rather than “either/or.”

A discussion of the ways in which UALR addresses the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge is provided in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization.”

**Excellence in Public Service**

Although UALR embraces and excels in the areas of teaching and research, it is what the University contributes through public service that sets it apart the most from other institutions of higher education in the state and the nation. The service work done at UALR reflects the active role metropolitan universities play in enhancing the well-being of the local community and their constituencies.

Faculty in virtually every academic unit use their expertise to address local and regional problems. They also involve students in community service through service-learning components of courses, capstone projects, internships, externships, and service projects sponsored by student groups. Staff also are actively engaged in service projects that benefit members of both the UALR and Little Rock communities. These are but a few of the ways in which UALR actively strives to be a good community citizen and uses its resources and abilities in a manner that benefits its constituencies.

A discussion of engagement and service activities at UALR is provided in Chapter 4, “The Connected Organization.”

**The Integration of Teaching, Research, and Service**

At UALR, teaching, research, and service are not separate, discrete activities. Indeed, a core institutional value is that the best scholarship involves the integration of all three, as described by Boyer in *Scholarship Reconsidered* (Carnegie Foundation 1990). One project that demonstrates such scholarship is the Central Arkansas Watershed Center of Excellence.

In June 2008, UALR, Central Arkansas Water, and the U.S. Geological Survey Arkansas Water Science Center signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work cooperatively to establish the Central Arkansas
Chapter One: Introduction

Watershed Center of Excellence.1 The purpose of the center is to understand how the watershed affects aquatic ecosystems in Central Arkansas. The project includes the following four programs:

- **the Limnology Program**, a science-based monitoring, research, and information-gathering program to provide long-term observations of water quality and management strategies for lake, reservoir, and stream protection in Central Arkansas
- **the Water Science and Engineering Program**, a research program that encompasses the scientific investigation of water quality/quantity issues as they relate to source security of drinking, agricultural and industrial water supplies, and the engineering processes that can be developed to enhance security
- **the Watershed Stewardship Program**, a community-based program designed primarily to educate the public about conservation, preservation, and stewardship issues of particular water bodies and ecosystems within the Central Arkansas region
- **the Research and Educational Outreach Program**, a program that will develop research and outreach opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in limnology, hydrogeology, and watershed science and that will communicate stewardship goals and research results to the community, by working through local teachers and citizens on science education workshops and citizen-based watershed projects

The example of the Central Arkansas Watershed Center of Excellence demonstrates UALR’s distinctiveness. It is a university that dedicates its resources to educating students and advancing the health and prosperity of all its constituencies.

**Institutional History**

UALR’s connection to the Little Rock community was present at its inception when local high school graduates began insisting on having the opportunity to complete their post-secondary education while remaining in the city. This led to the creation of Little Rock Junior College, under the supervision of the city Board of Education in 1927. That first semester, there were eight instructors and about 100 students.

By 1929, the new junior college was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, a status it has kept through changes in size and status. First housed in public school buildings, the College moved to UALR’s present location in 1949, a beautifully wooded 272-acre site donated by Mr. Raymond Rebsamen, a local businessman and philanthropist. At that time, the College also was the sole beneficiary of a continuing trust established by former Governor George W. Donaghey.

In 1957, the institution began a four-year degree program, became independent and privately supported under a separate board of trustees, and took the name Little Rock University. In September 1969, after several years of discussion and study, Little Rock University merged with

the UA System and became the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, a part of a multi-campus system that now includes 15 institutions of higher learning. Within this structure, UALR, the second largest institution in the UA System, is state-supported and operationally separate.

With the University of Arkansas merger, UALR began a period of rapid growth. In 1975 the University began offering graduate and professional programs, including a Juris Doctorate. In the early 1990’s, UALR began offering courses in Benton, 30 miles south of Little Rock, through a cooperative effort between UALR and the Saline County Education Development Association to promote higher education in the city of Benton and all of Saline County.

Today, UALR is a comprehensive university with six colleges and a law school offering 53 baccalaureate degrees, 44 graduate degrees, two law degrees, and eight doctorates. To meet the region’s diverse needs, UALR also offers one undergraduate certificate, seven associate degrees, and 19 graduate certificates. In 2009, the University awarded 2,084 diplomas, the most ever for the institution. These included 244 associate degrees, 1,084 baccalaureate degrees, 97 graduate certificates, 509 graduate degrees, 7 specialist degrees, 22 doctoral degrees, and 121 law degrees.

During its history, UALR has had six Chancellors:

- Carey V. Stabler (1969–1972)
- Joel E. Anderson (interim Chancellor 1993)
- Joel E. Anderson (2003–present)

An original building on the campus of then Little Rock Junior College.
Significant Changes: A Decade of Self-Reflection, Planning, and Growth

Following its last accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities in 2000, UALR entered into a period of self-reflection, planning, and unprecedented growth.

Self-Reflection and Planning

During the early- to mid-2000’s, UALR conducted three long-range planning activities that resulted in UALR Fast Forward, a comprehensive strategic plan; UALR On the Move, a complete revision of the campus master plan; and Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District, a revitalization plan for the commercial and residential areas surrounding UALR.

UALR Fast Forward

Following his investiture in 2003, Chancellor Anderson challenged the University community to address the challenges of the new century and to commit to “build a powerhouse university in the capital city—as fast as possible—not for the sake of those who work at the University but for the sake of the people the University exists to serve.” The result of this challenge was the development of UALR Fast Forward. Published in 2006, the strategic plan is designed to enhance the educational excellence of the University and its ability to help address the needs of the State of Arkansas.

The strategic planning process, led by Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (hereafter referred to as Provost) David Belcher, allowed for broad participation of campus and community representatives. It included a 32-member steering committee, nine expanded subcommittees, standing campus committees, standing external advisory councils, and some 20 focus groups of faculty, staff, and students. The use of electronic discussion technology further broadened participation.

1. http://ualr.edu/about/strategicplan/
2. http://ualr.edu/about/masterplan/
The planning committee included representatives from local and regional businesses and nonprofits, including Entergy; Aristotle; Delta Trust Investments, Inc.; Moses and Tucker Real Estate; Arkansas Rehabilitation Services; and the Little Rock School District; as well as both the Pulaski and Saline County Judges.

During the strategic planning process, these groups worked cooperatively and candidly to create a vision that affirmed UALR’s mission for the beginning of the 21st century and would, as Chancellor Anderson noted in his introductory letter in the strategic plan, “...improve our stewardship of the University and... increase our success in accomplishing the University’s noble purposes.”

UALR Fast Forward provides a thorough and thoughtful analysis of the institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that existed in the mid-2000’s and also delineates eight goals and seven pledges to external stakeholders that lay the foundation for UALR to achieve the institution’s vision.

Much progress has been made between the publishing of UALR Fast Forward and the writing of this self-study document. While some objectives have been accomplished or re-prioritized, the strategic plan continues to be relevant and dynamic. UALR Fast Forward is discussed in detail in Chapter 2, “The Distinctive Organization” and is referenced throughout the self-study report.

UALR On the Move

The second major planning initiative, completed in 2005, was a comprehensive update of the campus master plan: UALR On the Move. In the introduction, Chancellor Anderson states,

The planning reflected in this document manifests our desire to be good stewards of the small part of the planet the [u]niversity occupies. Beyond our desire to be good stewards, there are two important reasons for UALR to engage in campus master planning.

First, for a university located in the heart of a city—and very glad to be here—land for outward expansion of the campus will always be limited. Therefore, we need to make optimum use of the land presently available.

Second, today’s decisions on the location of additional buildings and facilities will limit the choices of those leading the University tomorrow. For example, a campus parking deck, wherever placed, will strongly influence the use of the area around it indefinitely. Therefore, for the sake of those leading the University tomorrow, we should endeavor to take an informed and long view today.

For a year, both on- and off-campus constituencies were involved in collaborative planning. Throughout the process, the consultant team met regularly with the UALR Campus Master Plan Update Committee, the Chancellor, and the Board of Visitors. At every stage, the campus and larger community were involved through a variety of forums including workshops, neighborhood meetings, and public open houses. Concurrent
planning for the campus and University District allowed for the seamless integration of ideas. Over 150 people—residents from surrounding neighborhoods, business owners, nonprofit leaders, school officials, and local governmental officials—took part in the process.

The resulting master plan update offers a ten-year vision for the physical development of the UALR campus and outlines specific actions to make the plan a reality. In keeping with UALR's mission as a metropolitan university, the plan forges clear connections with the surrounding community, strengthening the University’s role as a cultural and economic resource to the region. *UALR On the Move* is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, “The Future-Oriented Organization.”

**Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District**

The third major initiative is *Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District*. This initiative drew attention to the declining area surrounding UALR. Until the repaving and widening of University Avenue in 2008–2009, no major public infrastructure investment had taken place in the area in two decades.

Homes in the neighborhood are increasingly owned by absentee landlords, who defer maintenance on the residences, which contributes to a higher incidence of code violations and nuisance crimes in the area. Similarly, many of the older commercial areas have obsolete buildings, and fragmented land ownership inhibits large scale redevelopment. The University District Partnership was created as part of a long-term planning process to address the continuing problems plaguing the larger community of which the University is a part. The steering committee consisted of a coalition of neighborhood business, community, and institutional leaders, as well as city, regional, and state department and agency representatives.

The planning and policy framework for the University District Partnership is articulated in *Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District*, which describes major physical development projects that will upgrade the basic public infrastructure of the area. Additionally, it outlines a strategic plan that addresses socio-economic conditions of the area and describes partnerships for delivering programs and services. *Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District* is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, “The Connected University.”

**Growth**

The road map outlined in *UALR Fast Forward, UALR On the Move*, and *Partners for Progress* has resulted in significant, focused growth and change at UALR. Since the last self-study visit, the University has expanded and enhanced its campus, its curricula, and its role as a significant community partner in Little Rock and Central Arkansas.
Enhanced Campus

During the last decade, UALR has experienced an unprecedented expansion of its campus and facilities. In 2005, the University purchased and renovated much of University Plaza, a 22-acre shopping center bordering Asher Avenue directly south of the campus. This space is now home to the public radio stations KUAR and KLRE, the Sequoyah National Research Center, the Applied Arts Program, the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, the Department of Public Safety, and components of the Department of Construction Management.

Over the past ten years, the following buildings have been added to the campus:

- **H. Tyndall Dickinson Hall**, which houses the College of Education and the Departments of Computer Science and Mathematics and Statistics as well as the office for the Academy of Teaching and Learning Excellence and the office of Scholarly and Technology Resources
- **Donald W. Reynolds Center for Business and Economic Development**, which houses the College of Business, the Institute for Economic Advancement, and the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center
- **The Jack Stephens Center**, a 149,000-square-foot athletic center that features a full-court practice gym named after UALR alumnus Derek Fisher, an academic support center complete with 23 computer terminals, a first-class weight room, an athletic training room, locker rooms for the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams, and offices for the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball coaches, as well as the athletic administration and support staff
- **The Dr. Ted and Virginia Bailey Alumni and Friends Center**, available to campus and community groups for meetings, programs, and social functions, and home to the Alumni Association and the Office of Community Engagement
- **North and South Halls**, two apartment-style on-campus residential halls that hold 164 students each and annually are filled to capacity.
- A building under construction, partially funded through state appropriations, that will accommodate programs of the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology.
In addition to these building projects, UALR has completed several major renovation projects at both its main campus and at the William H. Bowen School of Law. On the main campus, renovations made to Stabler Hall, which houses most of the classrooms for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, made it one of the most technically advanced classroom buildings on campus. The building is now completely wireless, and all of the classrooms have state-of-the-art computer and audio-visual equipment. A digital learning and collaboration center aids in language instruction, and a state-of-the-art computer classroom accommodates instruction in subjects such as social science statistics and methodologies.

Since 2000, several renovation projects have been completed at the Bowen School of Law. These include adding new office space for student organizations; remodeling the administrative offices to create additional office space for expanded student, development, and alumni services; relocating the bookstore and the career services center; adding state-of-the-art academic technology in all classrooms and a video-capture system in most classrooms; and remodeling and updating the first-, second-, and third-floor public areas.

**Enhanced Curricula**

UALR fulfills its mission as a metropolitan university by developing and offering degree programs that meet identified regional needs. The close relationship to—and involvement with—the community allows UALR to work in partnership with constituent groups to offer educational programs that will benefit students as well as the region and the state. In the past decade, UALR has expanded its academic offerings in targeted areas to fulfill its mission and to meet local, state, and regional needs.

An example of how UALR has focused its curricular energies to meet the needs of constituencies is a commitment to graduate more students with nursing degrees. One of the goals articulated in *UALR Fast Forward* was to increase the number of graduates with either an ASN or BSN in Nursing by 100 percent, a goal that UALR is well on its way to accomplishing.

Graduate programming has been a particular area of curricular growth, most significantly in graduate certificates and doctoral degrees. Since 2000, faculty at UALR have designed and implemented 18 new graduate certificates designed for professionals in the community who wish to further their skills in a particular area, or advance their careers. These include the following:

- Information Quality
- Gifted Education
- Teaching Advanced Placement
- Reading/Literacy Coach
- Systems Engineering
- Applied Statistics
- Conflict Mediation
- Geospatial Technology
- Nonprofit Management
• Gerontology
• Public Service
• Rehabilitation Counseling
• Orientation and Mobility of the Blind
• Management
• Accountancy
• Taxation
• Information Systems Leadership
• Management Information Systems

Growth in doctoral programs also has been focused in areas that will benefit the metropolitan area and the state. Since 2000, UALR has added the following doctoral programs:

2004
• PhD in Bioinformatics
• Doctor of Audiology (with UAMS)
• PhD in Communication Sciences and Disorders (with UCA and UAMS)

2008
• PhD in Reading

2009
• PhD in Criminal Justice

**Enhanced Role as a Community Partner**

UALR has become a regional leader in the area of economic development. For example, the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC)\(^1\) is a university-based economic development program that provides assistance to entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout Arkansas via a statewide network of seven offices. Over the last decade, ASBTDC clients have

- created 2.4 new jobs per day for a total of 8,575 new jobs;
- made $260,000 in new sales per day for a total of almost $1 billion in new sales;
- obtained more than $130,000 in financing per day for a total of more than $476.1 million in financing; and
- generated $42.3 million more in state and $23.8 million more in federal taxes than if they had performed like the average business in the state.

The growing role of UALR in regional, national, and international innovation is demonstrated most clearly by the establishment of the Nanotechnology Center at the University. In 2006, UALR received approval from the Arkansas State Legislature to spend $5.9 million in Arkansas General Improvement funds to establish the center. When the

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1. http://asbtdc.ualr.edu/
funds were received in March of that year, the Center had already filed several patent applications for new nanotechnology breakthroughs related to UALR faculty research and had purchased state-of-the-art instrumentation and equipment. The money provided by the legislature led to $1.9 million in additional grant funding from the federal government and allowed the center to deepen and expand its research efforts.

Additional examples of UALR’s enhanced leadership role in economic development and innovation are as follows:

- The Institute for Economic Advancement.\(^1\) The institute provides specialized services which support the economic advancement of Arkansas and are available to businesses, governmental units, labor organizations, communities, and private individuals throughout the state. The institute offers multiple programs that offer economic assistance to Arkansas.

- The Office of Innovation and Commercialization. Created in response to the successes of the UALR Nanotechnology Center, the purpose of this office is to develop UALR’s technology transfer infrastructure, policies, and procedures; to create and grow a business incubator; and to foster start-up companies.

- The George W. Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology.\(^2\) Founded in 1999 specifically to meet the engineering and information technology needs of business and industry in Central Arkansas, curricula in the College have been developed and enhanced in response to industry need.

UALR’s enhanced role as a community partner is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, “The Connected Organization.”

**History of Accreditation**

The University was founded in 1927. By 1929, the College was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1957, the College became the independent, privately supported Little Rock University, with a four year program. In 1960, the University was granted a change of status to be accredited at the bachelor’s degree level.

In 1969, Little Rock University merged with the University of Arkansas to created the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. In 1971, UALR was accredited as a separate institution. Since then, the following changes in affiliation status have occurred:

- In 1975, following a comprehensive review for continued accreditation, UALR was granted continued accreditation with authorization to offer programs at the master’s degree level.

- In 1980, following a comprehensive review for continued accreditation, UALR was granted continued accreditation with authorization to offer programs at the First Professional degree level.

1. http://iea.ualr.edu/

2. http://ualr.edu/elt/
• In 1986, following a review by the evaluator’s panel, UALR was authorized to offer the Educational Specialist degree.
• In 1990, following a comprehensive review for continued accreditation, UALR was granted continued accreditation with authorization to offer the Doctor of Philosophy in Instrumentation Science (now known as Applied Science).
• In 1991, following a review by the evaluator’s panel, UALR was authorized to offer the Education Doctorate in Higher Education and also in Educational Administration.
• In 2000, following a comprehensive review for continued accreditation, UALR was granted continued accreditation with its next comprehensive visit scheduled during the 2009-2010 academic year. One challenge, assessment, was noted. The issue was resolved in 2003. No additional reports on UALR’s assessment program were requested.
• In 2004, following a review by the evaluator’s panel, UALR was authorized to offer the Doctor of Philosophy in Bioinformatics jointly with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and the Doctor of Philosophy in Communication Sciences and Disorders cooperatively with the UAMS and the University of Central Arkansas. Additionally, the stipulation in the affiliation status regarding doctoral programs was removed.

Responses to Concerns Identified by 1999–2000 Site Team

Identified Concern #1

It is critical to align enrollment and recruitment efforts with the mission and emerging programs. The University should determine the most appropriate mix of graduate and undergraduate students and develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan to address the improvement of recruitment, retention, and graduation. The planning process should seek representation from faculty and other groups throughout the campus and community.

As part of the strategic planning initiative, UALR completed several environmental scanning initiatives focused on enrollment management in the early- to mid-2000’s. In addition to several committees formed during the strategic planning process, these initiatives include the work of a Retention Task Force and the completion of the Foundations of Excellence study. Recommendations from these initiatives produced three specific strategies of particular note.

Office of Recruitment

Identified as a critical need, the Office of Recruitment\(^1\) was created in 2005. The office is directed by Mr. Cleveland James, who reports to both Provost Belcher and Dr. Charles Donaldson, Vice Chancellor for Educational and Student Services and Dean of University College. This organizational structure was designed as a clear message to faculty and staff that everyone on campus plays a role in the recruitment enterprise.

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/recruitment/
Chapter One: Introduction

In addition to the director, the Office of Recruitment has seven staff, including three recruiters assigned to specific areas of the state. The activities of the office are directed toward high school students as well as their parents and high school counselors, students currently attending one of the community colleges in Arkansas, and students attending high school in contiguous states. These activities include the following:

- holding campus high school counselor drive-in updates in the Little Rock and Pulaski Special County School Districts
- the high school counselor appreciation luncheon
- twelve on-site admissions events held at each Little Rock School District and Pulaski Special County School District high school
- call-out nights staffed by members of the Recruitment Task Force Committee, comprised of faculty and staff from across campus

During the 2008–2009 academic year, the Office of Recruitment conducted 237 campus tours for potential students and parents, made 66 high school visits, attended 87 community college fairs, and held 11 outreach events.

Enrollment Management Team and Plan

Another identified initiative was the formation of an enrollment management team to create a comprehensive plan for recruitment and retention. From 2005 to 2006, the enrollment management team, co-chaired by then-Director of the Office of Recruitment, Dr. Robert Mock, and the Associate Dean of the College of Professional Studies, Dr. Christina Drale, drafted a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan for 2007–2012 that is linked to the mission of UALR. This plan includes an analysis of UALR enrollment trends for the years 1990–2006 as well as a market analysis that takes into consideration projected Arkansas high school graduation rates and trends in market share. Based on this information, the plan outlines both the strategies that were in place in 2006 as well as additional recommendations for achieving the identified enrollment goals. Many of the recommendations for the enrollment management plan were incorporated into the initiatives outlined at the Retention Summit in 2007.

Retention Summit Initiatives

Fall 2007, Chancellor Anderson asked Provost Belcher and Vice Chancellor Donaldson to review the findings of all the environmental scanning activities conducted in the early 2000’s to identify retention initiatives of particular promise for the University in its efforts to improve retention performance. Their review identified six retention strategies that had been recommended by the studies and the strategic planning process:

- mandatory freshman orientation
- comprehensive services for students requiring developmental courses
- improved advising processes

• early declaration of major
• required first-year experience course for all freshmen and freshman-transfer students
• reporting of mid-term grades for all freshmen and sophomore courses

These strategies, presented to the faculty and staff at the Retention Summit in December 2007, are designed to facilitate early connections between students and faculty; provide support services and early warning measures to increase academic success; and provide services that create a more seamless transition for transfer students. A detailed discussion of the retention strategies and progress made on each is provided in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization.”

Identified Concern #2

While a significant investment in network infrastructure and technology has been made, it is essential to develop and implement a

• coherent, integrated faculty development program to assure faculty can effectively use current and emerging technology
• campus-wide strategic plan for integration, implementation, and maintenance of instructional and administrative technology

In 2001, Dr. Linda Musun, then Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and Director Aimee Dixon developed the Office of Scholarly Technology and Resources (STaR).¹

Now directed by Mark Burris, STaR provides on-going training and support to faculty for their use of UALR’s Blackboard learning management system. STaR also provides the following:

• Opportunities for training and professional development
• Instructional design and course development services
• Quality multimedia production
• Blackboard administration and support
• Tech support for faculty and students

In addition to the director, STaR has five full-time staff, two student workers, is open year round, and offers three or four days of training each week. Topics include Blackboard Basics, how to use the Assessment system, how to use Voice Tools in Wimba, and how to create effective Learning Modules.

As UALR became a leader in the state in distance education, it became obvious that there was a need to centralize administration of these efforts. The result was the creation of the Off-Campus Programs, now known as the Office of Extended Programs,² currently administered by Interim Dean Dr. Linda Musun. In FY 2009, the University added $211,000 to the Extended Programs budget to serve as an Innovation Fund to support the

1. http://ualr.edu/star/
2. http://ualr.edu/extendedprograms/
development of new distance-education classes and programs, or to pilot innovative applications of technology to improve teaching and learning.

The innovation fund is an ongoing budget resource.

In 2008, this fund supported installing equipment that will enable the BA in Interpreter Education program, located in the College of Education, to shift the delivery of its distance program at Tulsa Community College in Tulsa, Oklahoma, from a phone-based to Internet-based platform. Students can attend the same class here in Little Rock, in a classroom in Tulsa, or at a computer anywhere in the country. The program plans to use this as a model for programs in other states.

In addition to STaR, Dr. Musun created the Distance Education Advisory Committee. Meetings of this group are called by the Dean of Extended Programs. Members consist of two faculty nominated by the dean of each of the six colleges. It also includes staff from STaR, the library, the Disability Resource Center, and Computing Sciences. The group discusses and makes recommendations about a variety of issues to the Dean of Extended Programs, who then takes them to the Provost.

**Identified Concern #3**

UALR has initiated a campus-wide coordinated effort to assess student achievement as a part of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the institution. At this time, the commitment to assessment and the use of assessment results are widely variable across academic units. While successful models were noted, the institution has not documented a pattern of evidence that assessment is being used systematically and effectively to assure excellence in teaching and learning. Furthermore, there is little evidence that budget and other decisions are based on assessment results. With persistence, support, and appropriate development, the institution should be able to meet the assessment expectations of NCA.

UALR addressed the concerns regarding assessment in an interim report\(^1\) submitted to the Higher Learning Commission in December 2003. The staff analysis of the report states, in part

In addition to documenting that assessment implementation was institution-wide, the evaluation team in its report of the February 2000 visit to UALR provided evidence that assessment results are used across all academic units and that assessment is linked to curricular, budget, and planning processes. UALR reports the following assessment progress:

- Assessment Central\(^2\) website showcases assessment activities of each college, including the annual progress reports and assessment summaries.
- Provost Assessment Group approves assessment plans and reports on the “state of the campus.”

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• Faculty Fridays are development workshops on assessment topics among other topics.
• Assessment Poster Sessions are held annually and highlight assessment accomplishments in core courses.
• Assessment Expos highlight best assessment efforts from each college.

Subsequent to the visit of the evaluation team, UALR reports a culture of assessment on the campus. Assessment implementation in the general education core, in program assessment, and in the involvement of faculty and students are evident in the documents that can be viewed on the Assessment Central website. The report demonstrates that the Provost and Chancellor’s offices are involved and supportive of the campus assessment efforts. All disciplines have reviewed and revised their outcomes goals. Assessment results are fed back to faculty so that improvements can be made in curricula and pedagogy to improve student learning.

Conclusion: The UALR report and website documents demonstrate the ways that assessment is internalized and a part of the culture of the institution. The website is serving the institution in promoting its goals of teaching excellence and accountability to students. The institution is collecting, analyzing, and using assessment data to inform courses and programs to affect student learning. It is also demonstrating to students and stakeholders the achievement of broader institutional outcomes. Staff is encouraged by the University’s response to the team’s challenges and further encourages the University to continue doing the “hard work” of assessment.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report focused on assessment. No further reports are due. The institution’s next comprehensive evaluation is scheduled for 2009–2010.

The culture of assessment has continued to grow and evolve on campus since the acceptance of the interim report. Assessment is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, "The Learning-Focused Organization."

Goals of Self-Study Process

The self-study process was directed toward four goals:

1. Conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of progress made on the goals and objectives outlined in UALR Fast Forward.
2. Conduct a thorough evaluation and update of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified during the strategic planning process.
3. Identify emerging institutional goals based on self-study process.
4. Secure reaccreditation of the University for the maximum available term of ten years.
Description of the Self-Study Process

The self-study process began in 2003 with the strategic planning initiative that resulted in UALR Fast Forward. As has been discussed, UALR Fast Forward articulates specific goals, objectives, and strategies for accomplishing the mission of the University during the first two decades of the new century.

In Spring 2007, John Taylor, the Higher Learning Commission liaison for UALR, visited the University and met with campus leadership groups. He was impressed with the comprehensiveness of both the strategic planning that had been accomplished and the resulting UALR Fast Forward document. He encouraged UALR to use the writing of the self-study report as an opportunity to review and evaluate the progress made on the goals and objectives outlined in UALR Fast Forward.

In Summer 2007, Dr. Susan Hoffpauir, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and chair of the self-study process, formed an 11-member steering committee that represented administration, faculty, staff, alumni, and students. The steering committee was responsible for gathering examples of evidence for Criteria for Accreditation I and II. Dr. Hoffpauir also appointed three subcommittees responsible for gathering examples of evidence related to Criteria III, IV, and V.

The steering committee and subcommittee chairs met weekly or bi-weekly as needed throughout the 2007–2008 academic year and reviewed the goals, objectives, and strategies articulated in UALR Fast Forward and two progress updates. In order to re-evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified during the strategic planning process, actual and virtual round-table discussions involving faculty, staff, and students were conducted over a two-week period in March and April 2008. Unfortunately, due to late winter storms, participation in these was light. That spring, additional data were collected from students using the National Survey of Student Engagement and from the faculty using both the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement and the faculty survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute.

In Spring and Summer 2008, data were given to the writing team and they began working on the self-study document. As this work continued during the 2008–2009 academic year, updates were shared with the steering committee and subcommittee chairs, campus administration, deans, faculty, and staff. A update on the self-study report was given to Faculty Senate in April 2009. In June, an email was sent to all faculty, staff, and students, inviting them to read and comment on a draft of the self-study report that was posted on the University website. During a two-week comment period, responses were collected electronically and were incorporated into the report.

The findings from the review and evaluation of progress made on the goals and objectives outlined in UALR Fast Forward and the evaluation and update of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified during the strategic planning process are at the core of this document. The self-study report clearly shows how these continue to guide curricular, budgetary, and strategic decisions made at UALR.
Organization of the Self-Study Report

The self-study report is organized using the four cross-cutting themes articulated in Chapter 3 of the Handbook of Accreditation, 3rd edition. These themes provide the context for four of the six chapters that comprise the document and also provide the organizational structure for discussing how UALR accomplishes each of its six mission objectives: excellence in instruction; scholarly inquiry; service to society; community of learning; accessibility; and responsiveness.

Core components for each criterion for accreditation are addressed within the appropriate chapter. The remaining chapters are Chapter 1, “Introduction,” and Chapter 6, “Conclusion.”

- **Chapter 2: Distinctive (on page 21)**
  - Criterion One: Mission and Integrity
- **Chapter 3: Learning-Focused (on page 61)**
  - Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching
  - Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
- **Chapter 4: Connected (on page 137)**
  - Criterion Five: Engagement and Service
- **Chapter 5: Future-Oriented (on page 199)**
  - Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

At the beginning of each chapter, the criteria for accreditation and the core components addressed are identified. An example is the title page of Chapter 2, “The Distinctive Organization.”

Throughout the document, examples of evidence related to the core components are identified in the margin of the chapter in relation to relevant text.

To further facilitate locating specific examples of evidence in the report, a list of “Examples of Evidence by Criterion and Page” can be found on page xi.

Throughout the document footnotes are used to reference external websites or other online resources.
Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Components:

1a The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

1b In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

1c Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

1d The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

1e The organization upholds and protects its integrity.
Chapter Two: The Distinctive Organization

Description of UALR

As the only metropolitan university in Arkansas, UALR enjoys a unique prominence in higher education in the state. Originally a two-year and later a four-year private institution, Little Rock University merged with the University of Arkansas System¹ (UA System) in 1969 to provide access to public higher education in the state’s capital city and largest population center.

Since the 1969 merger, the institution has stayed true to the belief that it should “provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, and diverse world” (Mission Statement²) and “should share [its] intellectual resources to help solve community problems and otherwise advance the metropolitan community” (Dr. G. Robert Ross, Chancellor 1973–1982).

UALR is part of the UA System, which includes five universities; five community colleges; a college of medicine; two schools of law; a presidential school; divisions of agriculture, archeology, and criminal justice; and a high school for math, science, and the arts. The institution is governed by a Board of Trustees of the UA System (UA Board of Trustees), which has the power to prescribe all rules and regulations for the government and discipline of the University. Each of the ten members of the UA Board of Trustees is appointed by the governor of the State of Arkansas to a term of ten years and has legal control and responsibility for the functions of the UA System. Its composition is governed by provisions in the Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 33, which gives the UA Board of Trustees power over the University, and by certain Arkansas statutes. It is a body both corporate and politic.

Like all institutions of higher education in Arkansas, UALR is overseen by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board³ (AHECB) and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education⁴ (ADHE), which serves as its administrative staff. These two organizations act under the auspices of the state legislature to develop and implement policy and procedures stemming from state laws related to higher education. The mission of ADHE is to advocate for higher education; to promote a coordinated system of higher education in the state; and to provide for the orderly and effective development of each of the publicly and locally supported institutions of higher education in the state—all geared toward improving the delivery of higher education services to the citizens of Arkansas.

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1. http://www.uasys.edu/
ADHE serves as the administrative staff for AHECB. The board consists of 12 members who are appointed by the governor and serve staggered six-year terms. As part of its responsibilities, the staff develops and implements AHECB policies and procedures. Additionally, ADHE reviews and approves academic programs; administers statewide financial aid programs; contracts with the Southern Regional Education Board for support of graduate and first professional study outside of Arkansas; recommends institutional operating, capital, and personal services budgets; and collects and reports on student and course data as part of a statewide database and academic program inventory for policy studies.

**Documents that Guide the University: Values Documents**

**The University of Arkansas System Board of Trustees Oversight**

**Role and Scope**

Understanding, embracing, and encouraging the role of UALR as the metropolitan university for the State of Arkansas, the UA Board of Trustees established a foundational definition of the role of UALR and the scope of its mission within the state and region. The UA Board of Trustees has continually worked in partnership with UALR faculty and administration to develop a role and scope statement\(^1\) that reflects the growth, maturation, and importance of UALR to its constituencies. This statement was originally adopted in 1978 and revised three times, most recently in 2006. The following excerpt delineates the UA Board of Trustees’ recognition of the particular focus of UALR.

UALR is a Carnegie “Doctoral/Research Intensive” university offering a comprehensive range of undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral programs, and a first professional degree in law. Due to its location in the state’s capital city and largest, most complex metropolitan area, the demand for UALR to offer graduate, professional, and doctoral education continues to increase, and, thus, post-baccalaureate offerings will become a larger part of the institution’s instructional program. Because of its metropolitan location, UALR assumes a special role in relation to the needs of urban areas in modern society in its instruction, research, and public service programs. UALR recognizes and accepts that in the 21st century universities are critical to regional and state economic development.

UALR is strongly committed to research and public service. Faculty engage in applied and basic research appropriate to their academic disciplines and in response to economic development needs and other state and regional needs. The University is committed to supporting research and development, often in cooperative relationships, leading to intellectual property and commercialization. UALR’s public service mission is reflected in numerous outreach

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activities by individual faculty members, academic units, and a number of specialized units established to provide assistance and expertise to organizations and groups in the community and across the state.

Partnerships are very important to UALR for they enable the University to extend its reach, increase its effectiveness, and leverage its resources. UALR works with other institutions of higher education, particularly the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, and Pulaski Technical College to coordinate instructional programs. UALR partners with and complements the research activities of UAMS. UALR gives and receives benefit from partnerships with businesses, schools, governmental offices, neighborhood groups, cultural organizations, and nonprofit organizations. (Adopted by the UA Board of Trustees, 1978; revised 1982, 1989, 1991, 2006)

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education Oversight

Role and Scope

In 2008, as they provided leadership to institutions of higher education and responded to the needs of the state for an educated citizenry, AHECB revisited the role and scope statements to assure that each institution has a clear connection to its role in helping the state compete in the global economy of the 21st century and attain a high-quality standard of living. This new Role and Scope document, issued in 2008 by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, begins by recognizing that, “as the state’s metropolitan university,” UALR has the responsibility for serving seven distinct populations:

- Residents of Arkansas and the Little Rock metropolitan area who have completed a high school education and are seeking either a college degree or continuing professional education. As a metropolitan university, the institution serves adults, part-time students in particular.
- Employers across the state, particularly in the region, both public and private, seeking well-educated employees, technical assistance, and applied research
- Economic development interests and entrepreneurs in the region and across the state
- The research community
- The community and area by providing a broad range of academic and cultural activities and public events
- Area K–12 schools seeking college general education courses for advanced students
- Two-year college transfer students

In addition to the traditional role of an institution of higher education to offer baccalaureate, graduate, first professional, and doctoral programs to its students, AHECB also specifies that UALR has a commitment to
provide “services specifically designed to meet the needs of statewide and regional economic development, continuing professional education, technical and professional services, support of small businesses and entrepreneurs, and technology transfer” (2008).

Mission

In 1989, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board developed mission statements for each of the state’s colleges and universities. The statement originally created for UALR also recognized the University’s unique mission:

Because of its location in the state's capital city and largest metropolitan area, UALR assumes a special role in relation to the needs of urban areas in modern society in its instruction, research, and service programs.

UALR Mission and Objective Statements

Mission

On an institutional level, the UALR faculty, through the Faculty Senate, worked for more than a year to develop both a comprehensive understanding of the institution’s role and scope within the parameters established by the governing boards and also a succinct statement of mission, which was developed to codify the fundamental purposes and permanent commitments of the University to its publics.

While each document has been reviewed in the intervening years, most substantially as a part of the University’s strategic planning process in 2005–2006, the statements have withstood the test of time as both valid and reliable articulations of the intended outcomes of the educational experience at UALR, whether at the baccalaureate, graduate, or doctoral level:

The mission of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock is to develop the intellect of students; to discover and disseminate knowledge; to serve and strengthen society by enhancing awareness in scientific, technical, and cultural arenas; and to promote humane sensitivities and understanding of interdependence. Within this broad mission are the responsibilities to use quality instruction to instill in students a lifelong desire to learn; to use knowledge in ways that will contribute to society; and to apply the resources and research skills of the [u]niversity community to the service of the city, the state, the nation, and the world in ways that will benefit humanity. (Adopted by the UALR Faculty Senate, 1988)

1. http://ualr.edu/facultysenate/
UALR Mission Objectives

In conjunction with the development of the institutional mission, the Faculty Senate also drafted and approved objectives to guide its fulfillment of the mission. The six objectives codify the responsibility of the University to differing constituencies and the different components—teaching, service, and research—of the mission:

- **Excellence in Instruction.** The University has a responsibility to provide excellence in instruction to ensure high-quality education for students. This responsibility includes developing faculty teaching skills, awareness of the ways students learn, assessing student learning outcomes, and enhancement of resources to support effective instruction.
- **Scholarly Inquiry.** The University has a responsibility to use scholarly inquiry to advance the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. This responsibility includes the creation of a university environment that supports diverse research activities by faculty, staff, and students.
- **Service to Society.** The University has a responsibility to serve society through the application of knowledge and research skills. This responsibility includes applying the University’s resources to local, state, national, and international needs in order to improve the human condition.
- **Community of Learning.** The University has a responsibility to provide a community of learning through creation of an academic environment that stimulates students, faculty, and staff to become life-long learners. This environment should heighten the intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities of students, faculty, and staff.
- **Accessibility.** The University has a responsibility to serve the needs of a heterogeneous student population and to make its resources accessible to the general public and to local, state, national, and international groups. This responsibility includes creating opportunities for access to the University’s academic and other resources.
- **Responsiveness.** The University has a responsibility to remain responsive to a changing environment and society. This responsibility includes a continuous assessment of the University’s strengths and weaknesses in planning for and meeting internal and external needs. It also includes developing the faculty, staff, and students’ desire and capacity in order to create an academic community that is open to change and ready to meet the demands of a dynamic environment and student body. (Adopted by the Faculty Senate, 1988)

**Student Learning Outcomes**

In addition to affirming the codifying the mission, UALR has long recognized the importance of the outcomes of the educational experience. In 1986–1987, the Blue Ribbon Committee, an ad-hoc committee of the Faculty Senate, was established to review the educational goals of the University. The committee adopted the principle that a life-long ability to
Chapter Two: The Distinctive Organization

learn is the University’s paramount learning goal and that education should be considered a “structure of competencies” rather than a specific inventory of information (Blue Ribbon Committee Statement of Philosophy).¹

The committee identified nine essential competencies to be mastered by all students graduating from UALR. In 2004, the Faculty Senate added a tenth competency, Information Technology. The ten core competencies are as follows:

Aesthetic Experience includes knowledge about different art forms and their history; an understanding of how creative processes compare among art forms; and the ability to describe and analyze artistic works.

Critical Thinking requires the ability to analyze data, synthesize information, make decisions, and systematically and imaginatively solve problems. All core courses stress critical thinking, providing practice in the techniques of inquiry, logical reasoning, and critical analysis.

Ethical and Moral Consciousness involves the ability to recognize ethical and moral issues that may arise from scientific and technological developments or that may be inferred from aesthetic and humanistic works.

Historical Consciousness requires the knowledge of the main stages of human cultural development, along with the ability to relate one’s historical heritage to that of other cultures, past and present. This competency involves understanding historical events, whether social, economic, or political, and then examining the relationships among them—relationships such as change, continuity, and causation.

Information Technology requires using contemporary technologies to communicate effectively; to locate, manage, and analyze information; to critically evaluate information obtained through these technologies; to comprehend basic information technology concepts in order to understand and quickly assimilate new technologies as they evolve; and to have an understanding of and respect for the ethical and legal aspects of the use of information technology.

International Awareness involves the ability to examine one’s own culture, society, and nationality from perspectives acquired through understanding other cultures and nations, including their languages, literature, art, history, and geography.

Mathematics includes an understanding of the concepts, the methodology, and the application of probability and statistics; the ability to use and interpret functions and graphs to express relationships; an appreciation of the importance of numerical information; and a recognition of both the role and the limitations of mathematics in all areas.

Philosophy and Methods of Science involves understanding the strengths and limitations of science, including how scientists learn about the world through observation and experiment, through modeling and interpretation, and through the skeptical scrutiny of the work of other experts in the field. This competency includes the following: an awareness of relationships between science and society; the ability to use scientific reasoning to evaluate conflicting statements in order to arrive at informed opinions on contemporary issues; an appreciation of how experiencing the universe scientifically differs from experiencing it in other ways; and knowledge of the questions that science neither asks nor answers.

Social and Cultural Awareness requires viewing human beings as organisms functioning within a set of global, interconnected systems, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, class, law, religion, and communication—that influence and are influenced by changing individuals. This competency includes knowledge about how persons develop and grow; awareness of how social and cultural systems influence values, thought, and behavior; and appreciation for the interactions, conflicts, and communication among systems.

Verbal Literacy includes four skills: writing, reading, speaking, and listening and the ability to use language to learn and participate in the discourse and decision-making of academic, personal, professional, and public life. Competency in written literacy involves the ability to read and write clearly and thoughtfully, to understand different writing and reading processes, and to use these processes to advantage when writing and reading about experiences and ideas. Competency in oral literacy involves public speaking and interpersonal and small group communication. All core courses address this competency.

All courses included in current core or general education requirements at UALR are linked to one or more of these ten competencies and have been since the competencies were developed. As originally envisioned, the competencies provided a foundation for the undergraduate academic experience, and through the experience of the core curriculum, students developed the critical thinking and analytic skills necessary to successfully complete degree programs and become educated citizens with the ability for life-long learning.

By 2005, however, it had become clear that the method of assessing the core curriculum only using individual course assessments was not producing useful data, either for continuously improving the courses in the core or for measuring student achievement of the competencies through the core. This, as well as plans for revisiting the institutional student learning outcomes, are discussed in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization.”
Chapter Two: The Distinctive Organization

1b Example of Evidence

The mission documents affirm the organization’s commitment to honor the dignity and worth of individuals.

1b Example of Evidence

The mission documents provide a basis for the organization’s basic strategies to address diversity.

1b Example of Evidence

The mission documents present the organization’s function in a multicultural society.

Mission Diversity

UALR mission documents state the University’s commitment to recognizing and celebrating the diversity of students, faculty, and staff as well as the diversity of the surrounding community and Central Arkansas. Campus diversity is recognized in the Role and Scope Statement adopted by the UA Board of Trustees for UALR, the faculty-adopted mission statement, two of the six mission objectives, and the Faculty Role and Scope document.

UA Board of Trustees UALR Mission Statement1 (adopted 1998)

UALR serves a diverse student body. While it serves traditional students as do most other universities, UALR also serves large numbers of nontraditional students who enroll part-time, commute to campus, have job and family responsibilities, and may be older. The University also enrolls international students from more than 50 countries.

Faculty Senate UALR Mission Statement1 (adopted 1988)

To promote humane sensitivities and understanding of interdependence

Faculty Senate UALR Mission Objective Statements

• Accessibility. The University has a responsibility to serve the needs of a heterogeneous student population and to make its resources accessible to the general public and to local, state, national, and international groups. This responsibility includes creating opportunities for access to the University’s academic and other resources.

• Responsiveness. The University has a responsibility to remain responsive to a changing environment and society. This responsibility includes a continuous assessment of the University’s strengths and weaknesses in planning for and meeting internal and external needs. It also includes developing the faculty, staff, and students’ desire and capacity in order to create an academic community that is open to change and ready to meet the demands of a dynamic environment and student body.

UALR Faculty Role and Scope (adopted July 2008)

[UALR], taking advantage of its metropolitan location, offers programs and services that respond to the special needs and interests of individuals, organizations, institutions, businesses, and governmental units. Academic programs, student services, research activities, public service projects, and institutional policies reflect the University’s commitment to a diverse student body composed of recent high school graduates, students returning to school after other experiences, retirees, international students, disabled students, and professionals seeking career change or enrichment.

UALR strives to make higher education accessible to all those who can benefit. The institution's academic courses are offered in flexible and varied time periods and learning formats, at off-campus locations as well as in traditional classrooms, and by radio, telecommunication, and newspaper. In all of these forms the quality of instruction is of paramount importance.

Specialized programs and assistance are offered to educationally disadvantaged students. The University is committed to international education, supporting programs and courses that attract international students and offer opportunities for all students to explore and experience other cultures.

UALR has been particularly pro-active in recognizing disability “as an aspect of diversity that is integral to society and to the campus community.”¹ To emphasize UALR's commitment to meet the unique needs of each student, in 1995, then Chancellor Charles Hathaway adopted a policy which requires all course syllabi to include a statement articulating the disability support policy. Revised in 2007 and mandatory on every syllabus distributed on campus, the statement reads:

It is the policy of UALR to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement—such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos—please notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students are also welcome to contact the Disability Resource Center, telephone 501-569-3143 (v/tty). For more information, visit the Disability Resource Center website at http://ualr.edu/disability/.

UALR Fast Forward also recognizes several institutional strengths that speak to a commitment to diversity:

Academic breadth. UALR is a comprehensive university, offering major programs of study across the full range of academic disciplines and from the associate through the doctoral degree. The University is therefore capable of responding to the individual higher education needs of a great variety of people.

Convenient class schedule. For the many students who have to juggle college attendance, job demands, and family responsibilities, UALR, in addition to the traditional day-time class periods, has for many years offered classes during the late afternoon, evening, and weekends and has recently added many online classes, making them available to students essentially anytime and anywhere.

¹. http://ualr.edu/disability/
Mission Throughout the University

Understanding and supporting the mission also is evident in the way that the colleges and units refract the institutional mission statement within their own mission statement and strategic plans. Most, if not all, make their mission and role statements publicly available, through their websites, their unit governance documents, and/or departmental catalog descriptions. These statements often embody the goals of the program or unit and, as all good mission statements do, assist in evaluation.

The institutional commitment to teaching, service, and research is distilled within the more specific missions of each college and unit. For example, the College of Business’ mission statement reads

For the UALR College of Business, teaching, research, and service are the core foundations we build to serve our students, the business community, and industry in the State of Arkansas.

Our goal is to prepare men and women for careers of leadership and service in private and public business. We also provide applied research, information services, and continuing management and labor education services to the private and public sectors in support of the economic development of the state, the enhancement of the practice of management, and the effectiveness and efficiency in the work place.¹

Within the College of Business, each academic unit further distills the mission statement, as evidenced by the mission statement of the Department of Accounting.

The mission of the Department of Accounting is to provide quality educational experiences that enable students to enter and advance within the accounting profession. In pursuit of this mission, the faculty is committed to providing effective teaching, relevant research, and academic, professional and community service.²

Similarly, other academic departments have also made their missions public.

The Psychology Department strives to be excellent in teaching, scholarship, and service. We accomplish this by applying psychological knowledge, skills, and tools to further human welfare and by producing well-trained students.³

The opening paragraph on the website for the Dean of Students reads as follows:

The primary goals of the Office of the Dean of Students⁴ are to educate students regarding the University’s expectations of behavior, to protect students’ rights, and to assure fairness and due process.

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¹. http://ualr.edu/cob/
³. http://ualr.edu/psychology/
⁴. http://ualr.edu/deanofstudents/
The opening paragraph on the Disability Resource Center\(^1\) page embeds its mission in the description of what they do:

Providing access to a diverse student population is embedded in the philosophy of [UALR]. The Disability Resource Center recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity that is integral to society and to the campus community. To this end, the Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable learning environments. The Disability Resource Center also promotes and facilitates awareness and access through training, partnerships, innovative programs, and accommodations.

Although how the mission of UALR manifests itself in pragmatic terms has evolved over time as the needs of constituencies have changed, the core values of integrating research, teaching, and service to enhance the economic, social, and cultural lives of people living in the metropolitan area and throughout Arkansas have not.

**Mission Understood**

The mission of UALR is understood by its internal and external constituencies. Although few can recite it word for word, faculty, staff, and students understand and hold dear the vision and values of the University. Indeed, many faculty are at UALR specifically because of its mission. At a Spring 2009 lunch hosted by Provost Belcher, many of the faculty spoke eloquently and passionately about their appreciation for the high value UALR places on dedicating its resources to meeting community needs. These values are expressed through faculty and student research that solves real-world problems or advances economic prosperity; through academic programs that prepare students to become involved citizens and community leaders; and through outreach programs that engage faculty, students, and staff with external constituencies.

**Mission Accessibility**

The full text of all mission statements, objectives, core competencies, UALR Fast Forward, and the other strategic plans described above can be found in various highly visible and public documents and places such as UALR’s Undergraduate Catalog,\(^2\) Graduate Catalog,\(^3\) and the University website.\(^4\) The mission statement and objectives are also reproduced on the Chancellor’s website,\(^5\) in all large-scale planning documents (such as the strategic plan), and indirectly in many of the mission statements of the colleges and departments across campus.

These documents are available in electronic format, portable document format (PDF), and print format. All of these documents can be freely downloaded. Additionally, they are indexed so that any constituent or

1. http://ualr.edu/disability/
4. http://ualr.edu/
5. http://ualr.edu/chancellor/
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interested party may learn how the institution understands and articulates its commitments to society. In keeping with the University’s commitment to accessibility, those who need access to alternative formats such as Braille or cassettes are invited to contact the Chancellor’s Office or the Disability Resource Center for a copy. Shortened versions of UALR’s mission statement are printed in the program at fall and spring graduation (also available in alternative formats).

**UALR Fast Forward—Planning that Guides the Future**

Following his inauguration in 2003, in part in response to concerns raised by the NCA visit in 2000, Chancellor Anderson called on the university community to address the challenges of the new century and to commit to “build a powerhouse university in the capital city—as fast as possible—not for the sake of those who work at the University but for the sake of the people the University exists to serve.” The result of this challenge was the development of UALR Fast Forward, a strategic plan designed to help the University meet the need of the State of Arkansas” … to move forward at a faster pace if the people of Arkansas are going to maintain, much less improve, their standard of living in the intensely competitive global economy of the 21st century.”

For almost two years, UALR faculty and staff members, along with local community members and state representatives, worked cooperatively and candidly to create a visionary affirmation of mission for the beginning of the 21st century that would, as Chancellor Anderson noted in his introductory letter “… improve our stewardship of the University and… increase our success in accomplishing the University’s noble purposes.”

The 125-page report provides a thorough and thoughtful analysis of institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as is common in many strategic planning efforts and embodies the physical implementation of the mission and values documents over the next ten years. More importantly, perhaps, the creation of UALR Fast Forward reaffirmed the University’s commitment to the mission statement and the objectives document, which repeatedly were referenced to ensure the eight goals and seven pledges in UALR Fast Forward reflected the broad guidelines established by the mission: to develop the intellect of students; to discover and disseminate knowledge; to serve and strengthen society by enhancing awareness in scientific, technical, and cultural arenas; and to promote humane sensitivities and understanding of interdependence.

The eight goals articulated in UALR Fast Forward are as follows:

1. UALR will provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, diverse world of the 21st century.
2. UALR will provide a student-centered educational environment.
3. UALR will continue to expand its graduate offerings to address regional and state needs.
4. UALR will expand its research capabilities to support its academic mission and to strengthen regional and state economic development plans.
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5. UALR will provide exceptional service through partnerships and outreach activities.
6. UALR will support and strengthen its human resources.
7. UALR will provide the institutional infrastructure necessary to achieve its educational mission.
8. UALR will develop a strategy to enhance resources to accomplish its mission.

The seven pledges to external stakeholders are as follows:

1. UALR pledges to provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, and diverse world of the 21st century.
2. UALR pledges to shape its programs and align its resources to address state-identified priorities.
3. UALR pledges active support of regional and state strategies to speed economic development.
4. UALR pledges to work in partnership with governmental entities and community organizations and groups to solve community problems and advance the community in other ways.
5. UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the subject of race.
6. UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the need for regional cooperation in Central Arkansas.
7. UALR pledges to work as an active partner in revitalizing the University District, the area of the city immediately around the University.

The institutional mission is advanced through annual reports which show how units are meeting their own mission as well as UALR’s. Annual reports, submitted to the Provost by all academic units and colleges, do not merely report on the year’s highlights but specifically address faculty involvement in the following activities related to the mission:

- grant applications and awards
- public service
- research and creative activity
- use of information technology
- assessment of student learning

Also tied into the mission of UALR and UALR Fast Forward is each unit’s strategic plan. Each plan explicates the methods, objectives, and measures for accomplishing the goals of excellence in teaching, research, service, recruitment, and retention. Furthermore, yearly budgets from all areas of campus must relate to the strategic plan by referencing goals, objectives, and strategies. At each level, the requests are prioritized according to institutional goals and resources available that year. Once this has occurred, the Chancellor’s Leadership Group and the Faculty Senate’s Planning and Finance Committee meet to hear the recommendations of each vice chancellor for budgeting priorities in the coming fiscal year. This group ranks the requests in order to inform administrative decision-making on budgetary allocations.

1c Example of Evidence
The organization’s planning and budgeting priorities flow from and support the mission.
In addition to working on UALR Fast Forward, faculty, staff, students, and external constituents have taken part in the development or re-evaluation of a wide variety of policy and planning documents that put the mission statements and roles and scope documents into action.

**Other Planning Documents**

Over the past ten years, the following major planning documents have been revised or created:

* the Faculty Roles and Rewards\(^1\) document in response to the changing role of research on campus (committee formed in 2005; completed 2009)
* the Campus Master Plan, *UALR On the Move*, that guides the future physical growth and development of the UALR campus (2005)
* the University District Plan, *Partners for Progress: Shaping the University District*, that develops a strategic plan for revitalizing the part of the city immediately surrounding the campus (2004)

Currently, the faculty is in the process of reviewing and revising the following:

* the faculty Tenure and Promotion documents
* the role and rewards document for non-tenure track faculty
* the core curriculum requirements and core competencies

In addition, due to the information discovered during the self-study process, plans are being developed to revise the *Faculty Handbook*.

**Governance and Governance Policies**

**UA System and Board of Trustees**

As described previously, UALR is part of the UA System\(^2\) and is governed by the UA Board of Trustees,\(^3\) which has the power to prescribe all rules and regulations for the governance and discipline of the University. The UA Board of Trustees meets five times each year and alternates its meeting locations between the UA System office, the major campuses (UAF, UALR, and UAMS), and other UA System locations. Members of the UA Board of Trustees include a former senator and other public officials, lawyers, and heads (or former heads) of Arkansas corporations such as Anthony Timberlands, Akin Industries, and Tyson.

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2. http://uasys.edu/
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The UA Board of Trustees has “legal control and responsibility for the functions of the [UA System].” This authority extends to all institutions within the UA System and includes oversight of the following:

- athletics
- buildings and grounds
- educational policies and practices
- fiscal affairs
- audit
- personnel
- advancement and development

Appointed by the UA Board of Trustees, the President, B. Alan Sugg, is the Chief Executive Officer of the UA System and has served in that capacity since 1990. As President he coordinate[s] the activities of the [u]niversity and all of its constituent campuses and units in accordance with the principles prescribed by the [UA Board of Trustees]… [Further, the President], in consultation with the chancellors, establish[es] and define[s] the duties of university-wide councils, committees, or other bodies organized to advise and assist him or her. All official communications from faculty, staff, and students on a particular campus or unit shall emanate through the appropriate chancellor or director to the President.

The UA Board of Trustees appoints the chancellors of all campuses upon recommendation of the President. Each chancellor has “complete executive authority thereon, subject to the policies established by the [UA Board of Trustees] and the President,” as described in UA Board of Trustees Policy 100.4.1

According to UA Board of Trustees policy, each chancellor in the UA System is

the leader of and the official spokesperson for the campus and shall promote the educational excellence and general development and welfare of the campus. The Chancellor shall define the authority of administrative committees and officers of that campus, and all projects, programs, and institutional reports to be undertaken on behalf of that campus shall be subject to authorization and approval of the Chancellor.

UALR’s current Chancellor, Dr. Joel Anderson, began at UALR in 1971 and has advanced through every academic level at UALR. He was appointed Chancellor in 2003.

UALR Administration

The Chancellor is advised by various formal and informal groups consisting of external and internal constituencies. These include the Board of Visitors, the Chancellor’s Cabinet, the Chancellor’s Leadership Group, and the Policy Advisory Council.

Board of Visitors

The Chancellor meets monthly with the Board of Visitors. The Board of Visitors, which has no policy-making powers, is charged with the responsibility for advising the Chancellor of UALR, the President of the UA System and the governing body of the University, the UA Board of Trustees, with respect to means of maintaining high standards in the development and operation of UALR as a major urban university of higher education. Two of its members are invited to attend meetings of the UA Board of Trustees to advise on matters concerning UALR. Members of the Board of Visitors include prominent local area business leaders. The Board of Visitors functions under UA Board of Trustees Policy 1010.1.

The Board of Visitors was formed when UALR was created by the merger of Little Rock University and the UA System; the status of the Little Rock University Board of Trustees changed to that of a Board of Visitors.

Chancellor’s Cabinet

The Chancellor’s Cabinet, also known as the Direct Report Group (DRG), meets twice monthly with campus administrators who report directly to him in order to exchange information among the University’s top administrators. This group includes the following:

- Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Vice Chancellor of Educational and Student Services and Dean of University College
- Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration
- Vice Chancellor of University Advancement
- Vice Chancellor of Information Services and Chief Information Officer
- Executive Director of Development
- Director of Human Relations
- Director of Athletics
- Chief of Staff and Director of the Budget

Each member of the Chancellor’s Cabinet brings information from his or her unit to inform discussions on policy, budget, and other issues. Cabinet members also receive information from the Chancellor and others to disseminate among their staffs.

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**Chancellor’s Leadership Group**

Twice a month, the Chancellor meets with a larger group that represents campus leadership. In addition to the Chancellor’s Cabinet, this group includes the following:

- Deans Council
- Chair of Graduate Council
- Chair of Undergraduate Council
- Chair of Chairs Council
- President of Faculty Senate
- President of Staff Senate
- Director of the Office of Communication
- Division Chief of Enrollment
- Director of the Office of Institutional Research
- Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities and Services/Risk Management
- Director of Recruitment and Retention
- Associate Vice Chancellor of Advancement
- Director of the Academic Success Center
- President of the Student Government Association
- President of the Graduate Student Association
- President of the Student Bar Association

The purpose of the Chancellor’s Leadership Group is to ensure that diverse groups on campus participate in discussing policy issues, plans for the future, and other issues involving the University.

**The Policy Advisory Council**

The Policy Advisory Council meets monthly with the Chancellor. The Policy Advisory Council provides advice to the Chancellor on academic and administrative policies of the University that are subject to the authority of the University Assembly and the Faculty Senate. The membership of the council consists of the following:

- President and elected officers of the Faculty Senate
- Elected chairpersons of elected standing committees of the Faculty Senate
- Chairperson of the Staff Senate or designee
- President of the Student Government Association or designee
- One student services representative
- Two members of the University Assembly appointed by the Executive Committee of the University Assembly.

The agenda for the meeting is developed by the Chancellor and the president of the Faculty Senate. The meetings are chaired by the president of the Faculty Senate.
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The model for communication established by the Chancellor permeates all administrative units on campus. Each vice chancellor also meets regularly with the people who report directly to him or her. For example, the Provost holds weekly meetings of the Deans Council. Each of these administrators also meets regularly with the people he or she supervises. The Provost is invited to meet monthly with the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate in order to discuss upcoming issues being considered or projects on which the Faculty Senate is working.

1d Example of Evidence
People within the governance and administrative structures are committed to the mission and appropriately qualified to carry out their defined responsibilities.

UALR Organizational Chart

![UALR Organizational Chart Diagram]
Most of the upper-level administrative positions are appointed by the Chancellor after initial recommendation of the Provost and a committee made up of appropriate faculty, staff, students, and administrative members. (More information is available in the Faculty Handbook.)

The Chancellor, as authorized by UA System policy, has distributed responsibilities (administrative and other) of the University to various positions. These and their job descriptions are described below:

**Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs**

The Provost is appointed by the Chancellor, who is guided by the recommendations of a search committee that includes faculty and student representation. The Provost is the chief academic officer of the University and provides academic and administrative leadership in the area of academic and faculty affairs. Key responsibilities include the following:

- Long-range planning and development of academic programs
- Improving and maintaining quality of the curriculum
- Providing leadership in hiring faculty and reviewing recommendations for faculty retention, tenure, promotion, and salary increments
- Establishing and administering procedures for the regular evaluation of deans and the other administrators directly under his or her supervision
- Developing the overall academic budget
- Communicating policies within the University and among the community at large
- Acting as liaison in academic affairs with other units and the central administration of the [UA System]
- Chairing the periodic meetings of the Deans Council
- Reviewing and recommending action on nominations for tenure and promotion, applications for leaves of absence without pay, requests for off-campus duty assignments, and authorizations for employees to enroll in classes at the University

The Provost reports to the Chancellor and has the following reporting to him:

- Associate Vice Chancellor of Faculty and Administrative Affairs/
  Director of International Services
- Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Policy
- Director of the Office of Institutional Research
- Director of Research and Sponsored Programs
- Vice Provost for Innovation and Commercialization/Director of the Nanotechnology Center

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2. [http://ualr.edu/academics/](http://ualr.edu/academics/)
• Deans of the following:
  • Extended Programs¹
  • College of Education²
  • College of Professional Studies³
  • William H. Bowen School of Law⁴
  • Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology⁵
  • College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences⁶
  • College of Business⁷
  • College of Science and Mathematics⁸
• Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School
• Dean of the Ottenheimer Library
• Director of the Office of Institutional Research
• Director of the Office of Recruitment
• Coordinator of Web Services

Vice Chancellor for Educational and Student Services/Dean of University College⁹

The Vice Chancellor for Educational and Student Services / Dean of University College reports to the Chancellor. He is responsible for academic and educational support to students, faculty and staff. There are four units that report to this area (University College, Student Development, Enrollment Planning Services and Recruitment). Eighteen departments make up the Division of Student Services. Key responsibilities include:

• long-range planning and development of student development programs;
• improving and maintaining the quality of student life on campus;
• providing leadership and guidance in the hiring and evaluation of staff;
• developing and monitoring budgets for the Division;
• acting as a liaison with Academic Affairs, Financial and Administration and University Advancement;
• provide leadership and guidance in enrollment management of the University;
• provide leadership and guidance in the retention and graduation of students;

¹. http://ualr.edu/extendedprograms/
². http://ualr.edu/coe/
³. http://ualr.edu/cps/
⁴. http://law.ualr.edu/
⁵. http://ualr.edu/eit/
⁶. http://ualr.edu/cahss/
⁷. http://ualr.edu/cob/
⁸. http://ualr.edu/csam/
⁹. http://ualr.edu/vcess/
• provide leadership and guidance for four (4) auxiliary services
  (Barnes and Noble Bookstore, University Housing, Dining Services
  and Donaghey Student Center); and
• provides leadership in the assessment and evaluation of programs.

The Vice Chancellor for Educational and Student Services / Dean of
University College reports to the Chancellor and has reporting to him:

• Division Chief for Enrollment Planning
• Division Chief for University College
• Division Chief for Student Development
• Director of Recruitment

Vice Chancellor for Information Services

The Vice Chancellor for Information Services is the Chief Information
Officer of the University and provides leadership and management in the
area of information technology. Key responsibilities include to:

• strategic planning for the development and deployment of the
  technical infrastructure and service delivery to the campus
  community in the areas of networking and telecommunications,
  administrative systems, document imaging, electronic mail, learning
  management system, web services, campus wide computer support
  help desk, open student lab, multi-media classroom support, training
  initiatives, data center operations, and project management services;
• providing leadership in hiring and managing the technical staff who
  work collaboratively with academic and administrative departments
  to meet the technical needs of the campus community;
• establishing and administering procedures for the regular evaluation
  of associate directors and the other staff directly under his or her
  supervision;
• developing and managing the departmental budget;
• developing and communicating technical and computer use policies
  procedures, and guidelines with the campus community;
• acting as a liaison in meetings with other campus units, the central
  administration of the University of Arkansas, and statewide technical
  committees and work groups;
• and managing complex projects that further the long term objectives
  of the University.

The Vice Chancellor for Information Services has the following
individuals reporting directly to her:

• Associate Director of Networks and Communications
• Associate Director of Desktop Support
• Associate Director of Systems and Programming

1. http://ualr.edu/computingservices/
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Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration

The Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration is the Chief Financial Officer of the University and provides financial and administrative leadership in the areas of financial affairs, human resource services, public safety, physical plant administration, and campus planning. Key responsibilities include:

- long-range campus planning and development and oversight of capital projects;
- providing financial information for campus decision makers;
- providing leadership in the hiring process and oversight of all employee benefits;
- providing oversight of the campus police department and campus public safety efforts and programs;
- acting as liaison with the central administration of the University of Arkansas on financial and administrative issues;
- overseeing the campus risk management program and securing appropriate levels of campus insurance
- coordinating the annual audit process with the state department of legislative audit;
- ongoing review and revision as necessary to University financial policies and procedures.

The Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration has the following individuals reporting directly to him:

- Associate Vice Chancellor of Finance
- Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities and Services/Risk Management

Vice Chancellor of University Advancement

The Vice Chancellor for University Advancement has administrative responsibility for the key external relations functions of the campus. The offices under the Vice Chancellor’s area include: Office of Communications, Office of Alumni Relations, University District, Office of Community Engagement and Children International. In addition, the governmental relations functions of the campus—including local, state and federal levels—is managed by the staff of the Vice Chancellor’s office. The Vice Chancellor and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Advancement serve as the lobbyists for the University.

Key responsibilities of the Vice Chancellor include:

- determining overall strategies and objectives for the University’s relations with external constituencies
- directing the marketing and public relations goals of the University
- identifying and pursuing funding strategies for University priorities and projects, particularly from government sources

1. http://ualr.edu/vcfa/
• advising the Chancellor and other administrators on legislative and governmental issues of importance to the campus
• developing relationships and partnerships with elected officials and governmental agencies
• developing and administering outreach programs that link University faculty and students with community organizations to meet critical needs
• directing the Friday Fellows Leadership Program, a student service and leadership program, including teaching responsibilities for classes
• providing strategic direction for engaging the campus with the larger community, particularly focusing on new initiatives in which the University should be a participant
• directing the use of data with University Advancement in order to set goals and objectives for garnering support for University programs, including monitoring of departmental budgets
• providing administrative support in staffing, budget and facilities for departments within University Advancement in order to provide an efficient external relations operation for the campus

The following individuals report directly to the Vice Chancellor for University Advancement:

• Associate Vice Chancellor for University Advancement
• Director of Communications
• Director of Alumni Relations
• Director of Children International
• Director of University District
• Program Manager for University District Educational Net

**Director of Athletics**

The Director of Athletics is responsible for overall operations of the Department of Athletics. Key responsibilities include:

• Mandate a comprehensive rules education program.
• Identify issues and submits recommendations to the Chancellor.
• Consult with the Faculty Athletics Representative.
• Ensure athletic programs comply with the National Collegiate Athletics Association rules.

The following individuals report directly to the Director of Athletics:

• Assistant Director of Athletics/Compliance
• Assistant Director of Athletics/Business Operations
• Associate Director of Athletics/External
• Director of Athletics Development

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Campus Governance at Institutional Level

Communication on campus is structured through the following groups:

*Deans Council.* Chaired by the Provost, the Deans Council is comprised of the following:

- Deans of the Colleges, Law School, Extended Programs, and Ottenheimer Library
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Policy
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Administrative Affairs
- Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School
- Director of the Office of Institutional Research
- Director of the Office of Recruitment

The group meets weekly to discuss topical University issues (e.g., budgetary, legislative, developmental, or academic) about which they advise the Provost. The council is also the direct conduit of information from the Provost into the academic colleges. This council connects the academic perspective with the administrative processes of the campus. Agendas and meeting minutes are distributed to participants, department chairpersons, and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.

*Chairs Council.* Composed of the chairs of all academic units, the council meets monthly to discuss matters of common interest to department chairs and to act as a conduit of information back to their units. The Chairs Council has an elected chairperson and is supported by the Provost’s office.

*Graduate Coordinators Committee.* Comprised of the coordinators of the several graduate programs, this committee meets monthly and advises the graduate office in the formulation of Graduate School policies and procedures. It also provides assistance and information on other matters. Meeting minutes are published on the web.

*Various UALR administrative committees* that serve in an advisory capacity. There are two different types. One is a committee convened by a specific administrator to advise, gather, and promulgate information on topics of importance to that administrator. The other is administrative committees that are part of the University Assembly structure.

Faculty and staff members are appointed by the Chancellor upon recommendation of the Committee on Committees of the University Assembly. Unless otherwise specified, student representatives on these committees are appointed by the Chancellor from nominees recommended by the Student Government Association.

Each University Assembly administrative committee is instructed to keep Faculty Senate members informed of any action it takes that would be of general interest. These are committees such as the Behavioral Standards Committee, the Human Relations Committee, the Humane Animal Care Committee, the Sustainability Committee, and the Student Affairs Committee.
Collaboration and communication are supposed to be promoted throughout the University through various administrative groups that meet on a regular basis. The majority of these groups include people from across the University to ensure that each college and unit is aware of what other groups on campus are doing. However, during the self-study process it became apparent the information does not always flow as intended. For example, although progress on the goals and objectives of UALR Fast Forward are discussed annually at the Chancellor’s Leadership Group retreat, most faculty and staff remain unaware of this progress.

Collaborative Work

Despite issues with information flow, the administrative structure provides an effective framework for productive collaborative work. Group representation is often made up of cross-college or unit members, thus giving people a chance to meet and work with each other. One example of such collaboration is the University’s work during the past 18 months on five retention initiatives.

In Fall 2007, Chancellor Anderson asked Provost Belcher and Vice Chancellor Donaldson to review the findings of University ad hoc committees, such as the Task Force on Retention, as well as the recommendations from the Foundations of Excellence initiative in order to make progress on Goal Two, Objective Three of UALR Fast Forward: “The University will implement research-based strategies for increasing persistence (retention) and graduation rates of UALR undergraduate students by 20 percent in five years.” This review resulted in six initiatives that were presented to UALR faculty and staff in December 2007 at the Retention Summit.

A task force, comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, was formed for each initiative. Each task force researched best practices, explored needed changes in policy, and created a plan for implementation. (All initiatives are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization.”)

The first initiative required all freshmen to attend student orientation. This initiative did not need any changes in policy. Members of the task force reviewed the existing orientation and made revisions that increased academic unit participation. One issue identified was access due to the diversity of the student body. The final plan included providing day, evening, weekend, and online orientation sessions. Implemented in Fall 2008, this initiative has been successful.

The second initiative focused on developing processes to support and retain developmental students. Members of the task force reviewed existing practices and policies. They found that some of the policy needed for implementation already existed but was not being enforced. They also found that new policy needed to be adopted. The new policy recommendations were taken to Faculty Senate and approved. Implemented in Fall 2008, this initiative has been successful.

The original third and fourth initiatives were merged into one developing processes to strengthen student advising and encourage early declaration of a major. Members of the task force found that implementing this
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initiative required several policy changes as well as financial resources. One recommendation—the creation of an office dedicated to articulating transfer credit—was approved during the budget hearings in Spring 2009. Work on this initiative is continuing with further need for policy change and resources.

The fourth initiative required all freshmen to complete the First Year Experience course. In Spring 2008, Faculty Senate approved a policy requiring the course for all freshmen and tasked the Undergraduate Council with formulating course requirements and processes for having courses approved. In Fall 2008, the ad hoc committee formed by the Undergraduate Council completed a proposal which included a budget for resources. During spring budget hearings, due to financial constraints, these resources were not included on the priority list for funding. The proposal will go back to the Undergraduate Council for reconsideration during the 2009–2010 academic year.

The fifth initiative required faculty to report mid-term grades to students in all lower-level courses. The purpose was for students and their advisors to be aware of problems early in the semester. After much discussion in Faculty Senate, a policy passed that required faculty to report mid-term grades to students in the manner the faculty member chose as opposed to requiring that the grades be posted in the Banner system where they could be accessed by advisors.

This example illustrates how University governance structures allow for productive collaboration on campus-wide initiatives.

**Governance Policies**

According to UA Board of Trustees Policy 100.4, each campus

shall develop a system of campus government to establish policies and procedures for campus governance. The purposes shall be to provide a system that permits a broad base of governance of that campus through appropriate participation involvement of the administration, students, faculty, and staff in the determination of guidelines and policies for campus affairs and to generate and promote understanding, collaboration, and a sense of community on the campus.

Within this framework, the University Assembly, whose authority is delegated by the UA Board of Trustees, is the legislative and advisory body on educational policies and programs on campus. All legislative functions of the University Assembly are assigned to the Faculty Senate subject only to the right of the University Assembly to amend or rescind legislative actions of the Faculty Senate.

The University Assembly is composed of the President of the UA System and the following UALR personnel: the Chancellor; the Provost; all vice chancellors, associate vice chancellors, deans, and directors; the registrar; all full-time employees with the academic rank of university professor, distinguished professor, professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor; elected members of the Staff Senate; and one
student for every 400 students enrolled in the fall term of each academic year selected by the Student Government Association\(^1\) to be broadly representative of the various student groups.

Professors emeriti, persons with adjunct or visiting academic rank, lecturers, and part-time faculty members also have voice but may not vote in the University Assembly and are not eligible for election to the Faculty Senate or any standing committee or council of the University Assembly or the Faculty Senate.

The University Assembly has a wide variety of committees that deal with all aspects of matters within its purview. A complete list is available via Faculty Senate website.\(^2\)

Three elected bodies, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association, are authorized by the University Assembly. Each has its own constitution that empowers the bodies within their specified roles. The University Assembly serves as an oversight body and also reserves some responsibilities to itself, including the election of the president of the University Assembly, who also serves as president of the Faculty Senate. In addition to making recommendations on initiatives that affect the entire campus, the University Assembly also may make recommendations to the Faculty Senate, may nullify or amend legislation passed by the Faculty Senate, and may amend the constitution and the University Assembly bylaws. The new non-smoking policy, for example, was within the purview of the University Assembly.

In the 2007–2008 academic year, a member of the Student Government Association began an initiative to change the campus smoking policy to make UALR a smoke-free campus. At the time, smoking was permitted outside and away from the entrances to campus buildings.

The proposal was submitted to the University Assembly Committee on Health and Wellness, which held several meetings and invited comment from the campus community to the proposal to ban smoking. Following a series of discussions and lively campus debate both online and face-to-face, the committee voted to recommend a change in the policy to support the smoke-free resolution.

This resolution was then offered to the Faculty Senate and to the Staff Senate for review, comment and recommendation. Although such policies are not within the legislative authority of any campus governance unit, it is practice for votes on University Assembly resolutions affecting the entire campus to be informed by the votes of the appropriate Senate bodies if the bodies choose to take action. In this case, the Staff Senate voted in favor of the motion and referred it to the University Assembly. At the May 2008 meeting, the University Assembly approved the resolution to recommend to the Chancellor that UALR become a smoke-free campus.

1d Example of Evidence
People within the governance and administrative structures are committed to the mission and appropriately qualified to carry out their defined responsibilities.

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1. http://ualr.edu/sga/
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Clearly, there were a number of students and employees who did not concur with approval of the resolution. Subsequently, the Chancellor held a series of meetings with those who supported and who opposed the resolution to provide additional input to him directly. Following those meetings and after consideration, the Chancellor informed the campus community during the Summer 2008 that he would approve the resolution to take effect beginning August 16, 2009, allowing over a year to plan implementation of the new policy. Along with approval, he also announced that a number of initiatives in smoking cessation would be offered.

Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate is made up of full-time faculty members who hold the ranks of university professor, distinguished professor, professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor. These members are elected by the full-time faculty members of the Ottenheimer Library and all academic colleges and schools that report directly to the Provost. Schools that administratively report to a college dean are considered part of that college for purposes of representation in the Faculty Senate. All questions concerning representation of an academic college or school in the Faculty Senate are resolved by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, subject to appeal to the Faculty Senate.

Faculty who are serving as department chairpersons are also eligible for election to the Faculty Senate. Faculty members holding appointments that require them to devote more than half their time to administrative work may not serve in the Faculty Senate. The Chancellor and the Provost are exempt from this requirement and serve as ex officio members (with vote) of the Faculty Senate. The president of the Staff Senate and the president of the Student Government Association serve as ex officio (with vote) members of the Faculty Senate.

The faculty of each college or school with ten or more faculty can elect a minimum of one senator, with additional Faculty Senate seats apportioned on the following basis: a second Faculty Senate seat for those colleges or schools with 20 to 29 full-time faculty; a third Faculty Senate seat for those colleges and schools with 30 to 39 full-time faculty members; a fourth Faculty Senate seat for those colleges and schools with 40 to 49 full-time faculty members; a fifth Faculty Senate seat for those colleges and schools with 50 to 59 full-time faculty members; and so forth for each additional ten full-time faculty.

The Faculty Senate is reapportioned every two years, prior to Faculty Senate elections, by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, based on the current information as to the number of full-time faculty members in each college or school. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate assigns faculty members of units not otherwise represented in the Faculty Senate to a single unit solely for purposes of representation in the Faculty Senate provided that such full-time faculty members number 20 or greater; otherwise, the executive committee assigns such faculty to one or more units that are represented in the Faculty Senate. When a single unit is created for purposes of representing faculty members of units not
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otherwise represented in the Faculty Senate, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate has the responsibility for supervising elections to the Faculty Senate from this unit.

Colleges and schools that have academic departments and that are represented by three or fewer Faculty Senators may not have more than one Faculty Senator from the same academic department. Colleges and schools that have academic departments and that are represented by more than three but fewer than nine Faculty Senators may not have more than two Faculty Senators from the same academic department. Colleges and schools that have academic departments and that are represented by nine or more Faculty Senators, shall not have more than three Faculty Senators from the same academic department. This requirement may be waived by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate only when the executive committee has determined that following the requirement would make it impossible for a college or school to elect its full complement of Faculty Senators. In all instances the executive committee and the faculty of each college or school should be sensitive to the need to have Faculty Senators from as many different academic departments as possible.

The University Assembly and the Faculty Senate have the right to make recommendations on all matters that concern the educational mission and effectiveness of the University. More specifically, all legislative functions of the University Assembly have been assigned to the UALR Faculty Senate, as described in Article III of the Constitution of the University Assembly of UALR, subject only to the right of the University Assembly to amend or rescind legislative actions of the Faculty Senate.

Specifically, the Faculty Senate has legislative authority over admissions requirements, curriculum and courses, degrees and requirements for degrees, calendars and schedules, awards, honors and honorary degrees, and interpretation of its own legislation. These include committees such as the Committee on Tenure, Academic Calendar and Schedules Committee, Academic Technology and Computing Committee, and the Admission and Transfer of Credits Committee (a complete list is available online).\(^1\)

An example of how the Faculty Senate delegates its authority to elected councils to perform tasks within its legislative authority are the Graduate and Undergraduate councils, which review curriculum proposals and monitor program performance, on behalf of and subject to the authority of the Faculty Senate. Representation on both councils comes from the colleges, the Ottenheimer Library, and the Student Government Association. (Members are elected to the councils.) To support faculty oversight of curricular coherence, representatives from the councils sit on program review committees to assure that the state’s mandate for substantive program review is accomplished through faculty governance. When the department being reviewed has both Graduate and Undergraduate programs, members of both councils sit together to develop the program review documents.

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Any five faculty members, any single faculty senator, the Staff Senate, the Student Government Association, the Chancellor, or the Provost may place an item on the Faculty Senate agenda.

**Staff Senate**¹

Staff Senate is composed of classified employees. Two members of the Staff Senate are elected for each 25 full-time staff positions. The Staff Senate makes recommendations on matters of general campus-wide concern, including salaries, work schedules and working conditions, job evaluations, grievances and appeals, fringe benefits, health services, safety, traffic, and security. These recommendations may be sent directly to the Chancellor or to the Faculty Senate for concurrent action before being sent to the Chancellor. The Staff Senate is also actively engaged in service projects to benefit employees, the campus, and the community.

**Student Government Association**

The Student Government Association provides opportunities for students to participate in the affairs of the University. Through the Student Government Association, students get information about campus policies, events, and organizations. The Student Government Association provides a place for students to express their views about campus policies. Members of the Student Government Association also work on committees and organize promotions and special events. Student representatives are full-voting members of the University Assembly, and the president of the Student Government Association is an ex-officio, voting member of the Faculty Senate. Elected officers of the Student Government Association serve as members of the University Assembly’s Committee on Committees and meet with the Executive Committees of the Faculty Senate and the Staff Senate on a scheduled basis.

**Codes of Conduct and Expected Behavior Policies**

The University’s codes of conduct and expected behavior as well as statements of rights and responsibility are explicated in the handbooks for faculty, staff, and students. In keeping with the University’s mission objectives of excellence in instruction, scholarly inquiry, service to society, community of learning, accessibility, and responsiveness, these codes create an environment where diversity is valued and rights are protected. This is evinced in the UALR Policy on Discriminatory Harassment and Equal Opportunity.

UALR adheres to a policy that enables all individuals, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, veteran’s status, or disability, to work and study in an environment unfettered by discriminatory behavior or acts. Harassment of an individual or group will not be condoned, and any person—student, faculty, or staff member—who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

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¹. [http://ualr.edu/staffsen/](http://ualr.edu/staffsen/)
Harassment that is considered discriminatory includes actions or conduct (verbal, graphic, gestural, or written) directed against any person or group with the intent to demean or create a hostile or threatening environment. It is not the intent of this policy to infringe upon or limit educational, scholarly, or artistic expression.

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the Office of Human Relations to obtain assistance and information concerning the filing of complaints. At the same time the University prohibits discriminatory practices, it promotes equal opportunity through affirmative action. Nondiscriminatory affirmative action equal opportunity policies apply to recruitment, hiring, job classification and placement, work conditions, promotional opportunities, demotions/transfers, terminations, training, compensation, choice of contractors and suppliers of goods and services, educational opportunities, disciplinary actions, recreational and social activities, use of facilities, housing, and university-sponsored programs.

Rights and Responsibilities of Internal Constituents

The Faculty Handbook, Part-time Faculty Handbook, Classified (Staff) Employees Handbook, Student Handbook, Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and Law School Catalog contain the policies and procedures that apply to the rights and responsibilities of all internal constituents. The policies and procedures in these publications require and receive continuing evaluation, review, and approval by appropriate governing bodies. Many of the policies included in the Faculty Handbook derive from UA System policies that originate with the UA Board of Trustees. Copies of the UA Board of Trustees policies are available in the deans’ offices and in the Provost’s office. The Student Handbook is available in the Dean of Students’ office. All of these documents are also available online and, in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, are also available in alternative format upon request.

Faculty

The Faculty Handbook contains information for faculty on the organizational structure, governing documents, and policies of the University. It clearly defines the rights and responsibilities of members of the faculty. The Faculty Handbook also outlines structures and processes related to the integrity of co-curricular and auxiliary activities.

1. http://ualr.edu/provost/docs/ptfacultyhandbook/
7. http://ualr.edu/academics/
Part-time Faculty

The Part-time Faculty Handbook is a simplified guide to the policies and procedures of the campus that addresses issues such as the role of part-time faculty on campus, the nature of appointments, paperwork, and important policies and procedures. This handbook directs part-time faculty to the Faculty Handbook for more detailed descriptions of policies.

Classified Staff

The Classified Employees Handbook provides information to classified employees on the appropriate university policies and procedures that apply to the entire UA System and are included along with those that have been adopted for the UALR campus only. Included is information such as the nondiscrimination policies, employment and leave policies, benefits, classification and compensation, and privileges.

Students

Information for students is available in the course catalogs and the Student Handbook. The Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and the Law School Catalog state the University’s authority to grant degrees within the UA System and provide information on the mission and scope statements, accreditation and affiliations, degrees and their requirements, admission criteria, expenses, academic policies and procedures, and descriptions of academic resources. Members of the administration and faculty are listed along with the institutions of higher education where they earned their degrees.

The Student Handbook includes UALR’s statement on nondiscrimination, sexual harassment policy, sexual assault policy, academic adjustment policy for students with disabilities, smoking policy, computer systems acceptable use policy, distribution of printed materials policy, university housing rules and regulations, and regulations governing student organizations. In addition, the code of student rights, responsibilities, and behavior includes the policy covering student discipline and appeal procedures.

Blanket policies of the University include the following:

- **Sexual Harassment Policy.** UALR prohibits sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Initial complaints may be filed with any of three offices: the Office of Human Relations, the Department of Public Safety, or the Office of Campus Life.

- **Americans With Disabilities Act Policy.** UALR commits to make every effort to meet special accommodation and access needs, complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Questions, comments, or concerns regarding accommodations and accessibility are directed to the Office of Disability Support Services. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects people infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) from discrimination, and UALR accords all rights of access and responsibilities in every aspect...
of university life as available to uninfected persons. UALR neither screens nor inquires regarding HIV status in admission or employment.

- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (summarized).** FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students at UALR who are 18 years old or older have various rights with regard to their educational records, including the right to inspect and review all educational records and a valid expectation of privacy.

- **Computer Systems Appropriate/Acceptable Use Policy (summarized).** The use of information technology systems is restricted to authorized faculty, staff, alumni, and students. Information technology systems and network may be used only for the intended authorized purposes.


**Grievance Committees**

The University maintains an extensive and thoroughly developed set of grievance committees to assure both due process and fair hearings on a variety of issues relating to both behavior and professional standards. Those committees include the following:

- **Academic Integrity and Grievance.** The Academic Integrity and Grievance Committee hears specific grade appeals and hears, on appeal and referral, cases involving certain alleged academic offenses. The Academic Integrity and Grievance Committee comprises 15 faculty and three faculty alternates to be appointed annually in the spring by the Committee on Committees and 15 students and three alternates to be appointed no later than the beginning of the fall semester by the Student Government Association. The term of office begins with the fall semester and continues for twelve months. The purpose of the committee is twofold: (1) it affords the student an opportunity to appeal a grade if he or she feels the grade was inequitably awarded in that it violated a faculty member’s own specified grading standards, and (2) it affords a student a hearing in cases where disputes over alleged cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the like cannot be resolved (where the student does not admit that he/she violated an academic offense standard or the student admits that he/she did violate an academic offense standard and the Dean of Students (or designee) refers the

1.  [http://ualr.edu/campuslife/](http://ualr.edu/campuslife/)
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case for sanctioning). Students and faculty members are urged, however, to make all attempts possible to resolve a grievance before initiating formal appeal. The administrative officer shall assign two faculty members and two students to hear academic offenses by rotation according to alphabet if possible.

- **Behavioral Standards.** The Behavioral Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate is a disciplinary agent of the University and hears cases referred to it by the Dean of Students or by the Dean of the Graduate School whenever the behavior of a student (or group) is in violation of the University’s nonacademic behavioral standards. The committee hears cases involving student organizations upon referral from the Dean of Students (or designee) when no governing body judicial board exists. It also has jurisdiction over appeals by a student of an adverse decision of a faculty member regarding disruptive behavior in the classroom. The committee is composed of four faculty members and two faculty alternates appointed by the Faculty Senate president; three students and two student alternates are appointed by the Student Government Association.

- **Faculty/Staff Appeals.** All appeals and grievances involving faculty are made to the Faculty Appeals Council. This includes but is not limited to appeals and grievances about dismissal, tenure, promotion, salary, fringe benefits, working conditions, and discrimination based upon race, sex, or physical handicap. Membership of this committee shall include the Committee on Tenure; one full-time faculty member, with tenure, elected from each academic unit represented in the Faculty Senate; and two academic administrators below the level of dean who shall be elected by the Faculty Senate. Should the composition of the Faculty Appeals Council not, in the opinion of the president of the Faculty Senate, include adequate representation of women and/or minorities, the Faculty Senate president may appoint up to five additional full-time faculty members to provide such representation. Elections shall be conducted in the spring, and members shall serve two-year staggered terms.

- **University Judicial Appeals.** The University Judicial Appeals Committee is an administrative committee that reviews and hears appeals on the record of decisions made by the Behavioral Standards Committee, the Academic Integrity and Grievance Committee, the judicial boards of the Greek governing bodies for organizational offenses, and the Dean of Students or his or her designee as part of the informal system of adjudication. The committee is composed of one faculty member and one faculty alternate, one student and one student alternate, and one academic or nonacademic administrator and one alternate. This process ensures that students are provided due process.

Grievance processes are specific to the grievance and the committee to which it is addressed. All committees’ policies included information with respect to timelines, hearing guidelines, and appellate procedures.

UALR’s expectations for student academic behavior are outlined by Dean of Students’ Academic Integrity Policy, with examples of academic offenses such as student misconduct and plagiarism. The Dean of Students is also responsible for the Student Handbook. This handbook
defines academic misconduct and provides specific examples. All policies related to students include everything from the admission process through graduation. The University reserves the right to change policies at any time and without prior notice as deemed necessary for mission accomplishment or the health and welfare of faculty, staff, and students.

Student complaints and dispositions of grievances are recorded in one of the following offices: the Offices of the Chancellor, Provost, and Vice Chancellor for Educational and Student Services.

**Human Relations**

The Director of Human Relations\(^1\) reports to the Chancellor and is responsible for monitoring federal compliance, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Affirmative Action on campus. The Director also serves as a member of both the Chancellor’s Leadership Group and Direct Reports Group. The Chancellor implements policies on these issues and maintains oversight of compliance through the Office of Human Relations.

**Intellectual Property Rights**

The UALR Intellectual Property Policy\(^2\) is adapted from Policy 210.2, adopted by the UA Board of Trustees in 2001. This policy governs issues of copyright and use of technology-enhanced course materials (TECMs). (Please refer to that policy for complete details.) The policy creates five categories, dependent on the amount of technological support that is provided by the University into the development of the course, that are used to classify TECMs and determine copyright, revenue allocation, and use. A more detailed discussion of the categories is available online.\(^3\) The Intellectual Property Policy was approved by the Faculty Senate April 19, 2002, and by Chancellor Hathaway May 2, 2002.

To support faculty and students, Copyright Central\(^4\) was developed in 2005. Copyright Central provides a centralized location for information about copyright law and fair use for faculty and students, information about copyright protection for students, information about the UALR Intellectual Property Policy, and additional resources regarding copyright, plagiarism, and intellectual property.

**Office of Research and Sponsored Programs**

The organizational structure of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs\(^5\) has shifted a number of times over the past ten years as the type of research conducted at UALR has shifted. Because of the emerging role of research on campus, the University has re-assessed the function of ORSP. This assessment revealed the office had an inadequate infrastructure to nurture and support faculty doing research and to oversee all of the administrative functions of grants. To address this, the

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1. http://ualr.edu/human_relations/
3. http://ualr.edu/academics/?page_id=142
4. http://ualr.edu/copyright/
5. http://ualr.edu/orsp/
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administrative structure of the office was changed. The position of Dean of the Graduate School was expanded to include additional responsibilities for the oversight and support of research activities. This position, now titled Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, directly supervises the Director of ORSP.

ORSP ensures accountability, compliance, and stewardship for sponsored research as directed by all applicable federal, state, and university policies, procedures, and regulations. It also supports the fiscal management of funded projects to reduce the administrative load on researchers, project directors, and departmental support staff. It functions as the single point of contact for all activities between UALR and external sponsors.

The Director of ORSP is responsible for the development and administration of grant dollars on campus. This description covers a wide range of duties, such as encouraging and helping the faculty to apply for grants, administering awarded grants, and ensuring that the University is in compliance with all federal and state regulations that affect grants and contracts.

ORSP also provides administrative support to the Institutional Research Board\(^1\) (IRB). ORSP maintains all the official records of business conducted by or in support of the IRB. ORSP staffs the IRB meetings and takes and retains minutes. The office maintains current IRB Review Request forms (both hard copy and electronic), distributes them, receives completed review requests and processes them for IRB review.

Currently, UALR is guided by the ethical principles set forth by the *Belmont Report of Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Participants of Research*\(^2\) with regard to research involving human participants. This policy covers all research conducted by the faculty, staff, and students of the University regardless of the source of support (internal or external).

All research involving human participants conducted by UALR researchers must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before data collection begins. The IRB operates according to the guidelines in Title 45, Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) and other applicable state and institutional guidelines.

UALR has filed an assurance (FWA 00002205) with the Department of Health and Human Services Office for Human Research Protections stating its intent to adhere to these principles and follow the federal guidelines set forth for conducting research with human participants.

This policy applies if the following is true:

- The research is sponsored by UALR

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The research is conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of UALR in connection with his or her institutional duties—or

The research is conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of UALR using any property or facilities of UALR

Researchers (including students) must seek IRB review and approval of each research protocol prior to conducting the research. It is also the researcher’s responsibility to seek review and approval of any proposed modifications to an ongoing study and to initiate continuing review at least annually for the duration of the research project.

UALR requires that all investigators who wish to conduct research with human subjects complete a human research training course hosted by the University of Miami. The training is valid for three years. Investigators must also read the Belmont Report of Ethical Principles prior to initiation of the research. The IRB has the authority to approve, disapprove, or request modifications to research protocols involving human participants conducted by UALR researchers (including students) or conducted at UALR facilities.

Over the past three years, the IRB has conducted a full review of its protocol to ensure that UALR is in full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. In Spring 2009, the IRB submitted the revised protocol to the Provost and Faculty Senate. This project is an example of administrative and faculty bodies working collaboratively to develop policies that support UALR’s integrity and metropolitan mission. An additional goal of this project is to make the policy document more accessible to researchers. The project has involved faculty from across the campus and disciplines, administrators, and staff.

Researchers (faculty, staff, and students) at UALR accept their responsibility to conduct research in an ethical and responsible manner and acknowledge their obligation to protect the rights and welfare of any human participant involved in a research activity. The primary investigator and other key researchers are responsible for designing a sound study in accordance with the standards of the discipline and for disclosing any perceived or potential conflict of interest that would reasonably appear to be affected by the proposed research.

All research or teaching that involves animal subjects must be reviewed and approved by the University’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. The committee ensures that faculty and students are properly trained to perform or conduct any procedures pertaining to the use of animals. UALR faculty and students must have an approved protocol on file even if they are conducting research outside of the campus. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee meets every six months.

Work done with radiation is overseen by the Radiation Safety Committee and the Radiation Safety Office, located in the Graduate Institute of Technology, which was established to assure compliance

1. http://citiprogram.org
with state regulations and the conditions set forth by the license and to promote best practices. The UALR Radiation Safety Program assists management at all levels in fulfilling the UALR commitment to furnish a place of employment and learning which is as free as possible from recognized radiation hazards that cause or are likely to cause harm or death to personnel and the surrounding community. In the name of UALR, the Radiation Safety Committee has obtained an academic institution license from the Arkansas Department of Health for the use of radioactive materials. The Radiation Safety Office/Committee approves internal permits for responsible and qualified individuals to use radioactive materials within UALR after the permission has been approved by the Health Department. The permits are approved for the purchase, transfer, use, and disposal of specific amounts of a particular nuclide within the educational and research facilities of UALR. Appropriate application forms must be completed and approved before permission can be granted.

Financial Integrity
To ensure financial integrity, the UA Board of Trustees requires internal and external audits performed annually. The Internal Audit Department is responsible for providing the UA Board of Trustees and the President of the UA System with information about the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal administrative and accounting controls and the quality of operating performance when compared with established standards. To accomplish this, the Internal Audit Department is authorized to have full, free, and unrestricted access to all property, personnel, and records.

The internal auditor retains a high degree of independence, unhindered by the UA Board of Trustees or University officials in their audits. The auditors use nationally recognized guidelines such as *Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*, published by the Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc., and *College & University Business Administration*, published by the National Association of College and University Business Officers for internal audit activities. Internal auditors also coordinate external audit activities.

External auditors evaluate whether or not the University practices generally acceptable accounting principles and is free from fraud or any other financial improprieties. UALR’s audits for the past ten years have found no violations or misappropriations.

Upon Reflection
- UALR has clear mission and values documents that are available to constituencies.
- UALR has articulated mission goals and objectives that drive institutional decisions.
- Policy documents have been or are being updated in response to environmental scanning.
- Communication within and among campus units needs to be improved. This will enhance collaboration across campus.

**Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching**

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**Core Components:**

3a The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

3b The organization values and supports effective teaching.

3c The organization creates effective learning environments.

3d The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

**Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge**

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

**Core Components:**

4a The organization demonstrates, through the actions of the board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

4b The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

4c The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

4d The organization provides support to ensure faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.
Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization

In accordance with its mission, UALR is committed to educating tomorrow’s global citizens. This is articulated in the University’s mission statement “to develop the intellect of students...[and] to serve and strengthen society by enhancing awareness in scientific, technical, and cultural arenas” and is implemented through four of the six UALR mission objectives—Community of Learning, Accessibility, Excellence in Instruction, and Scholarly Inquiry—discussed throughout this chapter.

Diverse Student Body

The student body at UALR is the most diverse of any institution of higher learning in Arkansas. In Fall 2008, 64 percent of all students were Caucasian, 26 percent were African American, 2.8 percent were Asian, 2.5 percent were Hispanic, 2.2 percent were international students, and 1 percent were Native American (1.5 percent chose not to identify their race). UALR enrolls the second highest number of African American students in the UA System, closely trailing the only historically Black college. These students comprised approximately 21 percent of all UALR graduates in 2009, which is consistent with the ten-year average percentage rate of 20.3 percent.

The average age of UALR students falls between 27 and 28 years, and 90 percent commute to campus. These demographics affect UALR’s enrollment in specific ways. In Fall 2008, 63 percent of all students were female. Forty-nine percent of undergraduate students and 45 percent of graduate students received financial aid loans. Of students receiving financial aid loans, 26 percent had a dependent living with them and 12 percent were single parents.

Relatively few undergraduate students start out at UALR as first-time freshmen and continue straight through to graduation. As is true of many metropolitan universities, these students “swirl,” attending more than one institution over the course of their academic career, often stopping out for a semester or two due to financial or family issues. Since the early 2000’s, the number of undergraduate students with transfer credit has increased steadily. For the past several years, approximately seven out of ten graduating seniors came to UALR as transfer students. Year after year, the number of undergraduate degrees awarded by the campus exceeds the number of first-time, full-time entering freshmen. UALR is the only campus in Arkansas where this occurs.

The diversity of UALR’s student body is reflected in the varied life experience and educational preparation of its students. Accordingly, the University provides a learning environment that recognizes and supports this variety. This chapter will focus on how UALR creates a holistic community of learning through its support of student learning, its support of effective teaching and its support of the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.
Support of Student Learning

The UALR mission objectives Community of Learning and Accessibility state

The University has a responsibility to provide a community of learning through creation of an academic environment that stimulates students, faculty, and staff to become life-long learners. This environment should heighten the intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities of students, faculty, and staff.

The University has a responsibility to serve the needs of a heterogeneous student population and to make its resources accessible to the general public and to local, state, national, and international groups. This responsibility includes creating opportunities for access to the University’s academic and other resources.

The resources and support services provided to accomplish these mission objectives are as diverse as the UALR student body. They are located both physically and administratively throughout the University and range from non-academic support such as student development to large-scale units such as the Ottenheimer Library to various types of labs and centers devoted to additional academic support.

Ensuring Quality Services

Ensuring the quality of support and resource services through data-based evaluation is a priority at UALR. This is evinced by Goal 2 in UALR Fast Forward which states, “UALR will provide a student-centered educational environment.” Under this goal, Objective 1 commits the University to organiz[ing] its operations and shap[ing] its practices, policies, and procedures to be as student-centered as possible, as evidenced by increased student satisfaction and success.

Significant resources have been allocated to assess and improve student services and resources. A recent comprehensive assessment was the Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted by MGT of America, Inc., in 2007. Since results from this survey are included in the discussion of academic and service units throughout this chapter, an overview of this assessment is provided here.

MGT Customer Satisfaction Survey

In July 2007, UALR contracted with MGT of America, Inc., to conduct a Customer Satisfaction Evaluation. MGT is a national research and management consulting firm specializing in providing services that

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improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government. The primary objective of the project was to evaluate the level of customer service provided to students through both academic and student service units.

MGT interviewed staff in all of the student service units as well as “clients” of those offices, including academic departments and colleges. In addition, MGT conducted focus groups with both staff and students, and completed “mystery shopping” to the offices. Mystery shopping involves sending in a secret shopper to “sample” the services and staff attitudes in each of the studies areas.

In addition, all 11,549 students registered in Fall 2007 were given the opportunity to participate in a customer satisfaction survey that identified those areas where satisfaction and dissatisfaction existed. A total of 1,999 student respondents completed the survey, for a response rate of 17.3 percent. The majority of survey respondents were female (69.9%), white (67.6%), full-time (60.6%), matriculated at the main campus (84.4%), lived off campus (91.6%), and were returning students (69.8%).

Students were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the service and with the courtesy and friendliness of staff in each office/service/unit on a scale of 1 to 5, where “5” represented “very satisfied” and “1” represented “very dissatisfied.” A score of “3” is considered neutral. For the purposes of analysis, only ratings made by ten or more respondents were included. Offices/services/units are considered to be in need of improvement if the service had less than a 75 percent “satisfaction” rating (ratings of 4 and 5 on the survey) or if there was more than 10 percent “dissatisfaction” among student respondents (ratings of 1 and 2 on the survey). The units evaluated were:

- Office of Recruitment
- Disability Support Services
- Health Services
- Office of Testing Services
- Office of Campus Life
- Ottenheimer Library
- Writing Center
- Office of Counseling & Career Planning
- DSC Fitness Center
- Extended Programs
- Student Computer Labs
- Bookstore
- Office of Records & Registration
- Academic Advising
- Student Technology Support Services
- Public Safety
- Office Student Housing
- Parking Services
• Admissions & Financial Aid
• Dining Services

Students also were asked to rate the New Student Orientation Sessions, both on-campus and online (this was before they were revised as is discussed later in the chapter), their faculty advisor, other faculty, and their academic department.

The report puts the findings in perspective by saying

It is important to note that UALR students are like students at other urban universities in that they are not as satisfied with Dining Services, Parking Services, Student Housing, and Public Safety Offices as they are with other campus services. Parking and public safety, housing, and dining are three areas of general dissatisfaction on most campuses, but especially on campuses in urban locations.

The report results section states

UALR should be proud that, in general, students are satisfied with their interactions with UALR services and staff providing services, especially in academic areas.…. Students gave total satisfaction ratings for staff of less than 75 percent and more than ten percent dissatisfied to only five offices/services/units: Public Safety, Student Housing, Parking Services, Admissions and Financial Aid, and Dining Services. There is marked dissatisfaction with seven offices/services/units related to the services provided: Dining Services; Admissions and Financial Aid; Parking Services; Student Housing; Public Safety Office; Student Technology Support Services; and Academic Advising. In this context, “marked dissatisfaction” means that less than 75 percent of students responding indicated “satisfaction” (a rating of 4 or 5 on the survey) AND more than ten percent of students responding indicated “dissatisfaction” (a rating of 1 or 2 on the survey) with the service provided. Academic Advising and Student Technology Support Services are the only offices/services/units where satisfaction with staff was above 80 percent, but dissatisfaction with services exceeded ten percent.

UALR’s response to specific recommendations from the satisfaction survey are discussed throughout this chapter.

**Educational and Student Services¹**

The Division of Educational and Student Services provides educational and student support services to UALR’s constituencies, and maintains multiple relationships with academic departments, students, and community groups. The Division sustains and in many instances improves services in creative ways. Services are offered through three areas: Student Development, Enrollment Services, and University College.

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3c Example of Evidence

The organization provides an environment that supports all learners and respects the diversity they bring.

3c Example of Evidence

Student development programs support learning throughout the student’s experience regardless of the location of the student.
Student Development

Office of Campus Life

In the MGT assessment, 90.7 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 85.3 percent were satisfied with the services provided through the Office of Campus Life (OCL). OCL provides students with access to advocacy programs for special populations and support services for the variety of registered student organizations on campus. The office offers orientation programs, referrals and related services to ease students’ transition to college life. The OCL website provides information about orientation, the University Program Council, and the Student Government Association. In addition, there are links to important publications for students including

- Student Handbook
- Undergraduate Catalog
- Guide for Life-long Learners
- Safety Summary
- Safety Manual

Within the Office of Campus Life is the Adult Student Advocacy program, which works to create effective learning environments specific to non-traditional students. This office is open year-round, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and is also accessible 24 hours/7 days a week on the web. The office is in a high-traffic area of the Donaghey Student Center with good visibility. Services for prospective and current students who are over 25 years old focus on

- assistance with the admission and application process
- information regarding campus resources, services, and opportunities
- opportunities to meet other adult students and share experiences
- referrals to appropriate staff and faculty
- provision of fast information and assistance to busy adult students

For moral support and networking, a peer mentoring program is offered, and twice-a-week brown-bag lunch sessions in a reserved dining room within the Student Center are provided. Currently, over 500 out of the approximately 6,000 adult students register to receive regular emails about campus announcements and activities via a listserv. The number of contacts made will vary from month to month and semester to semester; however, in February 2008, over 120 contacts were made either in person, over the phone, or via email.

Office of Student Housing

The Office of Student Housing offers four options to serve the diversity of its students. Since a majority of students who participated in the MGT survey were not living in campus housing, it is not possible to interpret

1. http://ualr.edu/administration/vcess/
1. http://ualr.edu/campuslife/
2. http://ualr.edu/adults/
the findings on Housing within this context. On-campus housing is a relatively new addition to the UALR campus. Although East Hall opened in 1994, it was twelve years later before the Commons Apartments were added in 2006. The success of the two apartment-style residence halls recently has generated discussions about adding a third within the next two years.

East Hall, which has space dedicated to freshmen entering programs in the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT), is a traditional residence hall offering a support system geared toward first-time entering freshman. Students share space with a roommate to experience a community living setting. In addition to a full schedule of social and academic support programs offered in the building, a student Resident Assistant resides on each floor to help new students transition to college. The hall also has a computer lab that is open seven days per week.

Connected to East Hall are the Commons Apartments, which include North and South Halls, the newest additions to campus housing. This apartment style community offers a more independent experience for continuing students (non-freshmen). Connecting North and South Halls is a Commons Building that has an on-campus convenience store, computer labs, study rooms, and a television lounge where students can socialize.

In addition to the residence halls on campus, the Office of Student Housing manages a 20-unit apartment complex located on Fair Park Boulevard just south of the residence hall. These are available to students at a reasonable cost; a student manager resides in the complex.

Finally, UALR owns several houses in the Oak Forest neighborhood, the area surrounding the campus. These houses are available for rent to faculty, staff and student families.

**Disability Resource Center**

In the MGT assessment, 94.3 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 91.9 percent were satisfied with the services provided through The Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC promotes and facilitates awareness issues related to disability and access through training, partnerships, innovative programs and accommodations; supports students with disabilities through appropriate accommodations for testing and other course requirements; provides counseling and advocacy services; provides alternate formats for textbooks and other written materials, speech-to-text transcription, assistive or adaptive technology; and helps students find accessible online classes, lab assistants, interpreters, and note-takers.

The DRC also provides a faculty notification letter to students outlining the type of accommodations they might need, and annually updates and makes available the disability statement that faculty are required to include on all syllabi.

1. http://ualr.edu/disability/
2. http://ualr.edu/housing/
Through the PACE project, the DRC collaborates with students, faculty, and staff to create usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable learning environments. DRC works with faculty to ensure instruction and course design do not result in barriers to students’ inclusion or an accurate assessment of student achievement. For example, support is provided for inserting captions in online videos and for using the course management tools like Blackboard in ways that optimize usability for all students. Online tutorials are available which specifically address usability and accessibility. Students who are taking all of their courses online are able to request services online through the Disability Resource Center website. The work of the DRC makes education more accessible to all student populations across campus.

**Health Services**¹

In the MGT assessment, 95.2 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 90 percent were satisfied with the services provided through Health Services. This unit provides cost-effective, accessible health care while offering an array of medical services from treating minor illnesses and injuries to administering immunizations. The medical staff includes an Advance Practice Nurse, a Registered Nurse and a consulting physician. The mission of Health Services is to meet the immediate health care needs of the students, staff and faculty at UALR while empowering the campus community through education to become better able to care for themselves.

All office visits and consultations are free as are most medication. There is a small charge for some screenings and injections. Services offered include:

- nursing assessment, and treatment of common acute illnesses, medications and referrals when needed
- discount medical/dental resources
- nutritional counseling and percent body fat analysis
- student health insurance information, applications, and claim forms
- immunizations: MMR, Tetanus/Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and B, Flu, Meningitis
- classroom presentations on health-related topics
- Peer Education Program
- alcohol and other drug information, referrals, and risk reduction programs
- smoking cessation education and certain medications

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¹. [http://ualr.edu/health/](http://ualr.edu/health/)
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Enrollment Services

Office of Admissions\(^1\) and Financial Aid\(^2\)

The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid provides services to all UALR students while also complying with federal, state, and campus policies. The numerous responsibilities of this office include providing students with accurate information about admissions and financial aid, ensuring students are admitted appropriately with all required credentials and meeting all admission criteria, and working with students to ensure they receive all the financial aid for which they legally are eligible.

In the MGT assessment, the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid received some of the lowest ratings with 65.6 percent of student respondents being satisfied with the staff and 58.2 percent being satisfied with the services provided through the unit. This is not unusual, as mentioned in the MGT report. Both admissions and financial aid processes can be frustrating to students, especially when their expectations, through no fault of the staff, are not met. It should be noted that MGT “mystery shoppers” who visited this office all reported that their interactions with the staff were pleasant and carried out efficiently.

Mystery shoppers related negative experiences related only to the online admissions application, which currently is being revised. For the past year, faculty and staff at UALR have been working on a new online application process. The new process is currently being developed and tested.

Office of Records and Registration.\(^3\)

In the MGT assessment, 79.4 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 75.6 percent were satisfied with the services provided through the Office of Records and Registration. The responsibilities assigned to this office include ensuring that students receive accurate information about the registration process; helping students with registration problems; working with the Office of the Provost to load faculty approved courses into the University processing system (BANNER); ensuring that students who apply for graduation have completed all required coursework; and working with academic units on registration issues, making grade changes, etc.

TRIO Programs

Two of the four federal TRIO programs at UALR are administered through the Division of Educational and Student Support Services: Educational Talent Search\(^4\) and the Educational Opportunity Center\(^5\). Both programs identify and assist individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The

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1. http://ualr.edu/admissions/
2. http://ualr.edu/financialaid/
5. http://ualr.edu/eoc/
Educational Talent Search program provides academic, career, and financial counseling for high school students and encourages them to graduate and continue their education at the post-secondary institution of their choice. Talent Search also serves high school dropouts by encouraging them to re-enter the educational system, complete their degree, and continue their academic career in higher education. The services provided by the Educational Opportunity Center are similar to those of Talent Search, but are aimed at young adults over the age of 19.

Services include:

- academic, financial, career, or personal counseling including advice on entry or re-entry to secondary or post-secondary programs
- career exploration and aptitude assessment
- tutorial services
- information on post-secondary education
- exposure to college campuses
- information on student financial assistance
- assistance in completing college admissions and financial aid applications
- assistance in preparing for college entrance exams
- mentoring programs
- special activities for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders
- workshops for the families of participants

University College

Services offered through University College include Academic Advising, which is described in detail in the section on UALR advising processes; Cooperative Education; Counseling and Career Planning; and Office of Testing Services and Student Life Research.

Cooperative Education

The Cooperative Education Program (Co-op) allows qualified students the opportunity to participate in work-integrated learning. Students gain relevant work experience, academic credit, and pay while employers gain valuable employees who are enthusiastic about contributing their skills. A satisfaction survey conducted by the program found that 92 percent of its graduates indicated their experience with the Co-op gave them an advantage in the job market and 100 percent said they would advise other UALR students to participate in the Co-op.

1. http://ualr.edu/co-op/
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Office of Counseling¹ and Career Planning²

In the MGT assessment, 90.9 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 83.1 percent were satisfied with the services provided through the Office of Counseling and Career Planning. This office provides assistance in personal counseling, career and educational planning, and job searches. In the area of personal counseling, students can receive help with numerous issues including anxiety/stress management, balancing adult life roles, conflict management, crisis intervention, drug abuse and addiction, marriage problems, social isolation, and suicide.

In career planning and job searches, the office provides help with choosing a major, choosing a graduate program, how to dress for success, and interviewing skills. It also sponsors on-campus interviews and provides access to an online recruiting services and recruiter connections.

Office of Testing Services and Student Life Research³

In the MGT assessment, 89 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff and 85.5 percent were satisfied with the services provided through the Office of Testing Services and Student Life Research (Testing Services). This office administers exams for the purpose of admissions, class placement, course credit, graduation competency, licensing, credentialing, and professional certification. Through the office, students can get information on all credit-by-examination programs accepted at UALR and register to take the exams.

Testing Services also makes class presentations on ways to avoid test anxiety, and provides information on test-taking strategies. It offers non-cognitive assessment, conducts new student profile data collection and reporting, and coordinates the administration of national assessment studies such as the National Survey of Student Engagement, Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, and other institutional research.

In addition to participating in University-wide evaluations such as the MGT survey, the Division of Educational and Student Services conducts ongoing assessment. This reflects the division’s commitment to improving support and academic services that complement and enhance student learning. Each of the departments within the areas of Student Development, Enrollment Planning, and University College submit five-year assessment plans that provide information on the methodology used to assess goals and objectives on an annual basis. Unit assessment components with a timeline and status updates measure the outcomes, monitor progress, and permit continuous improvement. Data are available, and accumulated descriptions can be obtained on the website for each unit. A selection of assessment data and outcomes that support decisions made about effective services and student learning is available online.⁴

3d Example of Evidence
The organization regularly assesses the effectiveness of its learning resources to support learning and teaching.

4a Example of Evidence
The organization and its units use scholarship and research to stimulate organizational and educational improvements.

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¹ http://ualr.edu/personalcounseling/
² http://ualr.edu/careerservices/
³ http://ualr.edu/testing/
⁴ http://ualr.edu/administration/vcess/index.php/home/assessment/
Academic Advising Processes

Undergraduate Advising

One of the key divisions of University College is the Office of Academic Advising.1 UALR policy requires all students to be advised every semester and enforces this requirement with an advising hold. Undergraduate students who have not declared a major and are not being advised through the Collegiate Success Program, described later, are advised by trained, professional staff in Academic Advising. These advisors help students assess and clarify their educational, career, and life goals by examining personalized interests and abilities.

They also assist students by monitoring academic progress, helping with course selection based upon academic preparedness, educating students about the nature of college learning, and identifying academic and social support venues that connect the curricular and co-curricular collegiate culture. The office continually assists and clarifies optimum course sequences in order to help students plan their degree completion on a full- or part-time basis.

In the MGT assessment, 82.1 percent of student respondents were satisfied with the staff while only 73.4 percent were satisfied with the services provided through Academic Advising. The report speculates that this is due to the fact that the processes at UALR for articulating transfer credit have not been efficient, and students have been frustrated with the bureaucracy involved. This is the same conclusion reached by UALR faculty and staff in relation to the Retention Summit Initiatives discussed subsequently in this chapter. These findings led to the creation of the Office of Transfer Student Services2. With transfer articulation no longer a responsibility of the Office of Academic Advising, student satisfaction of the staff and services should improve.

After undergraduate students choose a major, they are advised within the structures that exist in their college and academic program. These vary from college to college. It is important to note that the MGT study found

- 94.7 percent of new freshmen were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of their faculty advisor
- 92 percent of new freshmen were satisfied with the service provided by their faculty advisor
- 93.6 percent of new transfer students were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of their faculty advisor
- 79 percent of new transfer students were satisfied with the services provided by their faculty advisor (again, this finding probably was affected by problems with articulating transfer credit)
- 90.8 percent of returning students were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of their faculty advisor
- 84.8 percent of returning students were satisfied with the service provided by their faculty advisor

3c Example of Evidence
Advising systems focus on student learning, including the mastery of skills required for academic success.

1. http://ualr.edu/advising/
2. http://ualr.edu/transfer/
Two examples of how different colleges arrange their advising structures are found in the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT) and the College of Business (COB). Because students in EIT follow a structured curriculum beginning in their freshman year, College faculty and advising staff cultivate a personal relationship with students while they are still in high school through active recruitment activities. For example, several times a year, high school students and their parents are invited to campus where they meet with student ambassadors, current majors in the College, as well as faculty advisors. Once a student comes to UALR as a major in EIT, he or she is encouraged to live in East Hall, where the College has dedicated space, so he or she may participate more fully in a community of learning. All EIT majors receive intrusive advising focused on helping the student be successful.

In contrast, COB generally does not advise students until they have completed their general education core courses. Once students are admitted to a COB program, professional advising includes help with courses and professional development workshops. The College also offers students numerous opportunities to make connections with employers through networking, recruiting, and placement events.

Graduate Advising

Graduate students are advised within their programs of study. Since students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to continue their studies, academic problems are identified and addressed early. An example is the advising process in the School of Social Work located in the College of Professional Studies (CPS). Students applying to the program must complete a personal statement which asks applicants to address specific issues. If the personal statement indicates that the applicant needs to improve his or her writing skills, the advisor is notified and then discusses the writing skills resources available to students, such as the University Writing Center. Advisors pay close attention to the academic progress of students, recommending additional support services as needed. The School also provides students with a “How to Thrive in Grad School” document that is available on the website.

In the MGT study

• 95.1 of new graduate students were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of their faculty advisor
• 91.5 percent of new graduate students were satisfied with the service provided by their faculty advisor
• 90.7 of all graduate students were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of their faculty advisor
• 84.8 percent of all graduate students were satisfied with the service provided by their faculty advisor

1. http://technologize.ualr.edu/
2. http://ualr.edu/cob/
3. http://ualr.edu/cps/
Resources to Support Learning

UALR has a wide variety of resources across the general campus to support academic learning. These resources include the various libraries and labs/centers that enhance the learning environment.

Ottenheimer Library

The mission of the Ottenheimer Library⁷ is to “enrich and support the University’s educational and research mission by sharing its expertise, fostering intellectual development, and providing academic excellence.” To this end, the Library offers a variety of informational resources and services to the students, faculty and staff of the University and to the public.

Library users have access to more than 513,000 books and other materials available online as well as in media such as print, microform, video and audiotape, CD and DVD. The Library is a depository for federal and state government publications in all formats. It is the state’s only repository for documents published in the European Union.

The Archives and Special Collections Department houses the Library’s non-circulating and rare book collections and the historical records of UALR and its predecessors, Little Rock University and Little Rock Junior College. The Library’s collection of Arkansas-related materials, including the papers of five Arkansas governors, is housed in downtown Little Rock at the Arkansas Studies Institute, a joint venture of UALR and the Central Arkansas Library System.

The Library subscribes to over 49,000 print and online journals and over 31,000 electronic books and electronic reference sources. The Articles & Databases link on the Library’s website makes these resources available via an Internet connection to UALR students, faculty, and staff virtually anywhere in the world.

Materials not held by Ottenheimer are obtained through Interlibrary Loans. The Library is a member of several regional and national consortia that allow reciprocal borrowing privileges and the sharing of materials through mail, facsimile and Internet transmission, and uses a document delivery service for Arkansas’s libraries.

The Library building is open 87 hours a week when classes are in session and offers extended hours during final exams. There is space for individual and group study and a student computer lab, which is maintained by Computing Services. The Library also is open to the public; residents of Central Arkansas may use databases and online resources in the Library and check out any of the circulating materials.

The Library maintains an active relationship with the campus. Every academic department has a library liaison—a reference staff member—who is available to answer questions, help with resource acquisition, and provide training on the use of collections, electronic resources, and the online catalog. Many degree programs incorporate this training into their

3c Example of Evidence
The organization employs, when appropriate, new technologies that enhance effective learning environments for students.

3d Example of Evidence
The organization ensures access to the resources (e.g., research laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites) necessary to support learning and teaching.

3d Example of Evidence
The organization regularly assesses the effectiveness of its learning resources to support learning and teaching.

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1. http://library.ualr.edu/
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student orientation sessions. The Library also regularly engages the University community in beta-testing online databases and directories, and solicits feedback on the effectiveness of materials.

In the MGT Customer Satisfaction Survey, 84.8 percent of respondents were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of the Ottenheimer Library staff and 84.7 percent were satisfied with its services. The Library also assesses its services and resources to further their effectiveness. Staff participate in an annual strategic planning retreat and have developed a strategic plan that evaluates service, acquisition, staff/faculty training, and technology.1

In July 2009, the Library was one of only twelve university libraries nationwide to present at the LibQUAL+(R) Share Fair, held in conjunction with the American Library Association’s Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois. This science-fair style gathering features 12 brief presentations/poster sessions by current and past LibQUAL+(R) survey participants highlighting examples of quantitative and qualitative analysis available from survey results and marketing ideas. The presentation, titled “You Asked For It/You Got It! A Chronology of Assessment Activities at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock,” was authored by Ms. Donna Rose, Head of Cataloging.

William H. Bowen School of Law Library2

The UALR William H. Bowen School of Law/Pulaski County Law Library is the major law library in Central Arkansas. It contains over 310,000 volumes and volume equivalents, as well as over 3,000 audio/video discs and tapes. The Law Library is a depository for federal and state government publications. In addition, the Law Library subscribes to a variety of online databases and indexes which provide access to well over 35,000 journals, electronic books and other publications. These are accessible through the library’s website and through the library’s online catalog.3 These electronic resources are available to everyone in the Law School building. In addition, Law School faculty and staff have off-campus access to these electronic resources.

The Law Library’s special collection includes archival material such as the Arkansas Territorial Briefs (1809–1836), Arkansas Appellate Records and Briefs (1837–1920), the W. Harold Flowers Law Society materials, the Arkansas Women Lawyer’s Association materials, and small personal collections of people related to the Law School.

Materials not held by the Law Library are obtained through Interlibrary Loans. The Law Library is a member of several regional and national consortia that allow reciprocal borrowing privileges and the sharing of materials through mail, facsimile and Internet transmission, and uses a document delivery service for Arkansas’s libraries.

1. http://library.ualr.edu/whatsnew/retreat/
The Law Library occupies 52,000 square feet of space located on four floors of the Law School building. It has sufficient shelving for an estimated ten years of growth at current levels. It contains seating for 365 people, nine group study rooms, 42 two-person closed carrels, and two computer labs. It is open 100 hours per week when classes are in session, with extended hours during final exams. The reference desk is staffed 68 hours per week.

The Director of the Law Library is the Associate Dean for Information and Technology Services as well as a member of the Law School faculty. She teaches legal research to all first-year law students in a two-semester course. The Law Library has five additional full-time librarians, all of whom are tenured as Law Library faculty members. Three of the librarians in addition to the director have law degrees, as well as a Master’s of Library Science degree held by all librarians. There are also six other full-time professionals in the library, three of whom serve as the Law School computer support staff, as well as five full-time paraprofessionals.

The Law Library is committed to providing resources and services valued by users. To that end, the Law Library gathers feedback from faculty members and students. Faculty members were interviewed individually by the Director. As part of a larger Law School survey, students were surveyed electronically about the library. In addition, the Law Library maintains a suggestion box located in the Main Reading Room as well as an online suggestion box available from the Law Library’s website. Each summer, the librarians attend a one-day retreat to engage in strategic planning, including specific goals for the coming year. As part of their annual review process, the librarians identify new annual goals for their specific areas and describe how goals were met for the preceding year.

The Law Library holds dual status as both the Law School and the Pulaski County Law Library. As such, it is funded by the Law School and by a portion of the Administration of Justice funds dedicated to county law libraries. The Law Library’s collection is enriched by this status since county funds are used to purchase legal materials, primarily practitioner-oriented material. These funds are never used to pay salaries or overhead.

Mathematics Lab Mathematics Assistance Center I (MAC I)\(^1\)

MAC I, provided through the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, is for students enrolled in College Algebra and above, Chemistry, and Physics. MAC I is located in Dickinson Hall Room 600, and provides free tutoring to students. MAC I also helps students in Business Calculus, Applied Calculus I and Applied Calculus II, College Geometry, Probability, Advanced Calculus I and 2, and Discrete Math on DVD. TI-84 graphing calculators may be rented for the session or semester from MAC I for $40. Students may check out a free “How to use the TI 82/83 Graphing Calculator” videotape and booklet.

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/mathematics/index.php/mathlab/
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Mathematics Lab (MAC II)\(^1\)

Mac II is for students enrolled in the developmental courses Elementary Algebra and Intermediate Algebra. Staffed with student tutors, the MAC II offers day, night, and weekend hours for assistance. All sections of Elementary and Intermediate Algebra at UALR are using the web-based system called ALEKS to ensure students are prepared for college-credit mathematics courses requiring basic algebraic skills. ALEKS is an assessment and learning system using adaptive questioning to individually tailor a student’s learning to achieve an appropriate level of mastery of algebraic skills necessary for College Algebra or College Math. Students can use the computers in MAC II to do coursework and receive one-on-one tutoring.

Assessment occurs through a variety of methods. Lab usage is tracked numerically and a suggestion box is available to users. A customer satisfaction survey was instituted in Fall 2009. Assessment data indicates UALR students are very happy with the services the labs provide. Use of the lab increased by 57 percent from Fall 2008 to Fall 2009. Additionally, from Fall 2008 to Spring 2009, use of the labs increased by 6 percent, despite an enrollment drop from fall to spring.

University Writing Center (UWC) and Online Writing Lab (OWL)\(^2\)

The University Writing Center (UWC), located at the center of campus, is dedicated to helping writers with different abilities in all academic programs improve their writing skills. The UWC emphasizes the process of writing and provides a comfortable place to write, to receive training, to work with writers, and to use tools and resources in a community environment. It nurtures writers individually through encouragement, development, and growth in the pursuit of excellence in rhetoric and composition. The UWC has approximately 20 computers available for students to use as they write and edit their papers. They are also given instruction on how to use a computer.

The UWC is one of the three writing centers in the nation to be staffed entirely by student interns who in turn receive course credit for their work. Interns attend weekly one-hour training sessions each Monday, reviewing best practices for conducting writing center conferences and dealing with individual differences in writers. They also make presentations at the weekly meetings, participate in reading and writing activities which enhance their learning experiences, and read in the field.

The effectiveness of the UWC is assessed several ways. Client response forms are collected periodically throughout the semester to assess students’ responses to services, and information is collected at the end of each semester to determine interviews and evaluations with each Intern. During the meeting, the intern submits materials reviewing his or her experiences, identifying skills that developed during the semester, as well as personal areas for further development. The exit interview form and

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2. http://ualr.edu/owl/
evaluation form data is collected each semester and reviewed for future training use. All end-of-semester records are compiled and stored for future reference. Ideas gathered from clients and interns during evaluation processes help shape the content of the training meetings for the next semester.

Evaluation, review, and accountability are vital to meeting the needs of an emerging student population, and over the years, the UWC has responded to changing student needs by expanding the training to include business concepts necessary for working with multiple-needs customers and creating a businesslike work environment. Although the primary focus of the UWC is UALR students and faculty, occasionally clients come from local high schools, the School of Law, and the Little Rock community.

The Online Writing Lab (OWL) was developed for online students and other UALR community members who want writing help, but who might not be able to come to the UWC during regular business hours. OWL provides students with quality feedback and helps solve problems they have with their writing. The online writing center, usually staffed by graduate assistants, has worked with clients as far away as China and Australia.

**Communication Skill Center (CSC)**

The Communication Skill Center (CSC) helps the campus with public speaking skills. At CSC, students receive help with a variety of communication-related skills, such as managing anxiety, presentation organization, effective delivery, and appropriate presentational aids. The CSC is a friendly environment located in SPCH 201. Graduate assistants are responsible for managing the CSC and supervise undergraduate interns recommended by Speech Communication faculty who have undergone thorough training and participated in weekly staff meetings. The interns earn academic credit for the completion of a reflective portfolio and weekly service in the CSC.

CSC services are evaluated several ways. Faculty and staff keep track of how many people visit the CSC as well as the number of people who use the center for public speaking help and for other communication-based information/support. The CSC utilizes “secret shoppers” who provide written evaluations of their experiences—the good and the not so good. Faculty also do presentations/workshops on campus regularly for departments. Those presentations are evaluated to help improve subsequent workshops. These data are used in the weekly meetings that the director of the center has with interns and graduate assistants. Positive and negative feedback helps interns improve and grow and helps ensure the quality of the services provided by CSC.

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Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization

Academic Support for Specific Groups of Students

In addition to resources designed to meet the needs of the general student population at UALR, the University offers several unique programs and resources that serve diverse groups of students and classroom facilities designed to provide specific learning environments.

Academic Success Center

The Academic Success Center\(^1\) is designed to help students who are underprepared or who are from traditionally underrepresented groups succeed in college. In addition to the Collegiate Success Program, which is described under the Retention Summit Initiatives section, the Academic Success Center includes the following resource services and programs:

- **Student Support Services.** The first of two federally funded TRIO programs administered by ASC, Student Support Services offers tutoring, academic skills development, and guidance and counseling, with an emphasis on development strategies for succeeding in college. Math assistance is offered through tutoring and non-credit math prep courses. All services are free and available to any student who lacks adequate preparation and qualifies under federal guidelines. Grant funds and scholarships are available.

- **Ronald E. McNair Program.** The second federally funded TRIO program is designed to prepare students who are underrepresented in graduate education for doctoral study. The program provides skill building seminars, research and mentorship, and graduate school admission assistance. At UALR, 22 Elite Scholars, who are low-income or first generation college students, are chosen each year to participate in this enriching Summer Internship Program.

- **Instruction and Test Preparation.** The Academic Success Center offers courses in reading and study skills that are open to all students. Test preparation materials are available to help students prepare for such tests as the ACT, SAT, PRAXIS, and the GRE.

Until 2007, the various programs that make up the Academic Success Center were separate entities spread across the campus. In an effort to increase the efficacy of services and provide additional support, these programs were brought together in one location under a director who reports to the Budget Director and Chief of Staff in the Office of the Chancellor.

Graduate School Support

At the graduate level, in addition to support offered through academic programs and by advisors, graduate students are supported by the Graduate School office and the Graduate Student Association\(^2\) (GSA). GSA promotes the advancement of quality and integrity in the graduate education experience. It also represents graduate students through

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/academicsuccess/
\(^2\) http://ualr.edu/gsa/
formal communication channels within the university structure and through informal networks to promote professional development. It is affiliated nationally with the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students.

**Donaghey Scholars Program**

The Donaghey Scholars Program\(^1\) is a University-wide honors program with a unique, comprehensive, and highly structured curriculum. It features an interdisciplinary core of team-taught, seminar-format courses that replaces UALR’s general education core. These core courses emphasize primary texts, critical thinking, active debate, and writing.

The Donaghey Scholars Program is one of only a handful of honors programs in the United States that requires and subsidizes its students to study abroad to assist them in developing competence in a foreign language. Donaghey Scholars also take seminars on special topics and complete a final project.

All Donaghey Scholars receive a UALR academic scholarship that covers tuition and fees, provides a stipend, and gives support for study abroad. The Scholars’ financial aid is underwritten by the Donaghey Foundation, whose support of the Scholars Program each year equals the income from an endowment of approximately $6 million.

The faculty of the Donaghey Scholars Program are drawn from across campus and are distinguished for their scholarly and creative productivity, as well as the energy and enthusiasm they bring to the Scholars classroom. Among them are scholar-teachers who have won University-wide awards for research, teaching, and public service.

The students are diverse, representing a mix of backgrounds, interests, and pursuits, and include traditional students, non-traditional, and international students. Upon graduation, many have entered directly into successful careers, while others have thrived at graduate and professional schools such as Harvard, Yale, Rice, Oxford, Vanderbilt, Stanford, Ohio State University, Louisiana State University, UALR, Cornell and the Universities of Pennsylvania, Texas, Michigan, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Virginia, Missouri.

Among graduates is a clerk for a federal appellate judge, several winners of Rotary scholarships, two Goldwater Scholars, a Fulbright Scholar, a Mellon Fellow, a National Science Foundation Fellow, a Truman Scholar, a Mitchell Scholar, and a Rhodes Scholar. Nearly half of the Arkansas finalists for the Truman Scholarship in recent years have been Donaghey Scholars, and of the Scholars who have applied for medical school, over 90 percent have been admitted.

The program was reviewed by faculty from honors programs belonging to the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) in Spring 2009. The resulting External Review Status Report included the following comments:

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1. [http://ualr.edu/donagheyscholars/](http://ualr.edu/donagheyscholars/)
Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization

The curriculum [of the Donaghey Scholars Program] is exceptional and outstanding.

We agree that the program is highly regarded throughout the University and beyond; the program has earned this high regard.

We were impressed with the high quality and dedication of faculty teaching in the program.

Fisher Fellows Life Skills Program

Former UALR basketball standout Derek Fisher, a member of the Los Angeles Lakers, pledged $700,000 to UALR in 2005 towards the construction of the Jack Stephens Center auxiliary gym, since named in his honor, and the establishment of the Fisher Fellows Life Skills program—a mentoring series for Trojan student-athletes.

As part of the Fisher Fellows Life Skills program, http://www.ualrtrojans.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=7400&ATCLID=676586 the UALR Department of Athletics welcomes three to four guest speakers per year to discuss various topics with the Trojan student-athletes. The program aims to help guide Trojan players through the various issues facing them as student-athletes, including mental health, nutrition, managing credit, goal setting, career choices, substance abuse, and public service. The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee assists in choosing the subject matter for each meeting. Additionally, the Fisher Fellows program sponsors a senior appreciation ceremony at the end of the year in which all graduating seniors are presented commemorative watches in thanks for their contributions to UALR athletics.

University Science Scholars Program

Another example of a program designed to meet the diverse needs of students is the University Science Scholars Program, http://ualr.edu/csam/ussp/ funded through a five-year National Science Foundation grant of $579,175. Directed by Dr. Janet Lanza in the Biology Department and Dr. Jim Winter in the Graduate Institute of Technology, this program provides scholarship monies and enrichment activities to talented students majoring in biology, chemistry, and geology who do not have the financial resources to attend college.

After an initial year of planning, 18 students were accepted into the program in Fall 2008. Required components include

- a first-year experience course titled “Science Skills” specifically designed to give students the skills that will benefit them in their science courses, and their college career
- co-enrollment of students in the same sections of English composition, biology or chemistry, algebra or calculus, and speech to enhance the students’ connections with both their peers and faculty
- individual and intensive advising of each student

Fisher: Life skills matter more than athletic ability in the end

BY JEFFREY SLATTON
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

A busy day ended with Derek Fisher passing out life lessons to UALR's student athletes.

Fisher, the former UALR point guard who will begin his 11th NBA season when training camp for the Utah Jazz opens next week, was in Little Rock Wednesday for a day that began with meetings and ended with a speech to UALR's athletic community at the Jack Stephens Center. He talked to the student athletes about everything from going to class and studying to attempting to stay out of debt.

"If you open up the dictionary for a definition of 'Respect The Game,' you'd see a picture of Derek Fisher," UALR Athletic Director Chris Peterson said as he introduced Fisher Wednesday night.

"The skills that you develop in life will carry you so much farther than any athletic skill you master," said Fisher, who played at UALR from 1992 to 1996.

"I got drafted in June of 1996. I had probably tens of thousands of dollars of debt from my first through my fourth year. Probably half of my first check, I spent paying on debt from four or five years ago. Fortunately, I could afford it. Everyone won't be able to just pay that off."

Future presentations will include a nutritionist along with former NFL tight end Keith Jackson.

An exhausted Fisher wrapped up the day mingling with the athletes.

"It was really just an action-packed day. It was all positive though," Fisher said. "[Fisher Fellows] has been in the works for some time and I'm really excited. I think the program's going to be great."
• information seminars on current issues in science
• field trips to the UAMS Biochemistry Department and UALR’s Nanotechnology Center
• multiple social activities designed to foster group camaraderie (e.g., a cake to celebrate Charles Darwin’s birthday, an outdoor lunch to celebrate Earth Day, etc.)

### Instructional Classrooms and Facilities

The physical learning environment at UALR is enhanced by smart classrooms and specialized labs. Smart classroom across campus are equipped with data/video projectors and instructor stations that allow teachers to incorporate a wide variety of materials into lectures and discussions. They also provide students with a means for learning how to use presentational technology in their own projects. UALR provides wireless access to the Internet in all of its classroom buildings, as well as across campus, so that both instructors and students may access information within the classroom setting. Many instructors also integrate the use of Blackboard, the University’s online course management software, with the physical classroom experience.

### Instructional Facilities

Specialized instructional facilities are used in nearly every department on campus from applied arts to virtual reality. These spaces run the gamut from a simple computer lab with discipline-specific software to ultra-sophisticated facilities such as the virtual reality laboratory. The following are a few examples of the facilities available to support effective teaching and student learning.

#### Virtual Reality Center (VRC)

One of only a few in the United States, the VRC includes a three-walled “cave” where students and faculty can interact within a three-dimensional virtual environment. This facility gives students the opportunity to experience the latest computing innovations in 3-D and 4-D. An adjacent laboratory allows students and faculty to develop virtual reality programs and test them in the VRC’s immersive environment.

During the 3-D Summer Art Design program, high school students spend two weeks developing 3-D art exhibits, animations, and virtual galleries. The animations can be played in the VRC in an immersive manner, which requires six movies to be played synchronously on the three walls of the “cave.”

#### EIT Senior Projects Research Laboratory

This modern laboratory, with floor space of little over 1,000 square feet, has been assigned for faculty research and senior projects in ECET 4370—Senior Design Project, a required capstone course in the Bachelor of Applied Technology in Industrial Computing. The laboratory was used in 2008 for research in the area of radar communication. The laboratory is commonly used by faculty for externally funded research projects.
Language Resource Center (LRC)

The LRC is a multimedia lab designed for second language study. Each of its 24 stations provides access to web or archived language resources as well as language learning software. The LRC serves both as an open lab and as a classroom facility that can be reserved by instructors. Tutors are available to aid students.

Structural Testing Laboratory (STL)

The STL conducts long beam testing in support of Department of Construction Management’s required senior design course using the MTS Beam Testing machine. The 100-ton testing facility has been utilized for timber, steel and concrete beam testing by students in construction classes for the past 25 years. This testing machine performs static and cyclic load tests for large full-scale beams under service loadings. Students for load conditions of several million-load repetitions have performed many tests to failure. This affords the Construction Management program at UALR the capability for structural building testing equal to that available to students only in the larger research universities in the United States.

Ceramics Studio

The studio is equipped with sixteen potter’s wheels, a slab roller, plaster wedging tables, a bench grinder, a hand grinder and a wide variety of hand tools. The clay and glaze mixing area provides a modern glaze lab with ventilation, triple-beam scales, and spray booth. Students also learn to use a variety of kilns, including gas, electric, raku, and a soda/salt kiln.

Non-linear Editing and Media Production Lab

Used by the School of Mass Communication, this 16-station instructional lab features professional state-of-the-art video editing software, graphic design software, and multimedia scripting software.

Thermal Sciences Laboratory

This laboratory has gas and solid fuel Calorimeters used in conduction, convection, and radiation heat transfer experiments in addition to an air-conditioning simulator. The laboratory has mechanical-heat equivalent devices to demonstrate energy balance, and is used in conjunction with the fluid power and thermal science courses.

Sculpture Facility

The facility has one of the best foundries in the state with the ability to use ceramic shell, investment, and bonded sand methods. The indoor space has 1,500 square feet and 14’ ceilings, and is set up with 40 large lockable storage spaces, eight large work tables, ten portable work stations. All woodworking equipment is set-up on a gated dust collection system. The wax-working and mold-working area has a 18’ square swing vent hood and 6’ long hood vent.
The outdoor space has 1,400 square feet, has ten’ brick walls and is covered with a metal roof. The facility is set up with 2’ high expanded metal at the top of the walls with natural draft hooded ventilation for all kilns plus an attic fan for constant air movement.

**Robotics Lab**

The Robotics Laboratory is used to conduct research in the areas of autonomous robots, instrumentation, machine learning, and embedded systems. The laboratory has two Pioneer AT robots, one Pioneer 2, one Pioneer 3 robot and numerous robots that were designed in-house and includes machining equipment (drill press, belt sander, band saw, circular saw, and router) and electronics equipment (digital oscilloscopes, frequency generators, FPGA programming and simulation software, embedded system programming, and debugging software and hardware).

**Theatre and Dance Studios**

The Theatre Arts and Dance Department is quickly becoming a leader in innovative theatre. With two theater spaces and two dance studios, the program offers many opportunities for students to explore all aspects of live entertainment and introduces them to many new technical developments in the trade such as intelligent lighting systems and on-site scene and costume construction.

**Geophysics Laboratory**

The Geophysics Laboratory supports research projects for faculty members, graduate students, undergraduate students, and public school science teachers who participate in summer research. It provides the necessary tools to conduct solid earth research, exploration geophysics, near surface geophysics, seismology, and environmental projects. The laboratory has comprehensive Ground Penetrating Radar systems with multiple antennas, total field magnetometer, an advanced geoelectricity measurement system, a survey grade GPS system, and a number of data acquisition and application software and computational tools. Currently, the laboratory supports the research of five PhD students and two faculty members. The estimated cost of the laboratory is $300,000 and the annual maintenance cost is about $10,000.

**Clinical Sites**

In Fall 2008, 23 different junior- and senior-level internship or field experience courses were offered across 16 degree programs, and 12 graduate internship courses were offered or required in eight master’s programs. Many of these require a clinical practice site, some of which are on campus while others are provided through partnerships with community clinical settings. A few examples of both are as follows:
Speech and Hearing Clinic

The clinic provides a full range of speech and hearing services to individuals with communication disorders. All services at the clinic are provided by graduate students and senior-level undergraduate students under the direct supervision of faculty in the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, a program shared by UALR and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS).

Students learn clinical skills in a facility equipped with an impressive array of diagnostic and treatment equipment. They learn how to use computerized fitting and adjusting instruments for hearing aids, diagnostic equipment for speech and hearing defects, and computerized analyses of speech and hearing.

Simulated Hospital Unit (SHU)

This unit includes high-fidelity and mid-fidelity human simulators that enable nursing students to rotate through simulated patient care areas/scenarios as a component of their clinical rotations. Students provide patient care and are challenged to solve complex health scenarios as part of course requirements.

Off-campus Nursing Practicums

In addition to their on-campus laboratory experiences, nursing students are required to complete a practicum in a community clinical setting. The nursing program at UALR offers a Practical Nurse to Registered Nurse fast-track transition program through a partnership with the St. Vincent Health System. Students in this program complete their clinical practicum at St. Vincent Doctors Hospital.

Social Work Internships Sites

Each year, the School of Social Work has approximately 200 graduate and 25 undergraduate students in internships throughout Central Arkansas. Settings for internships include a variety of public, nonprofit, and for-profit human and community service organizations in areas such as health and mental health care, child welfare, education, aging services, hospice care, substance abuse services, services to people with disabilities, and public policy advocacy.

UALR offers a broad range of support services and learning environments to meet the needs of its diverse student body. All of these enhance student learning and effective teaching, create a vibrant educational environment, and prepare students to succeed in their professional lives and become life-long learners.
Ensuring the Quality of Academic Resources

UALR Fast Forward commits the University to ensuring the quality of its academic services and resources. Goal 1 states, “UALR will provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, diverse world of the 21st Century.” Under this goal is Objective 1: “The University will ensure the quality of its educational programs,” which has the following identified strategy:

The University will develop a set of performance measures, appropriate to a metropolitan university, that provide the basis for quality assurance and quality improvement.

In addition, Goal 2 states, “UALR will provide a student-centered educational environment.” Under this goal is Objective 3: “The University will implement research-based strategies for increasing persistence (retention) and graduation rates of UALR undergraduate students by 20 percent in five years.”

Significant resources have been allocated to assess and improve academic resources. One example of this is the 2007 Retention Summit.

2007 Retention Summit

At the beginning of Fall 2007, Chancellor Anderson asked Provost Belcher, and Vice Chancellor Donaldson to review the findings of institutional assessment activities conducted in the early 2000’s. They were tasked to identify retention strategies of particular promise for the University in its efforts to improve retention performance and, as such, support student learning.


As a result of their review, Drs. Belcher and Donaldson identified six retention strategies that had been recommended in every study as well as the strategic planning process. These were:

- mandatory freshman orientation
- comprehensive services for students requiring developmental courses
- improved advising processes
- early declaration of major
- required first-year experience course for all freshmen and freshman-transfer students
- mandatory of mid-term grades for all freshman and sophomore courses
These strategies, presented to the faculty and staff at the Retention Summit in December 2007, facilitate early connections between students and faculty, provide support services and early warning measures to increase academic success, and create a more seamless transition for transfer students.

A task force comprised of faculty, staff, administrators, and in some cases students was formed to design and implement each of the initiatives. After some discussion, the initiatives targeting improved advising and early declaration of major were merged due to the overlap between them. What follows is a discussion of the progress made on the initiatives.

**Mandatory Freshman Orientation**

This initiative was the first to be fully implemented. The task force, chaired by Vice Chancellor Donaldson, included faculty and staff who worked to accomplish two goals: first, to increase access to orientation sessions to meet the needs of a diverse population of students and second, to increase the participation of academic units in a meaningful way. Both goals were accomplished.

There are now three freshman orientation sessions offered each summer. Orientation allows students and their parents or significant other to spend the day at UALR and is designed to assist in the student’s transition to university life. Students learn about available campus resources and services, receive a packet of campus publications and materials, and tour the campus to locate classrooms and offices before classes begin. An effort is made to educate the students about what is expected of them as a student through meetings with staff, faculty, and student peer mentors. Students unable to attend the on-campus orientation have the option of completing it online.

Faculty in colleges are actively participating and have developed creative ways to connect with students. One example is the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS). During the spring semester, the College forms an orientation session planning committee comprised of both faculty and professional staff in the dean’s office. Faculty recruit alumni and current majors to be student ambassadors who attend each orientation session and talk with students and their parents and/or significant others about the College.
Prospective students at an orientation session.

During the orientation session, there is a brief welcome from the Associate Dean, who discusses how students declare a major and encourages students to meet with faculty in their areas of interest as soon as possible. Then there are ice-breakers (for example, AHSS Jeopardy! has been popular) which help students feel less anxious. When students and parents are feeling more relaxed, the Assistant Dean introduces faculty and student ambassadors from each department who gather students into groups by area of interest. Finally, an informal tour of department labs, student lounges, multi-media classrooms, galleries, and performance spaces help students become familiar with the resources available to them.

Comprehensive Services for Students Requiring Developmental Courses

In Spring 2008, Faculty Senate passed legislation requiring students to complete their developmental coursework within their first 42 hours of matriculation and reaffirmed existing policy limiting the number of times students could attempt developmental courses at UALR to twice. This legislation laid the groundwork for establishing the Collegiate Success Program1 (CSP) through the Academic Success Center2 which was described previously.

CSP targets freshmen who need to complete developmental coursework in Reading and English. Through CSP, academically at-risk students receive one-on-one intrusive academic advising services. They also become engaged in a small learning community, which enhances academic skills and promotes community building activities. All CSP students are required to sign a contract and participate in the program for one year (two consecutive fall and spring semesters).

2. http://ualr.edu/academicsuccess/
CSP staff began their ongoing assessment of program effectiveness immediately. At the end of the Fall 2008 semester, they examined student retention rate and GPA. The retention rate of the students in the program was 78 percent compared to an overall freshman retention rate of 85 percent. This is an impressive gain. Prior to Fall 2008, the University’s 11-year average of retaining freshmen from fall to spring was 62.7 percent. The 263 students in CSP represented 42 percent of the 620 freshmen entering UALR that fall. It is apparent that the high retention rate of the program positively affected the overall retention rate.

At the end of the semester, 55 percent of the students in CPS had a GPA between 3.0 and 4.0, and 17 percent were between 2.0 and 3.0. Only 20 percent were on academic probation. The progress of these students, as well as future students participating in CPS, will be tracked to see if gains made while in the program persist. However, considering these are the most academically at-risk students at UALR, the retention rate coupled with strong GPAs indicate that the program is improving retention rates and enhancing learning opportunities.

Lacking basics, some get extra help in college

BY CAROLYNE PARK
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Students in Nancy Wood’s remedial reading class at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock begin each semester reading the novel The Cay. Theodore Taylor’s book for preteens tells of an 11-year-old white boy stranded on a small island with a black West Indian man.

It will be the first book many of the students ever read, Wood said. “This is a young adult novel, and I make no apologies for this,” she told students on the first day of class Tuesday. “I’m not trying to insult you by reading this.”

The 144-page book is well-written and addresses racism, a subject that stimulates class discussion, said Wood, who has taught remedial reading at UALR for 19 years. Piquing students’ interest is key. Thousands of Arkansas college students are taking non-credit math, reading and English courses this fall. Called various names — remedial, developmental or transitional — the courses are designed to close the gap between what students learned in high school and what they need to know for college.

See BASICS, Page 3B

Basics

Continued from Page 1B

The latest figures from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education show 52.6 percent, or 9,913 students, took at least one remedial class in fall 2006 because of their low scores on college entrance exams.

That’s down from 54.8 percent in 2005, but education officials said the number will grow as the number of Arkansans seeking a college degree grows.

The state is working to increase its number of college graduates. Just 19 percent of adults over age 25 in Arkansas hold a bachelor’s degree, ranking ahead of only West Virginia.

*As Arkansas reaches out to a broader cross section of the population, many of whom are the first

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<th>Institution Public Four-Year</th>
<th>MATHEMATICS Fall 2006</th>
<th>ENGLISH Fall 2006</th>
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SOURCE: Arkansas Department of Higher Education

* First-time entering students seeking an associate or baccalaureate degree.
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Improved Advising and Early Declaration of Major

These initiatives were combined since they are closely related. The task force formed met during the spring and summer of 2008, and, based on the fact that 70 percent of UALR students have transfer credit, recommended that the first step be to establish a transfer office to effectively and consistently articulate transfer credit. This would leave professional staff and faculty free to focus on advising students on core and major requirements and providing academic and professional mentoring. In April 2009, the Office of Transfer Student Services was established with a director and an administrative assistant. In August, two transfer specialist positions were added. Designed to expedite the articulation of core transfer credit, troubleshoot for faculty and staff on core transfer issues, and help inform policy change that will reduce barriers for students with core transfer credit, the Office of Transfer Student Services will ease the transition to UALR for a significant portion of the student population.

Although early declaration of a major was one of the initial recommendations of the review, it was ultimately decided that such a requirement was unenforceable. Rather, advisors in University College, will focus on helping undeclared students explore their personal and professional interests and connect with faculty advisors.

Required First-year Experience Course for all Freshman and Freshman-transfer Students

Much work was accomplished by the task force assigned to this initiative during the 2008-2009 academic year, and a proposal was created that outlined required criteria for the course titled First Year Colloquium. These criteria include the student learning objectives and a service-learning component. Unfortunately, the resources needed to offer enough sections to accommodate all eligible students were not available for the upcoming 2009-2010 academic year. Therefore, this course will not be required this fall. However, the task force is exploring ways to reduce the cost of providing the course; other options will be explored by the Undergraduate Council during Fall 2009.

Posting Mid-term Grades in all 1000- and 2000-level Courses

The task force behind this initiative had the following goal in mind: ensuring that students, faculty, and advisors were alerted to problems early enough to intervene appropriately. In May 2008, after much spirited discussion, the Faculty Senate passed legislation requiring all faculty teaching 1000-level and 2000-level courses to communicate mid-term grades to their students. The manner in which this occurs was left to the discretion of each faculty member.

Although the legislation does accomplish the goal of providing early-warning of problems to students and faculty, since posting grades in the University data system (BANNER) was not made a requirement, advisors may or may not have access to these data.

The identification and implementation of the retention initiatives is an example of how UALR uses institutional assessment data to improve curriculum, instructional resources, and student services. Work on these
initiatives involved faculty and staff from across campus and resulted in significant collaboration among units. The increased retention of students from Fall 2008 to Spring 2009 is encouraging. After classes begin Fall 2009, data will be collected to see if retention gains have persisted.

**Supports Teaching**

UALR's commitment to teaching is detailed in the mission objective Excellence in Instruction: “The [u]niversity has a responsibility to provide excellence in instruction to ensure high-quality education for our students. This responsibility includes developing faculty teaching skills, awareness of the ways students learn, assessing student learning outcomes, and enhancement of resources to support effective instruction.”

At UALR, excellence in teaching is the highest priority for faculty and administrators. Data collected in 2008 using the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement\(^1\) show that 100 percent of respondents ranked teaching as their most important job duty. Similarly, 100 percent of respondents who participated in the faculty survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute\(^2\) in 2008-2009 indicated that teaching was personally “very important” or “essential” to their professional lives.

The faculty’s commitment to excellence in teaching extends to the curriculum. As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, curricular content is the purview of the faculty. In Article III of the Constitution of the University Assembly, “Functions of Faculty Senate,” page 5-6, states as follows:

> The areas of the Faculty Senate’s legislative authority shall include but are not limited to the following: …curriculum and courses

Further, the constitution states

> Responsibilities of colleges and schools are as follows:
> 2. To study college or school curricula. Each college or school shall establish its own curriculum process. Routing of curriculum and program proposals shall follow the procedures outlined in the description of the Undergraduate Council.

On behalf of the Faculty Senate, and subject to that body’s authority, the UALR Graduate Council shall review and recommend action on new graduate courses, programs, and degrees and consider other matters related to graduate work at UALR… Proposals for graduate programs and courses which originate with department faculties shall be routed to college or school curriculum committees, to college or school faculties, and to the Graduate Council.

On behalf of the Faculty Senate, and subject to that body’s authority, the UALR Undergraduate Council shall review, interpret, and recommend action on all general undergraduate academic policies; it

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3b Example of Evidence
Qualified faculty determine curricular content and strategies for instruction.

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1. http://ualr.edu/testing/index.php/fsse
shall review and recommend approval or disapproval of curriculum proposals and degree programs.

In academic units organized into departments and colleges and schools, all proposals for changes in curricula and degree programs shall be routed to department, college, or school curriculum committees; to college or school faculties; and to the Undergraduate Council.

Academic policy ensures that qualified faculty are responsible for curricular content and strategies for instruction.

Technology use in the classroom.

**3b Example of Evidence**
The organization provides services to support improved pedagogies.

**3b Example of Evidence**
The organization supports professional development designed to facilitate teaching suited to varied learning environments.

**Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence**
The most visible commitment to excellence in teaching at UALR is the Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ATLE). Established in 2007-2008 by faculty leadership with a budget commitment of $55,000 from the Provost, ATLE is a faculty collaboration focused on advancing a rich conversation across disciplinary lines about pedagogical philosophy, teaching strategies, and the promotion of student learning. Its mission is to foster excellence in teaching and learning; to demonstrate the value UALR places on high-quality teaching; and to build a stronger community among teachers and learners.

The Academy is co-directed by three faculty members who are appointed by the Provost based on their distinguished awards and honors in the area of teaching and their deep commitment to quality education. Appointments are a three-year commitment and come with a course release for the administrative work.

1. http://ualr.edu/teachingacademy/
To accomplish its mission, ATLE fosters improved pedagogies through educating, supporting, and providing resources to faculty. UALR faculty have embraced ATLE and its mission. In 2008-2009, 385 faculty members (76 percent) participated in one or more of the Academy’s activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATLE Activities</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Demonstrations</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table-Top Discussions</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Speakers</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table-Top Discussions</td>
<td>4%</td>
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ATLE activities include the following:

- **Teaching Demonstration Luncheons.** These demonstrations, which have been popular, provide UALR faculty with unique opportunities to discuss and investigate diverse teaching strategies with colleagues from across campus. Past faculty presenters represent a broad range of academic disciplines including:
  - Dr. Michael Ledbetter, Department of Geology
  - Dr. John DiPippa, William H. Bowen School of Law
  - Dr. Karen Kuralt, Department of Rhetoric and Writing
  - Dr. Gregory Robinson, Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology
  - Profs. Catherine Lowry, Stephanie Harvey, Suzann Barr, James Hendren, David Luneau, and Thomas Wallace, Information Technology Minor

- Teaching demonstrations with handouts, classroom application strategies, as well as demonstrator quotes and biographies are kept in an electronic video archive accessible on the ATLE website.

- **Guest Speakers.** Since its inception, ATLE has sponsored two guest speakers—Dr. Ken Bain, author of *What the Best College Teachers Do*, in 2009, and Dr. Richard Light, author of *Making the Most of College*, in 2008. Both met with campus leadership, presented to faculty, and held informal question and answer sessions.

- **Distinguished Teaching Fellow Award.** To receive this award faculty must accrue 100 points within a year through participating in activities such as:
  - producing a scholarly article on teaching issues (20 points for each)
  - presenting at an ATLE event (10 points for each)

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**3b Example of Evidence**
The organization supports faculty in keeping abreast of the research on teaching and learning, and of technological advances that can positively affect student learning and the delivery of instruction.

**3d Example of Evidence**
Budgeting priorities reflect that improvement in teaching and learning is a core value of the organization.

**3d Example of Evidence**
The organization’s systems and structures enable partnerships and innovations that enhance student learning and strengthen teaching effectiveness.

**4a Example of Evidence**
The organization’s planning and pattern of financial allocation demonstrate that it values and promotes a life of learning for its students, faculty, and staff.
Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization

- attending an ATLE session (5 points for each)
- attending ATLE Teaching Camp (20 points)
- article in ATLE Newsletter (10 points for each)
- participate in Shadow & Share (20 points)
- leading a Hot Topic Discussion (10 points for each)
- Shadow and Share. This mentoring program matches seasoned faculty with new faculty. To date, 26 pairs have been matched.
- Tabletop Discussions. Held every Wednesday, these discussions provide an informal setting for faculty to discuss a range of issues from using technology in the classroom to how implementing the concepts of universal design can benefit all students.

The Provost has underscored the importance of this program by allocating funds for facilities, furnishings, and resources immediately and budgeting for this program well into the future. Plans for 2009-2010 include creating a Provost’s Lecture Series; organizing a Reading About Teaching group; having open classrooms with award-winning professors; creating a statewide organization of teaching academies; implementing teaching circles; hosting a teaching camp; developing a more comprehensive assessment process for ATLE; and sponsoring Philosophy Fridays.

3b Example of Evidence
The organization evaluates teaching and recognizes effective teaching.

Evaluation of Teaching and Recognition of Effective Teaching

Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching

UALR publicly recognizes excellent teaching at its annual Faculty Excellence Awards Banquet.¹ The UALR Foundation Fund Board in 1988 instituted a series of annual awards to recognize and reward faculty excellence in three specified areas of performance: teaching, research or creative endeavors, and professional and public service.

Recognition is accorded at the college level and at the university level. Each award consists of a framed certificate and a cash gift of $1,000 at the college level and, at the university level, $10,000 for teaching and $5,000 in research or creative endeavors and in public service. A list of all recipients and their achievements is publicly available online.²

The award for excellence in teaching is to recognize, encourage, and reward superior classroom teachers—individuals whose command of their respective disciplines, teaching methodologies, communications skills, concern for student performance, and commitment to the learning process exemplify the teacher/mentor model. The award is not intended to be a popularity contest. It is designed to distinguish those teachers who maintain high expectations of their students and who ensure academic rigor in their courses.

Each nomination packet for the teaching award includes excerpts or summaries from the department’s or program’s routine student evaluations of the nominee, accompanied by an explanation of the rating

2. http://ualr.edu/facultyexcellence/
scale and other information needed for a reviewer to understand the student evaluations. Department chairs also address the individual’s teaching strengths based on annual merit reviews and promotion/tenure application information prepared in the department. In addition, the application must include a description of how she or he has used assessment to improve course content, pedagogy or degree program outcomes. Applications who do not address this important teaching dimension are not forwarded to the national selection panel.

The national selection committee looks for command of the discipline, use of appropriate teaching methodologies, demonstration of exceptional communication skills, concern for student performance, commitment to the learning process, and maintenance of academic rigor. Evidence of innovation and adaptation of new technologies also are important.

The teaching excellence awards recognizes effective teaching in all forms and disciplines. Recent recipients of the award include a philosopher, an engineer and an expert in criminal justice.

- Associate Professor Andrew Eshleman was recognized in 2008 for his ability to inspire his students to achieve the highest standards in philosophical thought. Like many students at UALR, Professor Eshleman was also a first-generation college student and he remembers how his first philosophy course changed his life. He helps his students learn how to ask questions and think critically about important life issues.

- Associate Professor Hussain Al-Rizzo was recognized in 2007 for his innovation in combining his teaching methods with his research in systems engineering. Based on his own learning experiences, Professor Al-Rizzo knew that he learned engineering best when classroom information was combined with real-world applications and results. One recent project had students working on a Little Rock Airport efficiency study using engineering principles and problem-solving skills to make recommendations to the airport’s board of directors; many of which are currently being implemented or considered.

- Professor Charles Chastain was recognized in 2006 for thirty-four years of dedicated commitment to teaching excellence. Professor Chastain has mentored thousands of students over the course of his career, many of whom remain in close contact after decades of professional achievement. His students consistently characterize him as the best teacher they’ve ever had and understand that he wants them to make a difference in the field of criminal justice.

**Faculty Roles and Rewards**

UALR’s commitment to teaching also is emphasized in the newly approved Faculty Roles and Rewards document\(^1\), which was created by a committee formed by the Faculty Senate and Provost Belcher in December 2005. A number of forces—the expansion of graduate programs and the formulations of a strategic plan—were redefining

expectations of faculty and a document was needed to clarify, in broad terms, faculty roles and reward in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

The committee was charged with creating a document that represented various facets of the UALR community and included a faculty representative from each college, a dean, and a department chair. The committee began its work within the context of current policies and the University’s strategic plan, UALR Fast Forward. The committee also reviewed roles and rewards documents from sister institutions and consulted key publications, including Boyer’s Scholarship Reconsidered (Carnegie Foundation, 1997), Zahorski and Cognard’s Reconsidering Faculty Roles and Rewards (Council of Independent Colleges, 1999). As the document took shape, the committee presented drafts to administrators, focus groups of faculty from all colleges, and the Faculty Senate.

While the document does describe faculty roles within the widely recognized categories of teaching, scholarship, and service, it adapts these categories to the traditional strengths of UALR as a metropolitan university; clarifies values that impact the hiring, development, and evaluation of faculty; and acknowledges ways that faculty roles must change as the University’s strategic plan is implemented. At the same time, the document strives to respect differences across disciplines and the contributions of individual faculty within each academic unit. The document asserts the need for faculty to develop a clear and sustained research agenda, but it also values teaching, provides the option for some academic units to emphasize teaching over research, and validates a broad definition of scholarship. The document makes general assertions about teaching:

The nature of effective teaching may vary across disciplines, but certain qualities are universal: respect for students, faith in student abilities, a focus on student learning, and a commitment to student success. Equally important, faculty should view themselves as role models who convey the values of their disciplines and initiate students into their professions. In the pursuit of excellence in teaching, faculty members must remain current in their disciplines and in pedagogical strategies. They should consider teaching a continual process of improvement and growth.

The document clearly states that expectations of faculty, as embodied in their roles and rewards, must be balanced. In the introduction, the document states, “As faculty members have responsibilities to students, the University, and the community, so the institution has obligations to provide an institutional infrastructure to nurture professional growth and development.”

In the conclusion, “Achieving a Balance,” the importance of teaching is reiterated as is the need to establish realistic expectations and a balance between expectations and rewards:

Expectations for faculty performance must be balanced with appropriate support for achieving the expectations. This may include training or apprenticeship to achieve teaching or service excellence, teaching loads that provide adequate time for scholarly activity,
library resources, funding to support scholarship or presentation of scholarly work at conferences, grant-writing [sic] training and support, and other forms of professional development.

It is this balance, the document argues, that will lead to a “sound academic infrastructure,” one that will encourage scholarship without diminishing teaching. The report concludes with a series of recommendations to support the increased expectations of faculty roles which include reducing teaching loads, and increasing financial and institutional support for scholarship. This document was approved by Faculty Senate in 2007.

**Faculty Evaluation through Annual Review**

Faculty members at UALR are evaluated for teaching effectiveness through the annual review process which is required by the Arkansas State Legislature, the UA System and UALR. The purpose of the review is “to provide guidance and assistance to all faculty in their professional development and academic responsibilities.” The annual review is also used as “the primary basis for the chairperson’s recommendations related to salary, promotion, granting of tenure, and dismissal.”

The specific criteria used in the evaluation, the constitution of the peer review committee, the nature and the review materials, and the procedures for review of materials are determined by the department or school and are incorporated into the unit’s governance document. That document is approved by the Dean, Provost, and Chancellor.

Included in the annual review process are course evaluations, which are used in conjunction with other materials such as teaching portfolios to evaluate the effectiveness of individual instructors. All courses are required to administer course evaluations that are completed anonymously by students at the end of the term in which the course is taught. According to UALR policy, the instructor must leave the classroom while students complete the course evaluation. One student is designated to deliver the completed evaluations to the unit’s administrative assistant.

The results of the annual review inform decisions about merit raises. When the resources are available, all faculty get a cost-of-living increase. Department chairs then are given an amount above this to distribute among faculty based on their performance review.

**Tenure and Promotion**

The procedure used for awarding tenure and promotion reflects multiple levels of policy: the UA System policy, the UALR campus policy, and the governance document of each academic unit. UA System policy provides broad guidelines for the development of the tenure and promotion policies on each campus. It establishes who is eligible for tenure (full-time faculty with the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, professor, distinguished professor, or university professor), that the probationary period shall not exceed seven years, that the review process must include peer evaluation, and that the process must include the right to appeal a negative decision. The system policy also includes a statement about respecting academic freedom. This policy was established in 1980.
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The faculty senate reviewed and revised the UALR tenure and promotion document during the 2008 academic year. This document, which will come before Faculty Senate for full approval this fall, provides a detailed procedure for reviewing tenure and promotion dossiers; it both provides clear expectations for awarding tenure as well as instructions for a fair review process. For example, the candidate must be informed of the outcome at each level of review and allowed the option of appeal if the review at that level is negative. Equally important, the document provides guidelines for the professional development of faculty.

As specified in the UALR tenure and promotion document, each academic unit develops tenure and promotion expectations appropriate to the discipline(s) that it represents. The guidelines for post-tenure review are covered in the UA System policy. These guidelines encourage tenured faculty to remain active and current with their discipline.

Improving Teaching through Professional Development

In addition to the services and activities offered through ATLE, UALR promotes pedagogical development by encouraging faculty to take courses designed to enhance their ability to be effective in a variety of learning environments and with a diverse group of students. At no charge, full-time faculty can enroll in over 45 courses¹. These courses were chosen because they either increase understanding of individuals with disabilities or provide teaching techniques/theories that address diversity issues in instruction. Approved courses include

**ADED 4301/5301 Psychology of Adult Learning**

An examination of the research related to adult learning and development as it can be applied to the practice of adult education. Adult learning theories of the cognitivists, behaviorists, and humanists; state and phasic theories of development. Three credit hours.

**ADED 4303/5303 Teaching Adults**

An examination of the teaching/learning process from planning to presentation. Microteaching involving the integration of adult learning principles is conducted. Three credit hours.

**COUN 7362 Psychological Aspects of Disability**

Psychological and sociological aspects of disability, including community attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, strategies to change negative attitudes, adjustment factors in living with disabilities, and methods for supporting successful adjustment to disabilities. Three credit hours.

**COUN 2360 Introduction to Speech and Hearing Disorders.**

A description and discussion of speech, language, and hearing disorders; therapy surveys and assessment techniques. Three credit hours.

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¹. http://ualr.edu/academics/index.php/home/faculty-resources/approved-courses-for-faculty-development/
LAW 6399 Disability Law

Studies federal and state legislation and case law affecting people with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. Issues covered include education, employment, access, public services, and health care. Three credit hours.

EDFN 3320 Introduction to Educational Psychology

Applications of psychological principles to the learning and teaching processes; emphasis on learning, cognitive development, social development, discipline, intelligence, evaluation, and measurement. Three credit hours.

LANG 4324/5324 Teaching People of Other Cultures

Cultural issues for teaching students with limited English proficiency. A required course for ESL endorsement in the state of Arkansas. Three credit hours.

INTR 1320, 1321, 2320, 2321 American Sign Language I, II, III, IV

INTR 2340 Orientation to Deafness

An in-depth study of the field of deafness, the deaf community, deaf culture, and the hearing mechanism. Extensive readings on the deaf population, education of persons who are deaf, psychosocial development, communication, vocational rehabilitation, organizations of and for individuals who are deaf, and the legislative impact on the status of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Three credit hours.

INTR 4322 Comparative Linguistics: ASL and English

Study of the fundamental concepts of linguistics and its application to the study of American Sign Language. Focuses on the current state of research of linguistic inquiry such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and use of language. Compares and contrasts basic similarities and differences between ASL and English with a goal to develop critical thinking about the structure of ASL. Three credit hours.

PSYC 3356 Developmental Psychology

Development of the individual from conception through adolescence. Topics include prenatal, intellectual, emotional, social, and personality development. Three credit hours.

PSYC 3360 Abnormal Psychology

The causes, symptoms, and treatment of abnormalities in human behavior. Three credit hours.

PSYC 3380 Cognitive Psychology

An introduction to theories and research regarding human information processing. Topics include attention, memory, problem solving, information representation, and individual differences in cognitive ability. Three credit hours.
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**RHBL 7112 Psychological Aspects of Blindness and Visual Impairment.**

Historical attitudes toward blindness; impact of culture and gender on attitudes toward disability, methodologies of attitude change, process of adjustment to blindness and vision loss. One credit hour.

**RHBL 7315 Medical Aspects of Blindness and Associated Disabilities**

Anatomy, structure, function of the eye; frequently occurring diseases, malfunctions in children, adults; includes treatment procedures for disease process, rehabilitation/education implications of handicapped effects. Three credit hours.

**RHBL 7325 Implications of Low Vision**

Principles of visual perception development; implications of visual field losses; introduction to optics; optical, nonoptics low-vision aids; procedures for vision screening; vision stimulation activities; low-vision simulation experiences. Three credit hours.

**SPED 7121 Braille Formats/Nemeth Code**

Special Braille formats of music, foreign language transcriptions, Nemeth Code for mathematical transcriptions; transcribing these unique Braille codes. One credit hour.

**SPED 7335 Instructional Methods for Persons with Severe Disabilities**

Fundamentals of systematic data-based instructional skills needed to teach persons with severe disabilities in classroom, community environments. Three credit hours.

**SPED 7360 Characteristics and Educational Needs of the Severely Emotionally Disturbed**

Serious emotional disturbance and its educational implication; includes significant historical factors; theoretical orientations to definition, etiology of serious emotional disturbance; classification systems; learning characteristics, their educational implications; interdisciplinary appraisal, therapies; federal, state legislation, litigation relating to serious emotional disturbance and education. Three credit hours.

A complete list of approved courses is available online.¹

¹. [http://ualr.edu/academics/index.php/home/faculty-resources/approved-courses-for-faculty-development/](http://ualr.edu/academics/index.php/home/faculty-resources/approved-courses-for-faculty-development/)
Support for the Use of Technology to Improve Instruction

Over the past ten years, UALR has devoted considerable resources to incorporating technology into teaching in order to improve instruction and learning. The support and use of technology is integrated throughout the University.

Office of Extended Programs

The Office of Extended Programs is the part of UALR that “extends” educational opportunities to students at new locations or through new modes of instructional delivery. This office provides support for web-enhanced courses, online courses, and off-campus programs through the Scholarly Technology and Resources (STaR) office.

STaR is a full-service center that provides course development training and support to faculty. This includes tutorials for putting a course online, for creating effective online materials, and for developing effective online pedagogy. STaR also provides training on multimedia production for faculty members who want to develop audio or audiovisual components in their courses and special instruction on how to make online materials fully accessible to students with disabilities.

Faculty training programs in technology/software areas and online course development provided by STaR ranges from introductory-level to advanced. Examples are

• New to Online Course Shells. Participants in this training learn to understand the course request and development processes used at UALR, maximize the performance of Blackboard on their computer, edit the developmental course shell for the first semester, and locate and use resources uniquely designed for UALR faculty.

• Blackboard Basics. Participants learn to explore and navigate in the Build, Teach, and Student View tabs of a course, add tools to the Course Menu, create new content items and add them to the home page, and customize the appearance of a course.

• Learning Modules Made Easy. Participants learn to create effective learning modules, and build media library collections, such as a glossary.

• Introducing Wimba Classroom. Participants learn to engage students in real-time with live video and audio presentations, create live collaborative learning exercises, share their computer applications with students through application sharing, and archive lectures and live sessions for repeated student access.

• Designing Your Course. In this training course, participants are introduced to the design skills necessary to create effective, engaging online courses.

• Teaching Your Course. In this training course, participants are introduced to the technical and pedagogical skills necessary to be a successful, effective online instructor.

3b Example of Evidence
The organization supports faculty in keeping abreast of the research on teaching and learning, and of technological advances that can positively affect student learning and the delivery of instruction.

3d Example of Evidence
The organization supports students, staff, and faculty in using technology effectively.

2. http://ualr.edu/star/
• Assessments and Assignments. In this training course, participants are shown how to create and manage assessments and assignments within the Blackboard Learning System.

A list of scheduled trainings can be found online.1

Additional Technology Training

In addition to support from STaR, faculty innovation and use of technology are supported by technology initiatives sponsored within individual colleges. One example is the activities in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (AHSS), the largest college at UALR. Every classroom in the recently renovated Stabler Hall, the College’s largest building, is equipped with teaching technology, making it one of the most technologically advanced buildings on campus.

Approximately seven years ago, the Dean of the College began offering incentives to encourage and support faculty use of the technology. The creation of the Teaching with Technology Team formalized this initiative. The Team is responsible for assessing and addressing the pedagogical technology needs of faculty. Currently, the College offers three types of support to faculty wishing to integrate technology into their classrooms: workshops, grants, and stipends.

Workshops

Originally called “Off to See the Wizard,” the AHSS (pronounced “Oz”) Teaching with Technology workshops are specifically designed to encourage AHSS faculty to mentor other AHSS faculty in the use of technology and software. The 2008 Teaching with Technology workshops included the following:

• Teaching with Technology. Student panel discussion on likes and dislikes, and faculty demonstrations by Dona Bailey, Department of Rhetoric and Writing; Stephanie Dhonau, Division of International and Second Language Studies; and Paul Yoder, Department of English.

• PowerPoints. Grabbing Students’ Attention with Presentation Technologies

• PowerPoints. Designing Powerful Classroom Presentations

• WebCT and Blackboard Campus Edition 6 Swap Meet. Best Practices

Materials from the 2008 workshops can be found online.3

Grants

To support faculty who wish to attend advanced software training or training not available on campus, AHSS provides travel grants. Faculty have attended workshops on Developing Websites with CSS and

2. http://ualr.edu/ahss/
advanced training for Global Information Systems. Grants for up to $2,000 have been awarded. Faculty use this information to enhance their own teaching as well as to train other faculty.

**Stipends**

Small Blackboard Campus Edition 6 (CE6) project stipends also are available to faculty for developing Blackboard CE6 enhancements for existing courses. Projects include creating multifaceted interactive web guides to help instruct students on how to produce their own sites for a political science course and videotaping commentary, technical exercises, and a performance from each unit for piano students.

**Improving Teaching through the Assessment of Student Learning**

Goal 1 of *UALR Fast Forward* states: “UALR will provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, diverse world of the 21st Century.” Under this goal is Objective 1: “The University will ensure the quality of its educational programs” with the strategy

> The University will develop and implement a plan to maintain momentum and improve the strategies for assessing student learning outcomes in preparation for the comprehensive review by the North Central Association in 2010.

During the last accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission in 2000, the site visit team noted that although UALR had recently instituted a campus-wide, coordinated effort to assess student learning, the University lacked evidence of a culture of assessment. At that time, assessment was not used systematically across campus, and there were no clear links between assessment results and programmatic or budget decisions.

Since that time, quality assessment has become the institutional standard at UALR with every program, college, and student service unit actively assessing stated goals and objectives. Through various qualitative and quantitative means, UALR has created effective assessment strategies to gather information about the quality of teaching and student learning as well as the student learning environment and other identified outcomes. As stated on page five of the *Undergraduate Catalog*

> Assessment at UALR is designed to help the academic programs—whether core, undergraduate, or graduate—focus on what should be taught in the program and whether it is being taught successfully. This involves a variety of methods of inquiry to examine student needs, attributes, and success in learning. Each academic unit at UALR has an assessment program to conduct research that will be used to make decisions to improve its curriculum, instruction, and both academic and career advising. Students, alumni, and various stakeholders participate in a variety of assessment activities designed to assess learning in the major and in the core curriculum.
Assessment Infrastructure

Since the last NCA visit, UALR has built an infrastructure that supports assessment on campus. At the same time, assessment at UALR has evolved from a “top-down” approach to an environment where colleges and degree programs take ownership for developing, implementing, using, and improving evaluation processes. As a result, a true culture of assessment pervades the institution.

The infrastructure supports and promotes assessment which includes the Provost Assessment Advisory Group (PAAG). PAAG is led by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Academic Policy, and includes a representative from every college, Educational and Student Services, and the Ottenheimer Library. This group is responsible for reviewing assessment plans for all new degree programs and providing a direct communication link between the college assessment teams and university administration. For the past several years, this group has been active on the task force reviewing assessment of the core competencies.

PAAG also presents the Assessment Expo each fall where academic and student service units present their assessment plans and results to the campus community. Annual awards for demonstrated excellence in assessment are given in three categories: core course, degree program, and student services unit. In this way, the University highlights best practices in assessment and encourages faculty and staff to learn from one another. The Expo also features a nationally recognized keynote speaker in the area of assessment. These have included Dr. Lucille Sansing, who serves on the American Council on Education Educational Leadership Commission as well as Dr. Trudy Banta, Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, and Dr. Bob Mundhenk, Interim Director of International Center for Student Success and Institutional Accountability.

PAAG manages the Assessment Central\(^1\) website. The purpose of Assessment Central is to showcase what UALR is doing to promote assessment excellence and accountability to stakeholders both on and off campus, provide access to assessment resources for faculty and staff, and provide information on assessment events. Assessment Central also is linked to college assessment websites where annual assessment progress reports are posted. These reports include information on student learning objectives, assessment measures, most recent assessment findings, and curricular changes or other decisions that were the result of assessment findings.

UALR has become a leader in assessment in the state. In the past couple of years, faculty from other Arkansas universities and colleges have attended and participated in Assessment Expo. This has added a new dimension to the experience especially with the involvement of faculty from Pulaski Technical College, the closest two-year institution to UALR. Additionally, UALR is a founding member of the Arkansas Association of Assessment and Collegiate Learning\(^2\) (AAACL), and Dr. Jim Fulmer, Professor of Mathematics and Statistics and a member of PAAG, has been

on the AAACL Board of Directors since its inception in 2007. In Spring 2009, UALR hosted an AAACL assessment conference that was attended by over 100 faculty and staff from institutions across the state. Plans are to collaborate with AAACL to hold a yearly assessment conference at UALR.

UALR’s assessment efforts have been presented nationally as well. Each year, every college is given assessment funds to be used to strengthen assessment efforts. Some colleges use these funds to send faculty to assessment conferences such as the annual Assessment Institute held at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Since 2004, faculty from UALR have made presentations at the Institute almost every year, which highlights the extent to which assessment has become a central issue on campus.

Assessing Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes: The Core Curriculum and Core Competencies

All students pursuing a baccalaureate degree at UALR must complete the core curriculum articulated on pages six through eight of the Undergraduate Catalog except those enrolled in programs offered through EIT and those in the Bachelor of Nursing Program. Due to the length of these programs, students in them take an abbreviated version of the core.

The purpose of the core curriculum is to “establish a foundation for the undergraduate academic experience and to ensure that students develop fundamental skills and a life-long commitment and ability to learn. All courses stress active learning” (Undergraduate Catalog, page six). This general education curriculum is built around ten core competencies. In 1986 the Blue Ribbon Committee, an ad hoc committee of Faculty Senate, was established to review the educational goals of the University. The committee adopted the principle that a life-long ability to learn is the University’s paramount learning goal and that education should be considered a “structure of competencies” rather than a specific inventory of information (Blue Ribbon Committee Statement of Philosophy).

The committee identified nine essential competencies to be mastered by all undergraduate students graduating from UALR. The Faculty Senate added a tenth competency, Information Technology, in 2004. The ten core competencies are as follows:

1. Aesthetic Experience
2. Critical Thinking
3. Ethical and Moral Consciousness
4. Historical Consciousness
5. Information Technology
6. International Awareness
7. Mathematics
8. Philosophy and Methods of Science
9. Social and Cultural Awareness
10. Verbal Literacy

Assessing the Core Curriculum and Core Competencies to Improve Student Learning

All courses included in current core or general education requirements at UALR are linked to one or more of the ten core competencies and have been since the competencies were developed. As originally envisioned, the competencies provided a foundation for the undergraduate academic experience. Through the experience of the core curriculum, students were expected to develop “the critical thinking and analytic skills necessary to successfully complete degree programs, and become educated citizens with the ability for life-long learning.”

The competencies are linked to and assessed via the core curriculum. For example, core courses linked to Aesthetic Experience developed specific learning objectives to measure the extent to which students gained this competency. Throughout the 1990’s and mid-2000’s, this assessment was supplemented by data collected through the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP).

By 2005, however, it became clear that these methods of assessing the core curriculum were not producing data that were useful to continuous improvement of the courses in the core or for measuring student achievement of the competencies through the core. First, data produced by the CAAP were found to be unreliable due to lack of student motivation to perform well. Discussions about various ways to increase student motivation revealed that many faculty who taught core courses did not believe the CAAP was a valid measure of the core competencies related to their discipline. Therefore, when the Arkansas State Legislature removed the requirement that public institutions of higher learning in the state use the CAAP for assessment in 2007, UALR decided to explore other options.

Much more difficult to address and resolve, however, has been the issue of assessing the core curriculum using data collected through individual core course assessments. In March 2005, Trudy W. Banta consulted with and provided PAAG a report\(^1\) that summarized the strengths and gaps in the University’s institutional assessment program. In her report, she recommended UALR “[r]evie[w] the…ten competencies for the purpose of revising and updating the list if necessary.”

In September 2007, a task force was formed to review assessing the competencies with the understanding that a recommendation to revise them could be considered. Assessment Expo 2007 keynote speaker Dr. Bob Mundhenk, led the faculty through a discussion of the core competencies and facilitated several exercises that explored the meaning and purpose of each competency.

In addition, the task force reviewed general education models at similar universities and explored various ways in which the core competencies could be revised. However, although many on the task force felt the competencies themselves were not measurable and presented the major

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impediment to effective assessment, others felt additional issues that had emerged from their discussions were even more of a challenge. The task force had two questions.

The first question was related to the large number of students who transfer to UALR after completing one or more years at other institutions. This reality did not exist in 1988 when the core competencies were adopted. The task force asked, how can the University assess the core learning outcomes when many students who graduate from UALR do not take their core courses here?

The second question was related to how to define and measure any student learning outcome in a way that faculty across disciplines would find valid. For example, would faculty in science define and measure critical thinking in the same way faculty in art would? One suggestion for addressing this issue was to use a standardized test, such as the Collegiate Learning Assessment. However, faculty were skeptical about the reliability and validity of a standardized assessment tool. The year ended with plans to start the next academic year investigating ways of addressing the transfer issue and reviewing standardized assessment tools available for general education assessment.

In Fall 2008, the task force again began working on these issues. However, at the same time discussions about assessing the core and the relevance of the core itself were taking place in Faculty Senate. Some senators felt it was time for the University to revisit the core requirements as well as the core competencies. After initial discussions, a decision was made by Faculty Senate to postpone further deliberations regarding the core curriculum until after the site visit by the Higher Learning Commission. This was based on several factors. First, it had become clear at that point that the Arkansas State Legislature was going to consider several Bills during the 2009 session involving general education requirements at public colleges and universities (one of these became Act 182, which is discussed in Chapter 4—The Connected Organization). Faculty Senate believed that if such legislation passed, it would significantly affect any revision to the core they would consider.

The more compelling reason to wait, however, was simply the magnitude of what a reconsideration of the core curriculum would entail. The last revision of the core had stretched over three years and had required the focused effort of most of the faculty. Because the campus was already preoccupied with conducting the reaccreditation self-study, most thought it prudent not to distract attention from that task.

Despite the decision to postpone the conversation, the campus is readying itself to revisit the core curriculum. In Spring 2009, the president of the Faculty Senate presented a plan that called for 2009-2010 to investigate the process of doing such work. Faculty and administrators will create a structure to ensure a process that is transparent, inclusive, and informed.
Assessing Programs to Improve Student Learning

All academic programs have articulated processes for assessing student learning. This begins with identifying measurable student learning outcomes formulated by program faculty based on the knowledge and skills graduates will need for professional competence and/or for pursuing further education. Faculty construct five-year program assessment plans that outline how achievement of these outcomes will be measured. The results of the assessment are used to improve both curriculum and teaching.

Measuring outcomes varies by program, but most include both direct and indirect methods. For example, the BS/BA program in Biology uses direct measures such as course-embedded exams, papers, and presentations, as well as scores of the Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT). In addition, the program collected indirect data in Spring 2007 when it engaged the Survey Research Center\(^1\) in the Institute of Government to conduct a telephone survey of alumni.

Many programs at UALR comprehensively assess student learning outcomes through a capstone course or a practicum sequence. Capstone courses and field practicums take many different formats:

- portfolios, showings, or juried performances (Art, Music; Environmental Health Sciences)
- colloquiums or seminars (Philosophy, Rhetoric and Writing, History, Sociology and Anthropology; Speech; Chemistry; MPA)
- service learning/real world projects (Information Systems; Systems Engineering; Construction Management)
- supervised practicum placements tied to program learning outcomes (Social Work; Nursing; Education)

One example of a department that uses program assessment effectively for continuous improvement is the Department of Speech Communication.\(^2\) The department clearly differentiates between the student learning outcomes for BA and MA students and delineates how and when learning outcomes will be assessed in the five-year plans established for both programs. Assessment measures include a variety of methods and include the active participation of faculty and external stakeholders. Finally, assessment data are used to make curricular and program changes that will then be assessed in the next cycle.

Academic units are required to submit annual program assessment progress reports for each of their degree programs. These reports are based on the learning goals and strategies set out in the unit’s five-year assessment plan. The student learning objectives and outcomes of each program in the unit—doctoral, master’s, undergraduate major, and/or certificate level—are clearly articulated in the plans. Every baccalaureate degree program also links its student learning outcomes to the core competencies.

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1. http://ualr.edu/iog/surveyresearch/
These reports focus on the student learning goals addressed that year: what student learning objectives were measured for those goals, which assessment measures were used, how stakeholders were involved, what were the assessment findings, and how the findings will be used for program improvement. Additionally, in an effort to “assess assessment,” programs are asked for feedback regarding assessment processes at UALR.

Oversight of degree program assessment is provided by College Assessment Teams composed of faculty from college departments. These teams review annual assessment reports submitted by the degree programs and provide feedback to help improve evaluation processes, help clarify how assessment data are used, and/or suggest further use of data. Each college determines how the Assessment Team will function and the form in which feedback to programs regarding their assessment processes will be given. After program assessment reports are reviewed, a summary of assessment in the college is posted on the college website. In this way, assessment processes, findings and use are available for review by administrators, students, and other stakeholders.

Curricular changes also are made in conjunction with external constituents. Most departments have external advisory boards comprised of alumni and regional community and business leaders. These advisory boards participate by assessing current program offerings and recommending changes. For example, the Department of Computer Science rearranged its course sequencing based on advisory board input. The senior-level Software Engineering course (CPSC 4373) was moved from being a junior-level to a senior-level course, with appropriate prerequisites and was modified into a “pseudo-capstone” experience for students. The course involves significant real-world software design projects, which require teamwork, oral presentations, and timely delivery of working final products.

Using Program Review and Accreditation to Improve Teaching and Student Learning

Nationally Accredited Programs

Accreditation remains a vital part of the UALR academic landscape. The Bowen School of Law2 is accredited by the American Bar Association, programs in the College of Business are accredited by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (formerly known as American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business), the graduate programs in the College of Education3 are accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and University athletics are accredited by National Collegiate Athletics Association. Additionally, UALR has 15 nationally accredited degree programs. (e.g., music and social work).

3a Example of Evidence
The organization clearly differentiates its learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs by identifying the expected learning outcomes for each.

3a Example of Evidence
Results obtained through assessment of student learning are available to appropriate constituencies, including students themselves.

4c Example of Evidence
Curricular evaluation involves alumni, employers, and other external constituents who understand the relationships among the courses of study, the currency of the curriculum, and the utility of the knowledge and skills gained.

3a Example of Evidence
The organization integrates into its assessment of student learning the data reported for purposes of external accountability (e.g., graduation rates, passage rates on licensing exams, placement rates, transfer rates).

4c Example of Evidence
Regular academic program reviews include attention to currency and relevance of courses and programs.

1. http://technologize.ualr.edu/computerscience/
2. http://www.law.ualr.edu/
Programs with accreditation are reviewed every seven to ten years by professional accrediting organizations and must provide evidence of the currency and relevancy of their curricula and pedagogy. Such reviews also include information on graduation rates, passage of licensing exams, employment rates in the professional area, and alumni satisfaction with the program.

Accreditation site visits by external professional peers often involve interviews with University administration to assess support for the program as well as meetings with students and community constituents to ensure the program actively involves each in evaluation of program effectiveness. Site visitors provide programs with feedback on their strengths as well as areas that need improvement. Continued accreditation is evidence that the program is providing graduates with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful professionally.

**Non-Accredited Programs**

In April 2008, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board directed the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) staff to revise the existing program review process to ensure quality academic programs that support Arkansas’s economic development goals and to reduce barriers to graduation. This was done in cooperation with the public colleges and universities.

For accredited programs, nothing changed. Their accreditation reviews will serve to fulfill quality assurance requirements. However, the adopted policy requires that every non-accredited academic degree program participate in a self-study process and produce a report that includes the following:

- a clear statement of the programs goals and objectives
- a detailed discussion of the programs curriculum linked to goals and objectives
- evidence that program faculty are qualified
- a description of program resources
- a discussion of instruction delivered via distance technology
- a discussion of how the program supports the academic success of students
- evidence of ongoing program assessment that has resulted in program improvement
- evidence of program effectiveness

The self-study report must be reviewed by two unbiased out-of-state reviewers, approved by ADHE, who are affiliated with programs similar in mission and scope to the program under review. One of these reviewers conducts an on-campus site visit of the program. ADHE program review guidelines and timelines are available online.¹

¹. [http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/Pages/aa_academicproposals.aspx](http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/Pages/aa_academicproposals.aspx)
UALR was supportive of these changes and played a major role in formulating the new processes. Many of the procedures adopted were in keeping with the University’s strategy of “strengthen[ing] the University’s internal system of academic program review” articulated in 

### Supports the Acquisition of Knowledge

UALR’s mission objective Acquisition of Knowledge states, “The University has a responsibility to use scholarly inquiry to advance the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. This responsibility includes the creation of a university environment that supports diverse research activities by faculty, staff, and students.”

In keeping with the University’s mission, virtually all of the research done by faculty and students at UALR addresses issues related to the economic prosperity, social and physical well-being, educational development, and/or cultural vitality of Central Arkansas. At the same time, more and more during the last decade, the research conducted by UALR faculty has gained national and international attention. The same can be said of the research conducted by UALR students, whose work has received accolades from an international audience.

To support the free exchange of ideas and development of research, UALR policy addressing freedom of inquiry is included in the UALR Student Handbook\(^1\) and the UALR Faculty Handbook.\(^2\) These statements are publicly available online. The Student Handbook states:

> The University of Arkansas has an obligation to its students and the larger society of which it is a part to provide the fullest opportunity for a free exchange and critical evaluation of diverse viewpoints. This means freedom to teach, freedom to learn, freedom to discuss, and freedom to expose ideas to the critical analysis appropriate to the university setting.

The Faculty Handbook speaks of the University’s responsibility to use scholarly inquiry to advance the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge. This responsibility includes the creation of a University environment that supports diverse research…responsibility to serve society through the application of knowledge and research skills…responsibility to provide a community of learning through creation of an academic environment that stimulates students, faculty, and staff to become life-long learners…a responsibility to remain responsive to a changing environment and society.

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4d Example of Evidence
The organization creates, disseminates, and enforces clear policies on practices involving intellectual property rights.

Intellectual Property Rights
The UALR Intellectual Property Policy\(^1\) is adapted from Policy 210.2, adopted by the UA Board of Trustees in 2001. This policy governs issues of copyright and use of technology-enhanced course materials (TECMs). (Please refer to that policy for complete details.) The policy creates five categories, dependent on the amount of technological support that is provided by the University into the development of the course, that are used to classify TECMs and determine copyright, revenue allocation, and use. A more detailed discussion of the categories is available online.\(^2\) The Intellectual Property Policy was approved by the Faculty Senate April 19, 2002, and by Chancellor Hathaway May 2, 2002.

To support faculty and students, Copyright Central\(^3\) was developed in 2005. Copyright Central provides a centralized location for information about copyright law and fair use for faculty and students, information about copyright protection for students, information about the UALR Intellectual Property Policy, and additional resources regarding copyright, plagiarism, and intellectual property. Information on this website is updated annually.

Academic Freedom
Academic freedom for faculty is addressed in UA Board Policy 405.1\(^4\) which states

**Tenure, Non-reappointment, and Dismissal**

xiii. No faculty member shall be dismissed or denied reappointment in violation of the following principles of academic freedom, but the observation of the limitations stated herein is the responsibility of each faculty or staff member. Mere expressions of opinions, however vehemently expressed and however controversial such opinions may be, shall not constitute cause for dismissal. The threat of dismissal will not be used to restrain faculty members in their exercise of academic freedom or constitutional rights.

1. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results, subject to the performance of his or her other academic duties, but personal research for pecuniary return requires prior approval by the appropriate University authorities and must be in accordance with Board Policy 450.1.

2. The faculty member is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject of the course, but should not teach material inappropriate or unrelated to the course.

3. The University faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and a member of an educational community. Speaking or writing as a citizen, the faculty member is free from institutional censorship or discipline. However, as a person of

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/star/index.php/ualr-intellectual-property-policy/
\(^2\) http://ualr.edu/copyright/
\(^3\) http://ualr.edu/academics/?page_id=142
\(^4\) http://ualr.edu/academics/index.php/405-1/
learning and as a member of an educational community, the faculty member has a responsibility for awareness that the public may judge the profession and the institution by his or her utterances. Hence, faculty should at all times make an effort to be accurate, exercise good judgment and appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and indicate that they are not spokespersons for the institution.

The same policy addresses re-appointment, dismissal, hearings, and suspension procedures and policies.

At the University level, the Roles and Rewards document, described earlier, also reflects an adjustment by the faculty to the strategic vision of UALR Fast Forward, particularly as related to the increased emphasis on scholarly and creative output.

One of the major recommendations to emerge from the Roles and Rewards document is that each academic unit document procedures and criteria for annual appointment, tenure, and promotion that are consistent with the values expressed in the Roles and Rewards document. As part of this process, departments and colleges need to provide clear expectations in teaching, scholarship, and service to all faculty and to take special care that the expectations are thoroughly understood by new faculty. The Roles and Rewards document also calls for explicit processes for pre- and pro-tenure review.

Currently, the annual faculty evaluation process includes evaluation of scholarly or creative activity, including publication, grant writing, performance, concerts, exhibitions, and presentations to peer professional groups. The Faculty Handbook explicitly calls for peer review in judging the scholarly and creative activities.

At present, the precise expectations for scholarly and creative activities are established at the college and department level and vary to some degree. In EIT, the process for evaluating faculty within the department is determined by the Faculty Assembly. The Department of Information Science governance documents states, “The Chair annually will discuss with each faculty appointee his/her precise evaluations by peers. At that time, the Chair will also explain his/her evaluation of the individual and reasons for any variation of the Chair’s evaluation from peer evaluation.”

The Department of Teacher Education elects three tenured faculty members to serve on the departmental evaluation committee to evaluate annual review documents and make recommendations to the Department Chair. The committee and the chair compare ratings to reach an agreement on the annual review and applications for tenure and/or promotion. The Department of Rhetoric and Writing uses a committee of all tenured faculty to determine tenure and promotion.

In response to the recommendations in the University Role and Scope document, the faculty and administration began crafting a Tenure and Promotion document during 2007-2008. Once crafted and approved, departments and colleges will be required to adapt their governance

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1. http://ualr.edu/academics/?page_id=8
documents accordingly. Also emerging from the roles and rewards review process was the need for departments and colleges to revisit and, if necessary, revise their governance documents to ensure the documents are consistent with state laws, UA Board policies, and university policies. The revision of such governance documents is ongoing.

**Acquisition of Knowledge: Faculty Research**

As discussed in the Introduction, UALR faculty engage in a wide range of basic and applied research. Much has changed since 1989 when the State Board of Higher Education noted that “research is of growing importance” at UALR. Today research activities span numerous areas in all disciplines. In the 15 years following 1989, the level of funding from grants and contracts rose from $5 million to $22 million. In the national Carnegie classification system, in 2000 UALR was moved into a “research intensive” category. In the last seven years, seven UALR faculty members have received Fulbright appointments to teach and conduct research in seven countries around the world. Other faculty members have been awarded a variety of nationally recognized fellowships such as a Guggenheim Fellowship.

UALR faculty members are engaged in research on subjects appropriate to their academic disciplines; research interests are as diverse as faculty. Faculty at UALR study the structure and dynamics of galaxies and their dark matter halos; musical instruments and their use in early music; applied computational electromagnetic antennas and propagation; demonic possession in the Middle Ages; literacy issues; causes of stress in the workplace; legal writing; and sustainable business practices. A list of sample publications is available online.¹

The following are representative of the diverse research conducted by faculty at UALR. Specific examples provided in this section include the research on the internment of Japanese Americans in an Arkansas camp during World War II; UALR’s leadership on the Arkansas NASA Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research team; and a UALR faculty member’s applied use of his research on crisis communication.

**“Life Interrupted”²**

Dr. Johanna Miller Lewis, UALR Professor of History and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, won the 2009 National Education Association’s Ellison S. Onizuka Memorial Award for her work creating “Life Interrupted.” This public history research project, which documents the World War II internment of Japanese Americans in rural Arkansas,

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¹. http://ualr.edu/research/?page_id=4
was created in 2004 through a partnership between UALR and the Japanese American National Museum with major funding provided by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

The project resulted in a national conference, “Camp Connections: A Conversation About Civil Rights and Social Justice in Arkansas,” that drew over 1,200 people to Little Rock. It also included eight exhibitions in venues around the city, the development of a documentary “Time of Fear” that examined the Japanese American World War II experience in Arkansas, and the writing of a children’s book. One of the UALR exhibits, “Against Their Will: The Japanese American Experience in World War II Arkansas,” received a Best Exhibit Award from the Arkansas Museum Association at its annual meeting in 2005.

A strong component of the project was the training of master teachers and the development of curriculum so that the story of Japanese American incarceration during the war will be taught in Arkansas schools for years to come.

“Mobile Surveying for Atmospheric and Near-Surface Gases of Biological Origin”

In 2009, a team of Arkansas researchers led by UALR were awarded a $1.5 million NASA grant to develop a system to look for signs of life on Mars. The Arkansas NASA Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) team, which includes scientists from UALR, Arkansas Tech, and Harding University, was among 27 NASA recommended for funding during a national competition. EPSCoR won for its proposal “Mobile Surveying for Atmospheric and Near-Surface Gases of Biological Origin.”

The grant, which requires campus matching funds, was part of the $19 million in grants NASA awarded to colleges and universities nationwide to conduct research and technology development in areas of importance to NASA’s mission. In addition, the awards can be used for faculty development and student research support. The proposal builds on the investigators’ contacts at Ames Research Center in California and on research developed by grants of increasing size from the Arkansas Space Grant Consortium and NASA. The proposal includes outreach activities which are now being developed.

Researchers working on the grant include Dr. Keith Hudson, director of UALR’s Graduate Institute of Technology and the administrative principal investigator on the grant; Dr. Gary Anderson, UALR professor of applied science and the research primary investigator on the project. Other researchers include Dr. Charles Wu of Arkansas Tech University, Dr. Edmond Wilson of Harding University; and Dr. Constance Meadors, a recent UALR PhD graduate also at Harding University.

The work to be performed includes extending the capabilities of a current prototype instrument, integrating the instrument on a mobile robot, and performing increasingly more complex field studies to prove the

2. http://ualr.edu/lifeinterrupted/
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capabilities of the system. The goal of the work is to advance the project to the point where it can be included on a Mars mission in the next decade.

“Effective Crisis Management through Established Stakeholder Relationships”

Dr. Robert R. Ulmer, Chair of the Department of Speech Communication, won the University Faculty Excellence Award in Research in 2007. For almost ten years, the associate professor of speech communication has been a recognized expert in the field of crisis communication, working to “calm the waves” created by an emergency. He was one of the first to focus research on finding positive results from a disruptive wave of crisis. This approach is now used throughout the business and health communities as a way to communicate crisis-driven information effectively.

A preeminent authority in the field of crisis communication, Dr. Ulmer is author of three books and 37 articles integral to the study of communication in response to disaster, whether it is man-made or natural. His expertise has been recognized both on the locally and internationally. His article “Effective Crisis Management through Established Stakeholder Relationships” is one of the most frequently downloaded articles on Sage Publications’ electronic journals.

Presenting Research

UALR faculty show their commitment to a life of learning by publishing, performing, and presenting their work within their profession. For example, during the 2006-2007 academic year, UALR faculty published 219 articles in professional journals, made 440 presentations to professional audiences, and held 97 performances. UALR faculty also present their work to general audiences. During the 2006-2007 academic year, UALR faculty delivered 339 lectures to non-academic audiences and published 46 articles in non-professional publications.


Through its many centers for research and scholarship, UALR demonstrates its long-term planning and financial commitment to supporting inquiry and research. The centers cover a broad range of activities. Many provide opportunities for students to apply and enhance their classroom knowledge. A short description of some UALR centers is given below.
The Nanotechnology Center in the Department of Applied Science provides the analytical capabilities essential to today’s science and engineering related to nanotechnology. The center houses instruments used for the structural and chemical composition analysis of nanotechnology-related materials. The center supports several full-time employees including the Director, the Chief Scientist, the Instrumentation Director, Program Manager, one Research Assistant Professor, one post-doc and three doctoral students. The Nanotechnology Center also provides financial support to one graduate student in the Bio-Nano-Medical Laboratory, which conducts research in tissue engineering, cancer visualization and targeting, and bone/skin growth.

The MidSouth Bioinformatics Center (MBC) is a regional bioinformatics center serving the surrounding seven state area. The MBC is the first bioinformatics center within the region primarily charted to support bioinformatics educational efforts. Through outreach activities with Little Rock secondary schools, professional development workshops for researchers, and career advancement opportunities for working professionals, the MBC also helps advance technical and scientific education within the region.

The Arkansas Center for Earthquake Education and Technology Transfer provides comprehensive earthquake education and technology transfer program in the state of Arkansas and adjacent states. The center has set three distinct but overlapping tasks for its mission: public education, hazard mitigation, and scientific research. Each of these tasks works toward the state’s goal of making communities more disaster resistant.

The Juvenile Justice Center, located within the Department of Criminal Justice, seeks to achieve statewide excellence in juvenile justice through research, policy analysis, and education/training. The center serves as the primary mechanism in the state for research, evaluation, and data collection of the complex issues surrounding juvenile justice. Furthermore, the center trains professionals in Arkansas regarding issues, laws, and policies germane to juvenile justice.

The Center for the Study of Environmental Criminology facilitates UALR’s outreach to the community by providing research and assistance related to crime, community structure and change, and social dynamics within the state. The mission of the center is to substantively advance the knowledge of the nature and causes of crime through research focusing on crime as it relates to community structure and change; criminal activity patterns; the social dynamics of crime; and the relationship between offenders, victims, and the environment where crimes occur.

The Senior Justice Center addresses elder crime at the grass roots level and to address policy issues affecting the elderly through community seminars, scholarly conferences, serving on boards/commissions, operation of the Senior Justice Center hotline and completing research.

1. http://nanotechnologycenter.ualr.edu/
3. http://quake.ualr.edu/
5. http://ualr.edu/seniorjustice/
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The Senior Justice Center is the only one of its kind in the United States that mentors undergraduate students to directly address crime against the elderly. Senior Justice serves as the collector and administrator of the Arkansas Senior Citizen Crime Survey, which provides needed data on both crime and perceptions of crime impacting senior citizens in Arkansas. This is the only statewide annual survey at present targeting seniors and those who work with seniors such that crime policy might be affected. Via collaboration with the UALR Center for the Study of Environmental Criminology, Senior Justice provides the bulk of training for Arkansas Adult Protective Services.

The Center for Applied Studies in Education\(^1\) works to improve the quality of education and human services in Arkansas and globally. The center conducts research on the effectiveness of programs and practices in education and human services; provides technical assistance in statistics, research design, measurement methodologies, data management and program evaluation to students, faculty, and external groups and agencies; and collaborates with other institutions and agencies in meeting their goals for research and program management. Current projects include the Early Head Start National Evaluation Study.

**Acquisition of Knowledge: Student Research**

To integrate research and teaching, UALR has taken deliberate steps to include both undergraduate and graduate students in research projects, adding an enriching component to the educational experience. Student research is supported organizationally through faculty governance structures and financially through support from the Provost's office.

An example is the Undergraduate Research Council. This council grew from undergraduate research initiatives first undertaken in 2002 by Dean Deborah Baldwin of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Science (AHSS). The AHSS Undergraduate Research Committee was eventually opened up to other colleges and, in 2003, brought in two consultants from the Council on Undergraduate Research. In 2004, representatives from all colleges joined the Undergraduate Research Task Force and, in 2007, the Undergraduate Research Council became a standing council of the Faculty Senate with resources from the Provost to support an annual Undergraduate Research Expo\(^2\).

Such support has increased both the quantity and quality of undergraduate and graduate research at UALR. Like faculty researchers, student researchers have received attention and accolades from an international audience.

**Individual Research: Gaming and Sleep Disturbances**

UALR psychology graduate Amanda Woolems ('08) presented her research tying excessive gaming to sleep disturbances at the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies. Her claim that excessive gamers have significantly poorer sleep hygiene and sleep less

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1. http://ualr.edu/case/
on weekdays than other gamers made waves across the globe, from the
Atlanta Constitution to the Times of India to science blogs to online news
updates.

Ms. Woolems’ research was reported around the world, with stories from
gamers who reported that their gaming interfered with sleep and they
slept for 1.6 hours less than other gamers, while those who claimed to be
addicted to gaming slept one hour less on weekdays. Previous research
has shown that excessive gamers spend less time in bed, have longer
sleep latency, and shorter REM latency.

The study examined data from 137 students recruited from the University
who were enrolled in introductory psychology courses. Participants’
mean age was 22 years and a majority of the sample was women (86).
Gamers were classified as casual or excessive (those who spend more
than seven hours a week using the Internet and playing computer
games), based on a demographic questionnaire, and sleepiness was
assessed subjectively through questionnaires. Of the total sample, 10.8
percent reported that gaming interfered with their sleep and 12.6
identified themselves as being addicted to gaming.

Woolems’ research was one of more than 1,300 research abstracts
presented at the SLEEP meeting, a three-and-a-half-day joint venture of
the AASM and the Sleep Research Society.

**Collaborative Research: “Special Child” Project ¹**

Other student research includes collaborative teams. In July, a team of
UALR graduate students became the only United States team competing
for the H.E Suzanne Mubarak Special Award at the worldwide Microsoft
Imagine Cup Software Design Initiative Finals in Cairo, Egypt—a
stunning accomplishment considering it was the University’s first year
competing. This also is the first time in the seven-year history of the
competition that a team from a mid-South university has made the
nationals, much less the world finals.

The Imagine Cup initiative includes ten categories from software design
to short film. In addition, the first lady of Egypt asked Microsoft to create
a special category for software programs designed specifically to help
children. UALR’s team was selected to be one of the five competitors—
the only U.S. team selected for the special award.

The team, composed of graduate students from the Management
Information Systems program located in the College of Business, was
coached by faculty members Dr. Janet Bailey and Dr. James Parrish. Team
members developed a software application that establishes a central
point of information on adoptable children in state, private, and
international agencies around the globe. The application contains
information on families—also located globally—who have registered to
be adoptive parents.

Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization

Team members were Joshua Thacker of Little Rock; Sandy Callahan of Conway, formerly of Benton; Shreyasi Dutta, a native of India now living in Little Rock; and Tomica Seals of Marvell.

“I told them in January we have some of the best students in the country at UALR, and it was time the world knew it,” Bailey said. “Although they didn’t believe me at the time, I think we just proved it.”

The Imagine Cup is Microsoft’s largest competition, and the software company invests millions in it each year. Students had to design software around the theme “Imagine a world where technology helps solve the toughest problems facing us today.” Now in its seventh year, the Microsoft U.S. Imagine Cup attracts more than 200,000 students from more than 100 countries globally to enter the competition.

**Collaborative Research: Dynamic Airport Systems, LLC**

When the Little Rock National Airport needed a creative solution to enhance its efficiency and profitability, Airport Executive Director Deborah Schwartz approached Dr. Mary L. Good, Dean of UALR’s Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT). From that conversation, Dr. Good set in motion a multi-disciplinary team of undergraduate and graduate students from two UALR colleges—EIT and the College of Business—whose mission was to design an advanced information system to alleviate airport inefficiencies.

Not only did the team come up with a 21st century plan to improve service delivery at commercial airports, students also picked up a $5,000 award for their business plan in the process. The UALR team won third place in the coveted Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup for its entry: Dynamic Airport Systems, LLC.

The plan, crafted by EIT undergraduate students Daniel Rucker of Hot Springs, Rodney Arnold, and Tara Lancaster, both of Little Rock, will help airports enhance efficiency and profitability in everything from management to ticketing, providing a hub for collecting, analyzing, and reporting airline arrivals, departures, passenger counts, and other data to airport commissions and billing systems.

The systems engineering students suggest that having a centralized repository of automated information will allow managers to make better informed decisions more quickly, resulting in decreased passenger congestion, less downtime for airlines, and more revenue for airports.

The integrated technology system was coupled with a business strategy created by MBA students David E. Hunt of Cabot, Andrew Herden of Sherwood, and Lindsay Cowling of Benton. This collaboration of ideas and skills was evaluated by a panel of judges made up of Arkansas business executives who reviewed the written plan and oral presentations.

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The team was selected as one of six graduate teams to proceed to the final round of competition. Judging was based on overall feasibility, combined with significant capital gains potential, attractive investment possibilities, and actual implementation. The team’s faculty advisor, Dr. Joe Bell, UALR associate professor of management and entrepreneurship, also received $1,000. According to Dr. Bell, efforts are under way to seek grant funding for the concept.

**Classroom Research: Sustainable Business Practices**

Other student research at UALR includes work to help promote sustainable business practices. For their final projects in Spring 2009, students in Management 4385—Sustainable Business, formed groups to conduct research on sustainable business practices, forming a blueprint for organizations that want to improve the world starting in their own backyards.

Students focused on a number of improvement areas, finding ways for organizations to improve energy efficiency, join groups for like-minded businesses, and save money while utilizing sustainable products. Projects included:

- **Energy Efficiency Funding Opportunities.** Many businesses are eager to implement energy saving measures but need financial assistance in funding the initiatives. Students identified 29 funding sources that included loans, grants, tax credits, tax deductions, and free energy assessments.

- **Sustainable Business Networks.** Students studied 22 nonprofit organizations around the country and found that they are commonly named sustainable business networks and sustainable business alliances. The organizations are membership-based and provide a variety of services, such as speakers bureaus, social events, professional mentoring and support for local sustainable and green businesses, green business certification programs, “Local First” shopping campaigns, and presentations, clinics, and workshops on sustainable business practices. The students’ research serves as the foundation for the creation of the Sustainable Business Network of Central Arkansas, a nonprofit membership-based organization expected to be launched this summer to support the growing sustainable business community of Central Arkansas.

- **UALR College of Business Paper Project.** Students identified ways the University could become more “green” and environmentally friendly in printing practices and paper purchases while also saving money. The research study examined several options to reduce the environmental impact of the College of Business’ printing practices. After considering several options and combinations of options, the students ultimately recommended that the College switch to 30 percent recycled paper, change default printer margins on all College computers, install printer management software on all College computers, change default settings on all printers and copiers to

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1. [http://sbnca.org](http://sbnca.org)
duplex (double-sided copies), and install EcoFont on all computers and set it as the default font.

The combined impact of these recommendations implemented in unison would reduce the College’s paper and ink purchases and result in a 39 percent cost savings over current methods; require the purchase of 151 cases of paper (instead of the current 251 cases) and 26 laser ink cartridges and toner (instead of the current 30 cartridges). The environmental benefits of implementing these recommendations would be 87.3 trees saved, 11.3 tons of wood saved, 16,659 pounds of CO2 emissions prevented, 57,753.6 gallons of water saved, 33,449.9 kilowatts of electricity saved, and 6,985.7 pounds of solid waste prevented.

Creative Endeavors

The students of the creative arts also produce significant amounts of research. The University publications The UALR Forum, Quills and Pixels, and Equinox provide students an opportunity to publish their creative and creative non-fiction writing.

- The UALR Forum\(^1\) is the official student newspaper at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The Forum is funded in part by the student activity fee. Students enrolled in Journalism 3320 and other reporting classes are contributing writers for the Forum. The Forum is published 13 times in each of the fall and spring semesters and twice during each of the two summer terms at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

- Quills and Pixels is the UALR journal of nonfiction writing and is produced by the Department of Rhetoric and Writing’s Editing for Publication class each year. Essays are solicited from across the campus, and submissions are open to both students and faculty. Approximately 1,000 copies are printed each year.

- Equinox\(^2\) is the literary arts magazine published by the English Department at UALR. Submissions of original poetry, short fiction, artwork, and photography (color or black and white) from any UALR undergraduate or graduate student are accepted.

The Departments of Art, Music, and Theater and Dance regularly hold exhibits, performances, and concerts that feature student work, including artwork, choreography, performances, and compositions. These are open to the public.

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1. [http://ualr.edu/forum/](http://ualr.edu/forum/)
Showcasing and Acknowledging the Acquisition of Knowledge

The University acknowledges exceptional faculty research with an annual Award for Excellence in Research or Creative Endeavors, one of the three Faculty Excellence Awards discussed previously. The award publicly acknowledges and rewards faculty whose research or creative endeavors have been particularly successful and have achieved local, regional, and national recognition. Each college selects a faculty member for a college-level excellence award. The college-level winners receive $1,000 to further their research. A panel of national judges selects an individual from among the college-level winners for the University award. The University winner receives $5,000 to further his/her research.

Faculty Excellence Award for Research and Creative Endeavors

- Associate Professor Hussain Al-Rizzo was recognized in 2009 for his work in the areas of applied computational electromagnetic antennas and propagation, wireless communication systems, adaptive and statistical signal processing, and global positioning systems. He serves as an active mentor to both graduate and undergraduate researchers, guiding them to success in their own projects. Dr. Al-Rizzo ensures their work is as productive as his has been for more than two decades. He has earned several patents, written more than 30 peer-reviewed publications, and made countless presentations for international meetings and conferences. Dr. Al-Rizzo previously won the Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching in 2007.

- Professor Xiu Ye was recognized in 2008 for her work in applied mathematics—specifically numerical analysis. She has garnered a $61,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. In the competitive field of professional academics, Dr. Ye has produced 40 scholarly papers that have been accepted for publication. Six of those have been published in the top journal for mathematics scholars, the *SIAM Journal of Numerical Analysis*, and is a nationally recognized numerical analyst.

Some colleges hold events honoring student and faculty scholarship. At its annual event, the College of Business awards the Harper W. Boyd Professor of Excellence to a business professor with a record of excellent research and outstanding instruction.

Recognition of Student Research

To recognize excellence in student research work, the Undergraduate Research Expo showcases undergraduate students’ involvement in scholarly research and creative productions campus-wide. The Expo’s express purpose is to

- celebrate and showcase students’ involvement in scholarly research and creative productions campus-wide
- provide a venue that supports UALR’s combined educational and research missions

allow students to exchange ideas in a professional setting

The first Undergraduate Research Expo was organized in 2006 by the Dean of the Graduate School and the Undergraduate Research Task Force (now the Undergraduate Research Committee) and was funded by the Provost. In Spring 2008, 55 undergraduate students presented posters of their undergraduate research studies in the Third Undergraduate Research Expo. Winners of the project competition, chosen by UALR’s Undergraduate Research Committee, are nominated to present their research in Washington, D.C., at the annual “Posters on the Hill” event organized by the Council on Undergraduate Research. Recent project winners include:

- Beautiful Captivation, Character Defamation, and Orientalist Representation: A Contrapuntal Reading of Memoirs of a Geisha
- Wireless Communications with Biomedical Implantable Medical Devices
- Glycoconjugates Present Potential Antitoxin Therapeutics for Bacillus Anthracis Toxins and Their Complexes
- The Changing Images of Anne Frank

Graduate students may present their research in the UALR Graduate Student Research Forum1 (GSRF), which is sponsored by the Graduate Student Organization. The GSRF is designed to give graduate students the experience of presenting at a conference, but close to home and in a supportive environment. In Spring 2008, 41 research presentations were made in the forum. Recent winning projects included:

- The Effects of Peer Coaching on the Evaluation Knowledge, Skills, and Concerns of Gifted Program Administrators
- Differentiating between Women in Hard and Soft Science and Engineering Disciplines
- Bullet Probes—The Truth Revealed
- Communication Ambiguity and Cosmology Episodes: An Analysis of Crisis Communication Following the Sago Mine Disaster
- An Analysis of Communicative Methods Employed by Geomyx breviceps
- Energetics of Giant Pandas
- An Optimal Controller Design of Bipedal Model

In addition, the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Science holds an annual “Finale” event for performing arts with six other community partners in the arts, as well as an annual awards ceremony honoring student achievement.

The University recognizes high-achieving students through programs including the Chancellor’s List, the Deans’ List, and Golden Key. Several departments offer honors programs, which are posted on the students’ academic transcript at graduation. Students may also earn Graduation Honors.

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1. http://ualr.edu/gsa/index.php/home/graduate-student-research-forum/
Supporters of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s fine arts programs were treated to an evening of dinner theater, as the UALR Opera Theatre’s casts of Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance and Lerner and Loewe’s My Fair Lady performed selections from each show at the Finale benefit April 28. The Jack Stephens Center’s practice basketball court was transformed into a formal backdrop for the night’s festivities, which raised $80,000 for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences’ programs.

The first Finale last year raised $50,000.

KTHV meteorologist and UALR alumnus Tom Brannon served as master of ceremonies. He introduced the 400 guests to UALR’s Friends of the Arts, a volunteer organization, and its seven arts partners in central Arkansas, the Accademia dell’Arte, Arkansas Arts Center, Arkansas Chamber Singers, Arkansas Festival Ballet, Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts.

UALR representatives at Finale included Belcher and his wife, Susan; Chancellor Joel Anderson and wife, Ann; Deborah Baldwin, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; and her husband, Jim. Bob Deupman, executive director of development; Laurie Ann Ross, the corporate and foundation gifts officer; and her husband, Charlie; and Charles Hathaway, chancellor emeritus, and his wife, Betty.

— Samantha Friedman
The University also promotes faculty and student research to the general public through publications such as UALR Magazine, the Info electronic newsletter, the UALR website, the UALR Facebook page, the UALR Ning, the UALR YouTube channel, and Channel 62—the University Television Channel.

**Institutional Support for the Acquisition of Knowledge**

Institutional support for faculty and student research is primarily located within the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). The organizational structure of ORSP has shifted a number of times over the past ten years as the type of research conducted at UALR has shifted. Because of the emerging role of research on campus, the University has re-assessed the function of ORSP. This assessment revealed the office had an inadequate infrastructure to nurture and support faculty doing research and to oversee all of the administrative functions of grants. To address this, the administrative structure of the office was changed. The position of Dean of the Graduate School was expanded to include additional responsibilities for the oversight and support of research activities. This position, now titled Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, directly supervises the Director ORSP.

ORSP ensures accountability, compliance, and stewardship for sponsored research as directed by all applicable federal, state, and university policies, procedures, and regulations. It also supports the fiscal management of funded projects to reduce the administrative load on researchers, project directors, and departmental support staff. It functions as the single point of contact for all activities between UALR and external sponsors.

The Director of ORSP is responsible for the development and administration of grant dollars on campus. This description covers a wide range of duties, such as encouraging and helping the faculty to apply for grants, administering awarded grants, and ensuring that the University is in compliance with all federal and state regulations that affect grants and contracts.

ORSP also provides administrative support to the Institutional Research Board (IRB). ORSP maintains all the official records of business conducted by or in support of the IRB. ORSP staffs the IRB meetings and takes and retains minutes. The office maintains current IRB Review Request forms (both hard copy and electronic), distributes them, receives completed review requests, and processes them for board review.

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1. http://ualr.edu/magazine/
5. http://ualr.edu/tv/
Currently, UALR is guided by the ethical principles set forth by the *Belmont Report of Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Participants of Research* with regard to research involving human participants. This policy covers all research conducted by the faculty, staff, and students of the University regardless of the source of support (internal or external).

All research involving human participants conducted by UALR researchers must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before data collection begins. The IRB operates according to the guidelines in Title 45, Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) and other applicable state and institutional guidelines.

UALR has filed an assurance (FWA 0002205) with the DHHS Office for Human Research Protections stating its intent to adhere to these principles and follow the federal guidelines set forth for conducting research with human participants.

This policy applies if

- the research is sponsored by UALR;
- the research is conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of UALR in connection with his or her institutional duties; or
- the research is conducted by or under the direction of any employee or agent of UALR using any property or facilities of UALR.

Both faculty and student researchers must seek IRB review and approval of each research protocol prior to conducting the research. It is also the researcher’s responsibility to seek review and approval of any proposed modifications to an ongoing study and to initiate continuing review at least annually for the duration of the research project.

UALR requires that all investigators who wish to conduct research with human subjects complete a human research training course hosted by the University of Miami.1 The training is valid for three years. Investigators must also read the *Belmont Report* prior to initiation of the research. The IRB has the authority to approve, disapprove, or request modifications to research protocols involving human participants conducted by UALR researchers or conducted at UALR facilities.

Over the past three years, the IRB has conducted a full review of its protocol to ensure that UALR is in full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. In Spring 2009, the IRB submitted the revised protocol to the Provost and Faculty Senate. This project is a current example of administrative and faculty bodies working collaboratively to develop policies that support UALR’s integrity and metropolitan mission. An additional goal of this project is to make the policy document more accessible to researchers. The project has involved faculty from across the campus and disciplines, administrators, and staff.

Researchers at UALR accept their responsibility to conduct research in an ethical and responsible manner and acknowledge their obligation to protect the rights and welfare of any human participant involved in a

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research activity. The primary investigator and other key researchers are responsible for designing a sound study in accordance with the standards of the discipline and *Belmont Report*.

All research or teaching that involves animal subjects must be reviewed and approved by the University’s Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (*IACUC*). The committee ensures that faculty and students are properly trained to perform or conduct any procedures pertaining to the use of animals. UALR faculty and students must have an approved protocol on file even if they are conducting research outside of the campus. The IACUC meets every six months.

Work done with radiation is overseen by the Radiation Safety Committee (*RSC*) and the Radiation Safety Office (*RSO*), located in the Graduate Institute of Technology, was established to assure compliance with State regulations and the conditions set forth by the license and promote best practices. The UALR Radiation Safety Program assists management at all levels in fulfilling the UALR commitment to furnish a place of employment and learning which is as free as possible from recognized radiation hazards that cause or are likely to cause harm or death to personnel and the surrounding community. In the name of UALR, the Radiation Safety Committee has obtained an academic institution license from the Arkansas Department of Health for the use of radioactive materials. The Radiation Safety Office/Committee approves internal permits for responsible and qualified individuals to use radioactive materials within UALR after the permission has been approved by the Health Department. The permits are approved for the purchase, transfer, use, and disposal of specific amounts of a particular nuclide within the educational and research facilities of UALR. Appropriate application forms must be completed and approved before permission can be granted.

**Fiscal Support of Faculty Research**

As the role of research has increased at UALR, so have the grant awards. Annual reports of the UALR Office of Research and Sponsored Programs show that between 1989 and 2004, the level of external funding secured by UALR faculty and staff increased four-fold from $5 million to $22 million. What makes the record of UALR faculty even more impressive is that the campus does not offer programs in medicine or agriculture, and it also has not had a wide range of doctoral programs in engineering and the sciences—all representing disciplines that enjoy considerable opportunities for external research funding.

The total external awards channeled through ORSP have increased steadily over the past ten years, as shown below.

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Grant and Contract Awards 1998 – 2008 Reported by ORSP

Fiscal Year ............................................................ Total Awards
1998-99 ............................................................... $19,655,858
1999-2000 ........................................................... $20,152,289
2000-01 ............................................................... $18,591,045
2001-02 ............................................................... $21,656,501
2002-03 ............................................................... $24,096,136
2003-04 ............................................................... $20,623,531
2004-05 ............................................................... $22,449,726
2005-06 ............................................................... $27,049,710
2006-07 ............................................................... $21,589,500
2007-08 ............................................................... $24,875,507

Additionally, as ORSP records during 2007-2008 year show, all colleges have been successful in earning grants:

Grant and Contract Activity by College or Unit 2007–2008 Reported by ORSP

College or Unit........Number of Grants Awarded .... Dollar Amounts
Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences ............8 ........$474,500
Business ..........................................................20 ........$1,921,088
Education..........................................................14 ........$3,021,026
Professional Studies ......................................37 ........$6,508,106
Science and Mathematics ................................16 ........$1,816,343
Engineering and Information Technology ......23 ........$2,472,588
Graduate Institute of Technology ..................10 ........$3,228,014
Law .................................................................10 ........$740,311
University Advancement ................................2 ........$2,188,810
Educational and Student Services ................11 ........$1,900,829
Chancellor .....................................................1 ........$261,080
Provost ........................................................... 2 ........$337,862
Vice Chancellor for Finance ......................... 1 ........$4,950
ORSP supports faculty research professional development provides small grants through “Supplemental Sponsored Program Grants” as support for specific sponsored programs of individual tenured and tenure-track faculty members and/or professional staff. Colleges also offer professional development support: for the past two years, the College of Professional Studies has offered summer research grants of $25,000 to support faculty research.

A few internal grants are available at either the college or the university level. The Kathleen Thomsen Hall Charitable Trust supports full-time faculty members and professional staff members in their efforts to contribute to or enhance their own capacity in the arts, sciences, or education. Applicants in any academic field are eligible for this grant, but projects related to the sciences are given special consideration.

### Fiscal Support of Student Research

Grant opportunities also are open to UALR students. The Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) grants from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education support student projects. Recent awards of SURF grants have included:

- M. Kelly. “Internet Replay Sequencing Tool (FIRST).” $3,876 (with Prof. S. Geoghegan)
- Brandon Ballard on the project “Finite Element Analysis of HumanMusculoskeletal System for Simulation of Postural Reactions” (with Prof. G. Huang and Dr. K. Iqbal)
- Coletha-Nichole Johnson on the project “Applications of Digital Signal Controller in Submicron Position Control of a Linear Motor” (with Prof. J Zhang)
- Jason Robison on the project “Computer Simulation of Electrodynamic Screen for Mars Dust Mitigation” (with Prof. M. Mazumder)

The Graduate Student Association supports the efforts of UALR’s graduate students to present their research in various forums. GSA offers grants to students seeking financial assistance in traveling to present their research. These grants are strictly for student research that has been accepted at a conference.

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3. [http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/financialaid/Pages/fa_sur.aspx](http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/financialaid/Pages/fa_sur.aspx)
Other grant and research opportunities are posted online or distributed to students as they appear. One particularly good model is EIT, which distributes research, grant, and internship possibilities in their electronic newsletter.

**Faculty Professional Activity**

As professionals, UALR faculty members serve in significant roles in their academic areas on the local, state, and national level:

- Dr. Robert Bradley in the Center for Applied Studies in Education was appointed to the Advisory Board of the National Household Education Survey, 2007. Dr. Bradley also made invited presentations for the faculty at the University of Seville (Spain) and for university and governmental officials in Glasgow, Scotland, Cardiff, Wales and Bristol, England.

- In 2009, Professor Ann Robinson, Director of the Center for Gifted Education, was elected President of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). Headquartered in Washington DC, NAGC is the largest professional association in the world devoted to research, practice, and advocacy for gifted and talented children.

- Dr. Ann Schlumberger, chair of the Department of Nursing, has served two terms as an elected member of the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC) and currently serves as a Multi-program and ASN Evaluation Review Panel Member and as NLNAC site visitor chairperson. She is also currently serving an elected term as the secretary for the National Organization of Associate Degree Nursing.

- Dr. Barbara L’Eplattenier, Associate Professor in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing, serves on the Executive Board of the Council of Writing Program Administrators between 2007-2010. The WPA is comprised of people who administer first-year writing programs and is a national policy-making group.

- Dr. Angela Sewall, Dean of the College of Education, served as President of the Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities (TECSCU) in 2007-2009. TECSCU is a constituent group of 165 universities that prepare more than 50 percent of the teachers in the United States.

- Dr. Jeff Walker, Graduate Coordinator in the Department of Criminal Justice, served as the President of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, an international professional association.

- Dr. Steve Leslie, former Chair of the Department of Earth Science, served as Chair of the State Board of Registration for Professional Geologists.

- Dr. Ashvin Vibhakar, former Director of the Institute for Economic Advancement, served on the Board of Governors of the Certified Financial Analysts Institute.

- Dr. Tom Guyette, Chair of Audiology and Speech Pathology, served as the national chair of the American Cleft Palette Association.

Faculty in all colleges serve as editors, associate editors, or readers for journals in their disciplines.
• Dr. Carolyn Pearson in the College of Education has been selected as member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Educational Research*, the top journal in educational research.

• Dr. Meagan Jordan in the Institute of Government is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy*.

• Dr. Jim Peck in the Department of Biology was Associate Editor for *American Fern Journal*.

• Dr. Janet Lanza Department of Biology was Book Editor for the journal *Ecology*.

• Dr. Jerry Darsey in the Department of Chemistry served on the editorial board of the international journal, *Journal of Computational & Theoretical Nanoscience*.

• Dr. Steve Leslie, former Chair of the Department of Earth Sciences, served as Associate Editor for the *Journal of Paleontology*.

• Dr. Nickolai Kosmatov in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics was appointed to serve on the editorial board of the journal *Advances in Differential Equations and Control Systems*.

With UAMS, UALR co-publishes *Literature and Medicine*, which is edited by Dr. Charles Anderson in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing. *Literature and Medicine* explores the resonance between literary understanding and medical knowledge. Issues of illness, health, medical practice, trauma, and the body are examined through literary and cultural texts. The journal showcases the creative and critical work of renowned physician writers, leading literary scholars, and medical humanists. Readership includes scholars of literature, history, and critical theory, as well as health professionals.


*The Journal of Appellate Practice and Process* is the only scholarly law journal to focus exclusively on issues, practices, and procedures of appellate court systems, both federal and state, both American and international. Edited by faculty members of the Law School, *The Journal* is designed to provide a forum for creative thought and dialogue about the operation of appellate courts and their influence on the development of the law.

Each issue of *The Journal* is distributed to every active state and federal appellate judge in the United States, to the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada, to interested active appellate judges in other countries, and to subscribing appellate practitioners, trial judges, academics, and law libraries. Through special distribution arrangements, the ABA's Council of Appellate Lawyers and the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers also provide *The Journal* to their members.

*University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law Review* has three primary objectives: (1) to publish articles, surveys, essays, and book reviews that are timely and useful to Arkansas practitioners, the judiciary, and other

members of the state’s legal community; (2) to publish material which reaches national and international legal audiences; and (3) to provide a forum for outstanding student work of both local and national interest, as well as an opportunity for students to gain experience editing scholarly articles. The Review’s circulation list includes all members of the Arkansas Bar Association. Its scope, however, is not limited to jurisdictional boundaries, as many law libraries, practitioners, and judges around the country subscribe to The Review.

Service activity also extends to the national community. UALR faculty are encouraged to use their expertise in all areas. For example,

• Margaret (Beth) McMillan in the Department of Earth Science used her expertise in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to assist first responders in Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina. She volunteered to help develop maps that detailed road conditions, power outages, and facilities with hazardous materials-information used by the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Her work was noted on CNN Radio.

• Lars Powell, Assistant Professor of Finance, testified before a Congressional Subcommittee investigating the availability and affordability of insurance in May 2008.

• Win Bruhl, Chairman of the Art Department, was selected as a single representative of the United States in an International Linocut Symposium in Klenova, Czech Republic in October 2006.

UALR has also hosted a number of local and national conferences. In 2007, UALR hosted the 6th Biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics conference, which drew 400+ national and international scholars together. The theme, Rhetoric and Civic Discourse, drew on Little Rock and Arkansas’s rich history of political and civic involvement. Guest speakers included Minnejean Brown Trickey, an activist and member of the Little Rock Nine; Joyce Elliot, state senator and representative; and Joycelynn Elders, the former Surgeon General of the United State of America.

Other conferences have been held at UALR as well. The School of Mass Communication worked with Investigative Reporters and Editors to host their regional conference here March 5-6, 2005. The National Broadcasting Society held a national Executive Board and National Advisory Council here in 2003 and 2004, and the Girl Scouts of the USA Arkansas Council Realignment Committee PR and IT Sub-committees held meetings here in 2008. The School also worked with the Associated Press and Democrat Gazette to host Associated Press correspondent Bob Reid in November of 2006.

Community of Life-Long Learners

In keeping with its commitment “to provide a community of learning through creation of an academic environment that stimulates students, faculty, and staff to become life-long learners” articulated in the mission objective Community of Learning, UALR encourages life-long learning of its constituencies through various policies and programs.
Recently, UALR passed an admissions policy that allows community members interested in taking courses but not pursuing a degree to enter the University as non-degree-seeking students. As such, they are not required to meet the University’s admissions standards. If the student changes her or his mind and decides to pursue a degree, she or he must formally apply to UALR. Additionally, anyone age 60 years or older can attend UALR tuition-free on a space-available basis.

Other services available to the general public include

• **The Ottenheimer Library.** The Library is open to community members who can obtain library loan privileges and access library databases.

• **Arkansas Small Business Development Center.** The Center provides workshops and consulting services to small businesses and individuals.

• **The Community School of the Arts**\(^1\). The only school of its kind in Arkansas, the Community School offers non-credit instruction in the arts to students of all ages.

• **The Center for Economic Education**\(^2\). The Center offers resources for K–12 teachers and conducts workshops to train K–12 teachers how to integrate economics into their curriculum.

**Upon Reflection**

• The University uses assessment data to improve curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources, and student services.

• University faculty are committed to effective teaching and student learning.

• Faculty are productive in scholarship and creative endeavors, and receive national recognition for their work.

• The University supports student research with human and financial resources.

• Students are receiving national and international recognition for their research.

• The University is experiencing growing pains as it integrates its enhanced research role into its metropolitan university mission and traditional focus on teaching and service.

• It is time for the University to review its general education core curriculum and learning outcomes.

• The University needs to continue building a sense of campus community, in part through increased communication and outreach.

• The current level of funding for technology infrastructure is not meeting the needs of the University.

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1. [http://ualr.edu/csa/](http://ualr.edu/csa/)

**Criterion Five: Engagement and Service**

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

**Core Components:**

5a The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

5b The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

5c The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

5d Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.
Chapter Four: The Connected Organization

Service Mission of UALR

Since becoming a state-funded institution in 1969, UALR has been committed to sharing its intellectual resources to help solve community problems and advance the metropolitan community.

History of Commitment to Service Mission

Dr. G. Robert Ross, UALR Chancellor from 1973 to 1982, was an early proponent of the concept of “urban mission” at UALR. Under his leadership, UALR began to organize outreach units, such as a new Center for Urban and Governmental Affairs, and to modify policies to make it easier for faculty to engage in public service beyond the borders of the campus.

Dr. Charles Hathaway, UALR Chancellor from 1993 to 2002, enhanced the University’s role in the metropolitan area and Central Arkansas region. Before coming to UALR, Dr. Hathaway helped organize the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities and played an important role in drafting the new organization’s declaration of purposes, which noted that “[t]he public service function is particularly important for publicly supported urban colleges and universities. These institutions are partners in the economic, cultural, and social lives of the cities.”

The current Chancellor of UALR, Dr. Joel Anderson, also believes that the well-being of the University and the larger community are intertwined: as one advances or declines, so does the other. At his investiture in 2003, Chancellor Anderson reminded UALR and the Little Rock metropolitan community that

[W]e stand ready to work with the community in solving the pressing problems of our day. And more often than not, when we address the issues in our own backyard, we will be addressing issues of national significance, issues found in metropolitan regions around the nation … Many of the most vexing problems of civilization in the 21st century are found in our nation’s metropolitan communities.

Contemporary Service Mission Statements

The commitment of the University to its constituents and the community continues to be woven into both infrastructure and policies. As described in Chapter 2, “Distinctive Organization,” all mission statements highlight the unique role of UALR in Arkansas to partner with local and state governments, organizations, and businesses to address economic, social, educational, health, and other needs.

The most recent UA Board of Trustees’ Role and Scope Statement for UALR states in part:

Because of its metropolitan location, UALR assumes a special role in relation to the needs of urban areas in modern society in its instruction, research, and public service programs. UALR recognizes and accepts that in the 21st century universities are critical to regional and state economic development… UALR is strongly committed to research and public service. Faculty engage in applied and basic research appropriate to their academic disciplines and in response to economic development needs and other state and regional needs… UALR’s public service mission is reflected in numerous outreach activities by individual faculty members, academic units, and a number of specialized units established to provide assistance and expertise to organizations and groups in the community and across the state.

Partnerships are very important to UALR for they enable the University to extend its reach, increase its effectiveness, and leverage its resources… UALR gives and receives benefit from partnerships with businesses, schools, governmental offices, neighborhood groups, cultural organizations, and nonprofit organizations (2006).

The Role and Scope Statement adopted by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board for UALR in 2008 states:

As the state’s metropolitan university, UALR has the responsibility for serving seven distinct populations, including the following:

- employers across the state, particularly in the region, both public and private, seeking well-educated employees, technical assistance, and applied research
- economic development interests and entrepreneurs in the region and across the state
- the community and area by providing a broad range of academic and cultural activities and public events

Adopted by the UALR Faculty Senate in 1988 and revisited during the strategic planning process in 2003–2004, the mission of UALR explicitly addresses community involvement:

Within this broad mission are the responsibilities to use quality instruction to instill in students a life-long desire to learn; to use knowledge in ways that will contribute to society; and to apply the resources and research skills of the [u]niversity community to the service of the city, the state, the nation, and the world in ways that will benefit humanity. (Emphasis added)

In addition, mission objectives recognize the diversity of the University’s constituents:

- Service to Society: The University has a responsibility to serve society through the application of knowledge and research skills. This responsibility includes applying the University’s resources to local, state, national, and international needs in order to improve the human condition.
• Accessibility: The University has a responsibility to serve the needs of a heterogeneous student population and to make its resources accessible to the general public and to local, state, national, and international groups. This responsibility includes creating opportunities for access to the University’s academic and other resources. (Adopted by the Faculty Senate, 1988) (Emphasis added)

As discussed in the Introduction, during the early- to mid-2000’s, UALR participated in three major environmental scanning initiatives that resulted in comprehensive planning documents: UALR Fast Forward, UALR On the Move, and Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District. All of these evaluation and planning efforts included wide participation by internal and external constituencies, and all three planning documents outline how UALR will serve its constituencies.

UALR Fast Forward

Much of what the University has achieved since 2006 was driven by the information gathered during the strategic planning initiative led by Provost Belcher. The Provost organized a process for broad participation of campus and community representatives. It included a 32-member steering committee, nine expanded subcommittees, standing campus committees, standing external advisory councils, and some 20 focus groups of faculty, staff, and students. The use of electronic discussion technology further broadened participation.

The planning committee included representatives from local and regional businesses and nonprofits including Entergy, Aristotle, Delta Trust Investments, Moses and Tucker Real Estate, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Little Rock School District, as well as county judges in Pulaski and Saline counties. UALR’s priorities related to serving constituencies and meeting state and regional needs are apparent in three of the eight goals and five of the eight pledges in UALR Fast Forward.

Goals

• Goal 3. UALR will continue to expand its graduate offerings to address regional and state needs.
• Goal 4. UALR will expand its research capabilities to support UALR’s academic mission and to strengthen regional and state economic development plans.
• Goal 5. UALR will provide exceptional service through partnerships and outreach activities.

Pledges

• Pledge Three. UALR pledges active support of regional and state strategies to speed economic development.
• Pledge Four. UALR pledges to work in partnership with governmental entities and community organizations and groups to solve community problems and advance the community in other ways.
• Pledge Five. UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the subject of race.

5a Example of Evidence
The organization practices periodic environmental scanning to understand the changing needs of its constituencies and their communities.

5b Example of Evidence
Planning processes project ongoing engagement and service.

5d Example of Evidence
The organization’s evaluation of services involves the constituencies served.
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- **Pledge Six.** UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the need for regional cooperation in Central Arkansas.
- **Pledge Seven.** UALR pledges to work as an active partner in revitalizing the University District, the area of the city immediately around the University.

**UALR On the Move**

For a year, on- and off-campus constituencies were involved in collaborative planning. Throughout the process, the consultant team met regularly with the UALR Campus Master Plan Update Committee, the Chancellor, and the Board of Visitors. At every stage, the campus and larger community were involved through a variety of forums, including workshops, neighborhood meetings, and public open houses. Concurrent planning for the campus and University District allowed for the seamless integration of ideas. Over 150 people—residents from surrounding neighborhoods, business owners, nonprofit leaders, school officials, and local governmental officials—took part in the process.

The resulting master plan update offers a ten-year vision for the physical development of the UALR campus and outlines specific actions to make the plan a reality. In keeping with UALR’s mission as a metropolitan university, the plan forges clear connections with the surrounding community, strengthening the University’s role as a cultural and economic resource to the region. The Campus Master Plan is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, “Future-Oriented Organization.”

**Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District**

*Partners for Progress: Shaping the Future of the University District* resulted from the work of the University District Partnership. The steering committee, consisting of a coalition of neighborhood business, community, and institutional leaders, as well as city, regional, and state department and agency representatives, engaged in a long-term planning process to address the continuing problems plaguing the University District—the area of Little Rock that is home to the University.
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The planning and policy framework articulated in *Partners for Progress* (2007) consists of a revitalization plan that describes major physical development projects that will upgrade the basic public infrastructure of the area and a strategic plan that addresses socio-economic conditions of the area and describes partnerships for delivering programs and services.

The University’s dedication to the social and economic health of the University District is apparent in the goals articulated in *Partners for Progress*:

- **Historic Character.** Establish the University District as a destination of choice that attracts new families and businesses.
- **Housing.** Establish the University District as a place where every type of Little Rock household can find a suitable, affordable home.
- **Public Safety.** Establish the University District as a place where people feel safe in their homes and walking in their neighborhoods.
- **Education.** Raise academic achievement at every educational level within the University District population.
- **Economic Development.** Improve the economic well-being of families, individuals, and businesses within the University District.
- **Environmental Quality.** Improve the environmental quality of the University District.
- **Cultural Identity.** Establish the University District as a primary international business, arts, and cultural destination within the Central Arkansas metropolitan area.
- **Human Services.** Reduce dependency and improve living conditions for persons with special needs living in the University District.
- **Technology.** Establish the technology infrastructure in the University District so that residents and businesses can make full use of e-government and e-business services.

Current University District initiatives are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

**Campus Compact**

UALR is one of only two universities in Arkansas that maintain a membership in Campus Compact,¹ a national coalition of 1,100 colleges and universities that are committed to fulfilling the civic purpose of higher education. As the only national higher education association dedicated solely to campus-based civic engagement, Campus Compact promotes public and community service that develops students’ citizenship skills, helps campuses forge effective community partnerships, and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum.

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¹ http://compact.org/
Chapter Four: The Connected Organization

Office of Community Engagement

In 2001, using a Community Outreach Partnership Center grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and state funds from the Arkansas General Assembly, UALR created the Office of Community Engagement (OCE)\(^1\) to heighten the University’s presence and outreach to the Central Arkansas area. Administered through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Advancement, the OCE works collaboratively with the University District Partnership and has a two-fold purpose:

- to help the community access the knowledge and intellectual capital on the UALR campus
- to support outreach as a critical component of the academic culture at UALR

OCE projects include the following:

- *First Year Experience*. Students are required to complete at least 15 hours of service as part of this course. The OCE assists students in finding service opportunities.
- *Service Fair*. The OCE has coordinated a Service Fair every fall since 1999. The fair assists students, faculty, and staff in finding service opportunities in Central Arkansas. More than 40 community organizations participate each year.
- *Friday Leadership Program (formerly the Friday Sturgis Leadership Program)*. The OCE facilitates the Friday Leadership Program, a scholarship for students interested in leadership and service. Through coursework and service experiences, students in the program address social issues.
- *Service Clearinghouse*. OCE fields requests from community agencies for volunteer placements and connects them with students, faculty, and staff seeking such opportunities.

In 2008, OCE began the Summer Service Learning Academy. One purpose of the academy, which utilizes research and resources available through Campus Compact, is to assist UALR professors as they integrate service-learning into their courses and/or upgrade their courses’ community-based content to a level of true service-learning. Although the content and approaches of individual courses differ, in order for a course to be designated as “service-learning,” it must include the following components:

- activities that provide meaningful service to the community
- an articulated connection between course objectives and service activities
- a structured reflection component

OCE also works to strengthen the capacity of neighborhood-based organizations and to empower residents to become advocates for and instruments of positive change in their neighborhoods and community. It

\(^{1}\) [http://ualr.edu/communityengagement/](http://ualr.edu/communityengagement/)
partners with the City of Little Rock to provide the Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA), a ten-class certificate program. Offered twice a year, the NLA is designed to build the capacity of neighborhood leaders through interactive course work in the following topics:

- strategic planning
- association management
- working with City Hall
- conflict mediation
- crime prevention
- grant writing and fundraising
- youth programs
- desktop publishing
- marketing

NLA significantly affects its participants. Three community members who participated in the NLA its first year applied for and received appointments to city boards and commissions. Two neighborhood associations were formed in the last year using NLA’s training manual as a guide to develop their incorporation papers, bylaws, and working documents. One student became involved in the Arkansas Homeless Coalition, the subject of a case study used in the NLA. One neighborhood started a crime watch program that was included in NLA materials. The Office of Community Engagement is an example of how UALR connects with the community in a way that benefits both.

**Faculty**

The importance of service as an expectation of faculty at UALR is articulated in the newly adopted *Faculty Roles and Rewards* (2008) document, which states the following:

Particularly important to a university such as UALR is discipline-related service to the community. Such activity necessarily incorporates a wide variety of efforts but is defined by the application of the faculty member’s professional expertise to help the community at every level—local, state, regional, national, or international.

Thus, UALR has greater, and slightly different, expectations of its faculty in the area of service than many other universities. Because of this, faculty, staff, and a number of specific organizational units at UALR make contributions beyond the campus through activities variously identified as public service, outreach, professional service, community service, extension, and engagement.

Although these terms carry some different nuances, they all refer to professional activities of members of the university community aimed directly at solving community problems or otherwise assisting people, governments, groups, and organizations beyond the borders of the campus. All involve applying professional, discipline-specific expertise to issues and problems of external constituents.

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5b Example of Evidence
The organization’s resources—physical, financial, and human—support effective programs of engagement and service.

5b Example of Evidence
The organization’s educational programs connect students with external communities.

5b Example of Evidence
The organization’s co-curricular activities engage students, staff, administrators, and faculty with external communities.
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Faculty Commitment to Service

The commitment of the faculty to the service mission of the University is expressed in the results of the most recent faculty survey conducted in 2007–2008 by the Higher Education Research Institute through the University of California at Los Angeles Graduate School of Education and Information. With a response rate of 33 percent, respondents appear to represent a cross section of the faculty in terms of rank:

- Professor, 22 percent
- Associate Professor, 29.2 percent
- Assistant Professor, 30.1 percent
- Instructor, 17.7 percent

Of these respondents, the following responses were gleaned:

- 75.9 percent agreed that “colleges should be actively involved in solving social problems” compared to 71 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- 75.2 percent rated service as being personally “very important” or “essential” compared to 64.7 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- 56.6 percent said that in the current term, they were spending one to four hours per week engaged in community or public service compared to 51.9 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- 57.5 percent said they had used their scholarship to address local and community needs during the past two years compared to 53.2 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- 71.7 percent said they had engaged in service/professional consulting without pay during the past two years compared to 61.6 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- 67.9 percent believed creating and sustaining partnerships with surrounding communities was a high priority at UALR compared to 54.8 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.

Faculty Involvement in Service

Faculty in virtually all academic units are involved in service projects that benefit the constituencies of UALR. This is evident in the diversity of faculty each year who receive college-level and university-level Faculty Excellence Awards in Service.1 Sponsored by different local organizations each year, the service award was created to “recognize, encourage, and reward” faculty whose achievements in serving the public interest have been particularly successful and recognized locally, regionally, or nationally.

The Faculty Excellence Award winners in the area of service have contributed in a myriad of ways to Arkansas—using their talents, expertise, experience, and unique position to contribute to the well-being of constituents and society as a whole.

**Faculty Excellence Award for Service**

- **Dr. Juliana Flinn,** 2009 winner of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and the university-level service award. Dr. Flinn not only evinces a commitment to public service as director of the American Humanities Program at UALR, but also in the ways she devotes her own time and talents to model those behaviors for students and faculty. She was instrumental in developing and gaining internal and external approval for the first undergraduate certificate offered at UALR: the Service-Learning Scholars Certificate described below.

- **Dr. Ashvin P. Vibhakar,** 2007 winner of the College of Business and the university-level service award. Dr. Vibhakar was appointed by the Little Rock Mayor to head the economic development team in the planning effort of Vision Little Rock. He worked to produce a road map for the city’s future economic direction and was instrumental in forming the Metro Little Rock Alliance with 11 counties to promote economic growth of the area. Dr. Vibhakar also served on the Governor’s Economic Advisory Council and the Arkansas Promise Steering Committee to provide access of resources to young people to succeed. He serves on the National Certified Financial Analysts Institute Board of Governors, is a member of the Board of Directors of Arvest Bank, and is past president of the Association of University Bureaus of Economic Research.

- **Dr. Roby D. Robertson,** 2005 winner of the College of Professional Studies and the university-level service award. He is the only person to have won the same university-level Faculty Excellence Award twice—in 1993, he won what was then known as the UALR Public Service Award. His contributions to the UALR Task Force on Water Resources in Central Arkansas culminated in the release of a year-long study that led to the merger of the Little Rock and North Little Rock water departments, which became Central Arkansas Water. He also served on the faculty task force that ended decades-old disputes involving Saline County water districts and produced a model for cooperation that other regions are using today. As a result, Dr. Robertson became a member of the Central Arkansas Water Commission and contributed his insight and negotiating skills to the governing body of the single largest water utility in the state. In this role, he shaped policy and made management decisions for a system that serves more than 350,000 customers.

These are only three examples of the many ways in which faculty at UALR are involved in service projects that benefit the metropolitan Little Rock area and the Central Arkansas region, as well as the national and global community.
Chapter Four: The Connected Organization

Student Involvement in Service

Many courses, program requirements, and co-curricular activities present students with multiple opportunities to practice in the community or participate in public service, and a number of students take advantage of these opportunities. Data collected from a random sample of 691 UALR freshmen and seniors during 2008, using the National Survey of Student Engagement,\(^1\) indicates that 20 percent of freshmen respondents had participated in a service-learning or community-based project as part of a course. Most likely these students were involved in the First Year Experience course, which has a service-learning requirement. Over 33,000 hours of service by students have been conducted as part of First Year Experience courses at UALR since the OCE began keeping statistics in 2003. The course, which has been optional for a number of years, is planned to become a required course for all freshmen beginning Fall 2010.

Internships and Field Experiences

In Fall 2008, 23 different junior- and senior-level internship or field experience courses were offered across 16 degree programs, and 12 graduate internship courses were offered or required in eight master’s programs. According to the 2008 National Survey of Student Engagement survey, 39 percent of seniors said they had participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, or clinical assignment as part of a course at UALR, and 53 percent said they had participated in community service or volunteer work.

Examples of how educational internships benefit community constituencies include the following:

- **The Speech and Hearing Clinic operated through the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, a collaboration between UALR and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS).** Student clinicians under the supervision of department faculty provide speech, language, and hearing services at a reduced rate to members of the community with communication disorders. Each year there are over 5,000 patient visits to the clinic.

- **Internships in the School of Social Work.** By the time they graduate, Master of Social Work students have 1,200 hours of field experience and Bachelor of Social Work students have 400 hours of field experience. Given the average annual graduation of 80 Master of Social Work and 20 Bachelor of Social Work students, this results in an annual average of 104,000 internship hours for the school. Settings for internships include a variety of public, nonprofit, and for-profit human and community service organizations in areas such as health and mental health care, child welfare, education, aging services, hospice care, substance abuse services, services to people with disabilities, and public policy advocacy.

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1. http://ualr.edu/testing/index.php/nsse/
Service-Learning in Courses

The OCE estimates there are 40 different undergraduate courses, often having multiple sections, that include a service-learning requirement. In addition to the more traditional types of internship experiences, a significant number of classes at UALR incorporate some type of service learning—whether it is a small, fast interaction with the public or an entire class devoted to helping and interacting with external communities. For example, in 2008, faculty in the Department of Speech Communication implemented a four-hour service requirement for all students in the required core course Speech 1300, a $100,000 in-kind donation to the greater Little Rock community.

In addition to the work done by the OCE, service-learning projects of all sorts are embedded ad hoc in individual classes throughout campus. Students and faculty also work together on research projects that directly serve society.

The Department of Information Science requires a two-semester capstone course project that requires students to work with community groups and businesses. Past projects have included the following:

- designing and creating an innovative online record-keeping system for St. Vincent Health System that hospital officials say will save them $100,000 in consulting services and several thousand dollars annually in overhead and operations
- creating an effective and user-friendly method of extracting, querying and reporting on log files for AR GIS, as well as figuring out how best to manage, store, and retain files
- creating an application that allowed a person without HTML programming skills to create a webpage on an Aristotle website hosting server. The application allowed the user to upload images to the webpage, select and display graphics from a pre-determined list, type in meta-tags, enter text for automatic display, preview the page, and edit the page overall. Complete documentation was included in the application.

The Construction Management Program’s capstone course requires students to design, develop, estimate, schedule, contract, and administer the works for the completion of a small commercial or light industrial project.

Students in Department of Rhetoric and Writing classes often do projects that incorporate work for the community. The grant writing class writes grants for local, student-selected nonprofits and has secured over $350,000 of funding. The document design class has created brochures, flyers, and handouts for groups such as Amigos, which helps Spanish-speaking children in public school classes. Nonfiction classes have documented oral histories of members of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society.

The Department of Economics and Finance works with Stephens, Inc., an investment bank headquartered in Little Rock, to offer finance majors the opportunity to manage the investments of the Ford Trust, an endowment
to UALR. Each student in the course is paired with a research analyst from Stephens who guides the student in financial analysis of a chosen company.

Department of Speech Communication graduate students helped the Arkansas Department of Health assess state emergency responses to Hurricanes Katrina and Gustav. A small group communication class acted as consultants for nonprofit organizations and made public presentations on their results.

UALR also incorporates service-learning on a broader level into the curriculum. Several academic and scholarship programs at UALR focus on service:

- The Service-Learning Scholars Certificate combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity changes both the recipient and the provider of the service. The goals of the program are to further support the service-learning community of UALR faculty conducting and/or interested in implementing service-learning in their courses and to support the University's mission by strengthening connections among UALR students, the UALR campus, and communities in central Arkansas.

The program, which will be administered through the Office of Community Engagement, is designed be interdisciplinary. Students must take courses across at least three disciplines, and faculty from every college are involved in vetting courses for inclusion in the program. Examples of courses already approved include a Construction Management Service Learning course that requires students to participate in a construction-related labor experience on a community service project such as Habitat for Humanity.

In addition to the scholarly reflections required within each course in which students identify and discuss meaningful connections between their service-learning experiences and a variety of course content areas, students in the program will complete a final integrative reflective essay where they articulate why civic engagement is an inherent responsibility in a democracy as well as the importance of continued civic engagement after graduation.

- The Cooperative Education Program allows qualified students the opportunity to participate in work-integrated learning. Students earn academic credit by enrolling in a co-op course from their academic department. Throughout the semester, students and their supervisors participate in learning agreements, assessments, and site visits. At the conclusion of the semester, students present learning outcomes to the co-op coordinator and their faculty coordinator. On evaluations of the co-op experience, students indicate that it clarifies their understanding of classroom theory, it enhances classroom learning, and it gives them confidence in their choice of major and career. Currently, there are 55 co-op courses at UALR. Additionally, the Cooperative Education Program offers special workshops to its participants on resume writing and interviewing. In a new initiative,

1. http://ualr.edu/co-op/
in Summer and Fall 2008, UALR sent the largest contingent of students, five in all, to the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars internship program in Washington DC through the co-op program.

- The American Humanics Program\(^1\) educates, prepares, and certifies students to strengthen and lead nonprofit organizations. These students, committed to service by their very choice of the minor, complete 300 hours of internship in local nonprofit organizations, including the Red Cross, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, United Way, City Year, Boys and Girls Clubs, Habitat for Humanity, Arkansas Volunteer Lawyers for the Elderly, Partners for Pinnacle, Watershed, Share America, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, National Conference for Community and Justice, and Rape Crisis, in addition to a number of national and international organizations.

- The Friday Fellows Program\(^2\) (formerly the Friday Sturgis Leadership Program), was established in 1997 through the gifts of two civic-minded families. With the program, UALR strives to continue Mr. Friday’s professional and community leadership contributions and further the Sturgis’ goals to advance public education at all levels. In the Friday Fellows program, students combine leadership with service, working with all levels of a service organization.

- The Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management\(^3\) requires students to take 18 graduate level hours. There are two required courses—Nonprofit Organization Management and the Capstone Project—and four elective courses that may be selected from a group of classes.

- The EAST Lab, a cooperative effort between UALR and the EAST Initiative, provides challenging and rewarding opportunities for students who have completed at least one year in an EAST program in high school. Ten $10,000 scholarships are offered each year in conjunction with Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT). EAST Lab requires students to perform 1,200 hours of community service time during their four-year career at UALR. The amounts decrease each year from a high of 450 hours to a low of 150 hours when they reach their senior year. Service hours are performed either in a UALR computer lab, EAST lab and an EIT lab, or working with a community organization to assist them with technology issues. Projects in the past have included creating a website for the Pinnacle Mountain Rendezvous, assisting Helping Hands with a database project, volunteering at Children’s Hospital in the student artists program, and working with a North Little Rock school in playground design. Four-year retention rates in the program approach 70 percent.

The unique community setting of UALR not only gives students the opportunity to develop valuable skills that enhance their professional and personal lives, but it also allows the University to enrich the

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1. http://ualr.edu/amhu/
2. http://ualr.edu/fristur/
community. Academic experiences that integrate service into the curriculum increase civic engagement by students while in college and after.

**Disconnect: Faculty Perception about Student Service**

While the Higher Education Research Institute faculty survey results discussed previously indicate the faculty who responded are committed to public and community service, the data also indicates striking differences between the faculty respondents’ perceptions of what they should and are doing in the area of service and their perceptions of what students should be encouraged to do or are doing. For example, of these respondents, the following information was gathered:

- Only 46 percent agreed “instilling in students a commitment to community service” was a “very important” or “essential” goal for undergraduates compared to 57.3 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- Only 22.7 percent agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” that “most students are strongly committed to community service” compared to 38 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- Only 33.6 percent believed “facilitating student involvement in community service” was a “high” or the “highest” institutional priority compared to 42.2 percent of a national sample of faculty at other public four-year institutions.
- Although 82.3 percent agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” that “colleges should encourage students to be involved in community service activities,” this was lower than the 87.8 percent average at other public four-year institutions.

This disconnect between what faculty respondents perceive is their role in public service versus what they perceive is the role of students is surprising and disconcerting, especially given the history and mission of the University in the area of service to the community. Obviously, there is a need to educate faculty about the level of student involvement in service projects.

**Commitments to Constituencies**

The pledges to external stakeholders articulated in *Fast Forward* reflect broad commitments in response to the strategic challenges of the state, the Central Arkansas region, and the greater Little Rock/North Little Rock metropolitan community. These pledges were driven by identified community needs, and all reflect the desire to align the resources of UALR with the needs and priorities of the state. These pledges and work on them are indicative of the connection the University has to its constituents and to the surrounding community.

In partnerships with external constituencies—educational organizations, governmental offices, nonprofit agencies, and businesses—UALR clearly identifies expectations of both the University and the partnering entity or entities through memoranda of understanding or agreement. When
appropriate, contracts or other legal agreements are used to uphold the University’s integrity. Faculty who are paid for work involving external constituencies must first receive approval from their chair and dean with oversight provided by the Provost.

**Identified Need: Access to Higher Education**

One of the most important needs in Arkansas is access to higher education. Less than 20 percent of Arkansas’s adult population has a college degree; Arkansas is 49th in the number of college graduates. According to the Council for Adult and Experimental Learning\(^1\) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems\(^2\), over 400,000 working-age adult Arkansans have completed some college hours but have no degree. In order to address this need, UALR provides targeted services to create an environment that supports the mobility of the students.

**Serving Students with Transfer Credit**

As with many metropolitan universities, the students at UALR “swirl” in and out of various institutions, sometimes stopping out for a few semesters to save money or attend to family matters. In fact, since 2002, the ratio of first-time entering freshmen to first-time entering transfer students each year has changed from approximately 1:1 to almost 1:2. Almost 70 percent of undergraduate students have some transfer credit.

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<td>2008</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>1217</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>786</strong></td>
<td><strong>1114</strong></td>
<td><strong>1900</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.9%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UALR /g75/g312/g272/g286 of /g47/g374/g400/g415/g410/g437/g415/g381/g374/g258/g367 /g90/g286/g400/g286/g258/g396/g272/g346

As a result, UALR has spent considerable time re-examining policies that hinder students’ ability to access higher education. One of the most important issues for students is transferring credits from other schools. Chancellor Anderson has placed UALR at the forefront of re-examining assumptions made about credit transfer. In a 2009 article entitled “Needed: A Transfer-of-Credit Paradigm Shift,” Chancellor Anderson stated

On each campus the disciplinary faculties—once the custodians of unique, local curricula—have each become de facto custodians and agents of the base of knowledge, curriculum, and notions of best practice of their respective national faculty communities. The reputation of our respective institutions will remain intact, and our graduates will be as well prepared for graduate school or a job, if our campuses readily accepted the credits that students earned from faculty at other accredited institutions... Located in cities—crossroads for a mobile national population—our urban/metropolitan universities attract and serve transfer students in very large numbers. Surely that reality obligates us to find new ways to speed their paths to graduation. (Coalition of Urban Metropolitan Universities Because Place Matters e-newsletter)¹

His argument was based, in part, on the success of the Fast Track Transfer Project, a pilot study designed to ease access to higher education through a revision of UALR’s transfer credit policies. During the 2006–2007 academic year, Chancellor Anderson asked all interested faculty to join him in a discussion about transfer credit due to the changing characteristics of the student body at UALR. The Chancellor was interested in reviewing certain policies that tended to hamper rather than help the academic progress of students toward graduation. These policies spanned five areas: core or general education requirements, major requirements, minor requirements, the requirement for 45 upper-level hours, and the requirement for 30 hours in residence.

In Spring 2007, a transfer pilot program was initiated with four undergraduate degree programs participating: Criminal Justice, History, Biology, Nursing, and Construction Management. These programs were given leeway in making transfer articulation decisions in the five areas identified. Participating departments were asked to keep two broad criteria in mind when considering substitutions, waivers, and exceptions to the current policies: (1) Will the student be as ready for graduate study in the discipline? (2) Will the student be as employable in the discipline?

Preliminary evaluation data collected indicate that the accommodations granted through the pilot result in students graduating sooner than they would have otherwise. Additionally, faculty enjoy having the flexibility to address the unique needs of each transfer student rather than feeling constrained by policies largely created for students without transfer credit.

One unexpected finding related to the pilot was that some of the policies that create seemingly unnecessary roadblocks for transfer students also disadvantage students who matriculate only at UALR. As discussed in “Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization” on page 61 initial planning to evaluate the structure and requirements of the University’s core curriculum has begun. As this process moves forward, the results of the pilot Fast Track Transfer Project can help inform ways of eliminating these roadblocks.

¹ http://www.cumuonline.org/membership/newsletter6_09.htm
Serving Students with Military Credit

Driven in part by the success of the Fast Track Transfer Project and the changing demographics of the student body at UALR, steps were taken in 2008 to make higher education more accessible to another one of UALR’s student populations: military personnel. UALR is located near Little Rock Air Force Base and the National Guard’s Camp Robinson, the center of educational services for all 400,000+ Army National Guard soldiers nationwide. As a result, UALR has significant numbers of students with current or past military experience. In 2008, UALR began an initiative to become a military friendly university. Significant progress has been made.

• Changing the policy on how military education credits are evaluated as transfer credits. The new policy states: “… military education credit evaluated by the American Council on Education will be accepted as transfer credit at UALR.”

• Creating a task force to help plan a comprehensive, holistic approach to meeting the needs of active duty, National Guard, and retired military personnel who are interested in attending UALR either through online, hybrid, or traditional programs was created. Recommendations from this task force resulted in the appointment of a military ombudsman located in the Provost’s Office. UALR is now listed in the 2010 Guide to Military Friendly Schools.1

• Educating faculty and staff about “trauma informed” best practice models of support needed to help military veterans succeed on campus. For example, in February 2009, faculty and staff participated in the Academic Impressions Webinar Psychological Needs of Returning Veterans sponsored by Educational and Student Services.

Partnering with Two-Year Colleges

As UALR faculty have been adjusting to the changing composition of the student body and examining internal policies and processes, external political factors also have been at play. The relationship between UALR and the closest two-year institution, Pulaski Technical College (PTC),2 based in North Little Rock, has not always been smooth. In the late 1990’s, due to the importance of both institutions to the Central Arkansas region, UALR and PTC received encouragement from the state legislature to strengthen the relationship. Discussions among academic affairs and student services administrators from both institutions led to a less adversarial relationship between the two schools. Once this was accomplished, an articulation guide was created that specifically outlined the courses PTC students needed to take in order to transfer as seamlessly as possible into any degree program at UALR.

In 2004, UALR and PTC further strengthened their partnership by establishing an advising office on the main campus of PTC for students interested in transferring to UALR. The liaison officer has advised and assisted hundreds of students. The liaison job entails serving as a

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2. http://www.pulaskitech.edu/
resource for prospective UALR students and providing information about the admissions process, financial aid, transferring credit, and academic advising. The liaison also acts as a representative of UALR at recruitment fairs and PTC community activities.

Further, the institutions have formed two groups, one composed of academic administrators and the other of student support administrators, that meet twice a year to discuss ways in which the institutions can work more collaboratively. One result of these meetings was the creation of the Bachelor of Applied Technology in the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology, which was approved in 2006. This 2 + 2 program is specifically designed to allow students who have received an Associate of Applied Science in an information technology area to complete a baccalaureate degree by taking fewer additional lower-level hours. At this time, three additional departments are working on other 2 + 2 programs: Mass Communication in the College of Professional Studies, Management in the College of Business, and Health Sciences in the College of Science and Mathematics.

The experience of creating a collaborative relationship with PTC placed UALR in a unique position among the four-year institutions in the state as the Arkansas Legislature began to focus on transfer issues in higher education during the mid-2000’s. Discouraged by a lack of cooperation among state institutions regarding the transfer of core or general education credit, the legislature passed Act 672 in 2005, which established the Arkansas Core Transfer System.¹ This system expands and at some point will replace the State Minimum Core Document. It includes “commonly taught” lower-level courses and ensures their transferability among state institutions toward general education requirements. It also identifies these courses as being “equivalent for prerequisite purposes,” thereby ensuring students cannot be required to retake the course at a four-year institution when applying it toward a major or minor.

Then, in 2009, the Arkansas State Legislature passed Act 182, also known as the Roger Phillips Act, to

create a system for fully transferable credit hours from degrees in Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Arts Teaching among public institutions of higher learning.

Although many of the provisions in this Act are still being defined and clarified, one of the requirements is that every four-year university must establish an articulation agreement with every two-year college within a 50-mile radius of it.

Building on the experience with PTC and keeping in mind the composition of the campus, UALR has seized the opportunity to be at the forefront in working collaboratively with other state institutions in regard to transfer credit and to providing a welcoming environment on campus for transfer students. The newly created Office of Transfer Student Services (discussed in Chapter 3, “Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization” on page 61) will help achieve both.

¹. http://acts.adhe.edu/
Originally identified as a need in the MGT of America, Inc. (discussed in “Chapter Three: The Learning-Focused Organization” on page 61), report, the idea of establishing an office focused on students with transfer credit also had been suggested by the retention task force to strengthen advising. One of the goals of this office is to cultivate more collegial relationships with two-year institutions across the state, and to develop full articulation agreements with the top five from which UALR receives students.

Serving High School Students: Concurrent Enrollment

In addition to relationships with other institutions of higher learning, UALR has worked with K–12 schools to improve access to higher education. In 1998, UALR began a partnership with the Little Rock School District to establish a concurrent enrollment program, which allowed qualified students at Hall High School (the designated partner school) to enroll in UALR courses for university credit while simultaneously satisfying high school course requirements. Participating UALR academic departments provided an instructor who team-taught with a Hall faculty member.

By 2005, however, the number of students eligible for university credit at Hall had diminished drastically as a result of enrollment pattern changes in Little Rock School District high schools. The University made a decision to phase out the program due to instructional costs, the challenges of finding available UALR faculty, and the decreasing number of eligible students.

Then, in 2006, the Arkansas State Legislature directed the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to develop a governing policy for institutions of higher education choosing to offer concurrent credit to high school students. This policy, adopted in April 2007, permits students to enroll in university courses that are taught solely by a high school faculty member who meets the qualifications for teaching as determined by the University’s academic department in which the course is offered. Additionally, it allows for AP (advanced placement) courses to be merged with university courses, if agreement can be reached between the University and the AP teacher. It also allows for the students to be enrolled without tuition being assessed to the student. The University must, however, budget grant-in-aid equivalences to offset the cost of tuition.

This new arrangement changed drastically the opportunities for offering concurrent credit. As a result, UALR in 2007–2008 has partnerships with five schools in four counties and is offering credit in 27 courses in nine academic departments to over 600 students during the current academic year. Under the authority of the program guidelines modified by the Faculty Senate in 2006 to accommodate the new opportunities, oversight of the program is vested in a campus coordinator who reports to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

UALR is actively participating in another concurrent enrollment program for students attending the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts (ASMSA), the only high school in the UA System—an advanced placement residential school located in Hot Springs, Arkansas. UALR
works with the faculty of the school to determine standards for concurrent enrollment classes, teaches some of those classes, and works with school faculty to assess the outcomes of the students enrolled in concurrent classes. This collaboration has been exceptionally fruitful, as significant numbers of ASMSA graduates have chosen to attend UALR after their high school graduation. For the last three years, UALR has been the top choice among the ASMSA graduates. Running a close second is the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. ASMSA students are highly sought after by other institutions of higher education. The 100 members of the 2008 graduating class were offered over $1.3 million in scholarships from various institutions such as Brown, Case Western Reserve, Yale and, of course, UALR.

**K–12 Partnerships: The Central Education Renewal Zone**

In response to the need for successful school-community partnerships, in 2003, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 106, which established Education Renewal Zones across the state to promote collaboration among public schools, education service cooperatives, and colleges and universities, as well as parents and community members. The Act states “that schools and [the] educators who serve them could benefit from a more focused and sustained collaboration with each other, the regional education service cooperatives, and the institutions of higher education engaged in teacher and school leadership preparation.”

Housed on the campus of UALR and administered through the Dean’s office in the College of Education, the Central Education Renewal Zone (CERZ) was established in 2005 and is comprised of partnerships among UALR, Little Rock School District, and Magnolia Public Schools. During the 2005–2006 year, a group of 19 original stakeholders was expanded to 53 members and was renamed the Central Education Renewal Zone Advisory Council.

This group met systematically throughout the 2005–2006 school year to refine the CERZ planning process. The CERZ director met with school superintendents, principals, faculty and staff members, UALR administrators, Deans Council, faculty and staff, and area business leaders and community groups in an ongoing process of networking.

After some initial set-backs, including the loss of the program director, in 2007, the Advisory Council finalized its strategic plan, which outlines how the CERZ will address and evaluate progress toward accomplishing the following eight legislative requirements articulated in Act 106:

- develop meaningful collaboration between and among the higher education institution partners, education service cooperatives, schools, and communities participating in the CERZ, including academic departments within the higher education institution partners
- develop a comprehensive program of professional development to assure the practical knowledge base of pre-service and in-service teachers with respect to pedagogical practice, content knowledge, and competent use of distance learning technology

• enhance and expand local school curricula offerings through the use of two-way interactive television to include advanced placement, dual credit, and advanced high school courses
• develop a means of sharing faculty for core course offerings when schools are unable to hire highly qualified teachers in core subject areas required for college entrance or teachers necessary to meet state accreditation standards
• develop a strategy to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers with particular focus on hard-to-staff schools
• develop a system for mentoring teachers with three or fewer years of professional service as well as career status teachers whose performance indicates the need for such help
• develop active participation of the community in the work of the school and parents in the academic work of the school
• outline short-term and long-term evaluation strategies, including a means of collecting data necessary to evaluate the progress of each participating public school and the CERZ in its entirety

According to the 2008 Annual Report

CERZ made a great deal of progress during the 2007–2008 school year. All legislative requirements achieved some level of success with the greatest growth in the areas of collaboration and professional development. All projects initiated during the year were successfully completed on schedule except for the High School Redesign, which did not progress as planned.

Achievements noted include the following:

• the development of a comprehensive website and newsletter to strengthen communication among members and facilitate work group efforts
• the development of a catalog of professional development services specifically tailored to the needs of the partners
• the identification of specific strategies to recruit highly qualified teachers for hard-to-staff schools
• the implementation of a mentoring system, including Pathwise mentor training for cooperating teachers who work with teacher candidates in their field placements, Co-Teach training, the Middle School Summer Science Institute funded through the No Child Left Behind Math Science Partnership Grant, and the new Smart Start Part II Science Institute
Collaboration with Other Universities

The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

In 2007, UALR became part of a three-campus consortium that received a $9 million grant from the National Science Foundation. The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) program, awarded by the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, will create the Arkansas ASSET Initiative (Advancing and Supporting Science, Engineering, and Technology). This grant enables UALR, in partnership with the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF) and Arkansas State University (ASU), to create a new three-campus research initiative aimed at converting research discoveries into commercially viable products and dramatically advancing Arkansas’s knowledge- and technology-based economy. The grant will support two scientific research areas that have major economic development potential: wireless nano-bio-info-technology sensors and plant-based bioproduction.

One aspect of the grant will support the Wireless Nano-Bio-Info-Tech Sensor System and Center, which will create a collaborative infrastructure for the design of arrays of nanosensors that can be integrated with wireless systems and fabricated with a specialized, yet low-cost, nanofabrication technology. Examples of such sensors include

- monitoring levees so that problems can be corrected before levees collapse
- monitoring physiological functions (e.g., a diabetic’s blood sugar level)
- monitoring chemical and biological molecules for protection of emergency personnel

The second aspect of the grant will establish the EPSCoR Center for Plant-Powered Production. This center will build on Arkansas’s existing strengths in agriculture and the food industry and recent investments in research at the interface of agriculture, the environment, and medicine, to develop research infrastructure, resources, and cross-disciplinary, multi-institutional collaboration in plant-based bioproduction. The goal of this arm of the program is to advance discoveries in the fundamental biology of plant-based bioproduction to improve the nutritional value of food, develop sustainable biofuels, and develop new crop varieties that are resistant to drought and other environmental stresses.

1. http://technologize.ualr.edu/?p=64
The cooperation among the three universities will enhance Arkansas’s research competitiveness, create added research and training opportunities, attract top scholars, enable Arkansas to form new links with national and international programs, and create new economic opportunities for industry and entrepreneurship.

The William J. Clinton Presidential Library.

**Clinton School of Public Service**

Working with UAF and UAMS, UALR was instrumental in the creation of the Clinton School of Public Service (the Clinton School),¹ the nation’s first program to offer a Master’s in Public Service degree. The Clinton School, located on the campus of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock, offers curriculum on global leadership and civic engagement and promotes a vision of world leaders who are able to work effectively with individuals and organizations to build healthy, engaged, and vibrant communities, both in Arkansas and across the globe. The program is designed to help students gain knowledge and experience to further their careers in the areas of nonprofit, governmental, volunteer, or private sector service work, specifically in the area of global equity. Applicants are drawn from a variety of disciplines that are relevant to public service.

A number of UALR faculty members have been active in the planning and operation of the Clinton School:

- Dr. Deborah Baldwin, Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Dr. Margaret Scranton, professor of political science; and Dr. Angela Brenton, Dean of the College of Professional Studies, helped design and develop the Clinton School’s curriculum.

¹ http://clintonschool.uasys.edu/
• Dr. David Sink, professor of public administration; Dean Angela Brenton; Dr. Sharon Wrobel, assistant professor in the Institute of Government; and Dr. Sandra Robertson, Chief of Staff and Director of the Budget, have served as faculty members at the school.

• Dr. Michael Hemphill, professor of communication at UALR, currently serves as the Clinton School’s Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Collaborative Doctoral Programs

UALR offers three collaborative doctoral programs:

• PhD in Bioinformatics. Offered through a collaboration between UALR and UAMS, the program is designed to train students to research, develop, and apply computational tools and approaches for analyzing and expanding the use of biological, medical, behavioral, and health data.

• Doctor of Audiology. Offered through the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, a collaborative program between UALR and UAMS, this degree is designed to emphasize the sciences of hearing, speech, and language; the acquisition of knowledge about human communication disorders; and the study and practice of methods for evaluation and treatment of individuals with hearing loss and/or balance disorders.

• PhD in Communication Sciences and Disorders. Offered through a consortium that includes the Departments of Audiology and Speech Pathology at UALR, UAMS, and the University of Central Arkansas, the program is designed to prepare graduates to be faculty members and scientists at institutions of higher education.

Collaboration with other universities enables UALR students to be connected with other students from around the state and has a global impact.

Regional and State Economic Development

Pledge Three. UALR pledges active support of regional and state strategies to speed economic development.

This pledge reflects an understanding that universities have become critical economic assets indeed, economic engines in a high-tech, knowledge-based economy. UALR will be a ready partner and a strong contributor to innovative entrepreneurship, research, and development activities in the region and in the state.
UALR has a well-earned reputation for helping facilitate economic growth in Central Arkansas. Many units, such as the Nanotechnology Center or the Virtual Reality Lab, conduct research that will ultimately develop into economic opportunities for the state. In addition, UALR has two outreach units specifically purposed to help innovate entrepreneurship in the state—the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center and the Institute of Economic Advancement. One other outreach unit—the Institute of Government—is purposed with helping governmental entities and nonprofit organizations maximize and improve their work.

Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center

The College of Business houses the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC),¹ funded approximately 50/50 by the University and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The ASBTDC was established in 1980 as the Arkansas Small Business Development Center and is the state’s only economic development entity that provides face-to-face assistance to Arkansas businesses in their local communities through a network of seven offices located around the state. It is one of only nine Small Business Administration offices in the country to qualify for the “T” designation, indicating they do significant work with technology.

In addition to face-to-face consulting, ASBTDC provides numerous classes and short courses on starting a business, cash flow, loan proposals, marketing, business planning, and government contracting. It has an outstanding record in guiding clients to financing for start-ups or expansions. An economic impact study in 2004 by a Mississippi State University researcher found an annual effect of $73 million in increased sales and $3.3 million in tax revenues for Arkansas.

Over the last decade, ASBTDC clients created 2.4 new jobs per day for a total of 8,575 new jobs, and its clients made $260,000 in new sales per day for a total of almost $1 billion in new sales. Clients also obtained more than $130,000 in financing per day for a total of more than $476.1 million in financing. Additionally, ASBTDC clients generated $42.3 million more in state and $23.8 million more in federal taxes than if they had performed like the average business in the state. Arkansas businesses assisted by the ASBTDC provided significantly more economic impact than the average Arkansas small business over the last decade. ASBTDC clients have an average sales growth that is 19 percent higher than the average Arkansas business and average employment growth that is 17 percent higher than the average Arkansas business.

The continued ability of ASBTDC to help clients produce results such as these will be hampered by current economic conditions, and how long they last. It is almost certain that the trend in growth, sales, and tax revenues experienced over the past few years will not be maintained;

5a Example of Evidence

In responding to external constituencies, the organization is well-served by programs such as continuing education, outreach, customized training, and extension services.

5d Example of Evidence

The organization’s economic and workforce development activities are sought after and valued by civic and business leaders.

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¹ http://asbtdc.ualr.edu/
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however, based on past performance, there is every reason to believe that the services and resources offered through the ASBTDC will result in positive outcomes for its clients.

The Institute of Economic Advancement and The Institute of Government

In 1990, then-Provost Joel Anderson presented a reorganization plan that involved outreach units that jointly or separately provided research and technical assistance to both state and local governments and to businesses. Two units were formed: the Institute of Economic Advancement and the Institute of Government.

Institute of Economic Advancement

The Institute of Economic Advancement (IEA)¹ is an excellent example of how UALR economic and workforce development activities add value to the state. Located in the Donald W. Reynolds Center for Business and Economic Development, the IEA is a part of the College of Business. It is comprised of a unique collection of professional expertise divided into three basic functions: data collection, data analysis, and continuing education training. IEA is one of the largest outreach units at UALR with a budget of $3 million and 48 employees.

In a single location, IEA provides specialized services that support the economic advancement of Arkansas and are available to businesses, governmental units, labor organizations, communities, and private individuals throughout the state. In particular, IEA is dedicated to supporting the economic-development community by serving as a source of sound and credible research and training. Covering a broad range of issues, IEA assists as a catalyst for the University’s contribution to providing effective state economic development strategies and increased vitality in business and industry. IEA is a multi-leveled organization, housing five distinct units, each of which in turn houses additional groups. The following list highlights just a few of the projects housed within the institute.

• **The Center for Economic Development Education** offers training, planning, and development services to economic developers and economic development organizations. The training complements career development courses available for professionals in economic development and prepares volunteer leaders for their participation in their communities’ economic development programs.

• **The Census State Data Center’s** main responsibility is one of dissemination. The center receives all the Arkansas census information and provides technical assistance in the understanding and application of the census information. Also housed in this unit are the Children’s Research Center and the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Application Lab.

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¹ [http://iea.uarl.edu/](http://iea.uarl.edu/)
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- The Children’s Research Center is a major source of information on the well-being of Arkansas children and their families. Data available through the center include demographics for each county as well as information on the safety and security of children. Other indicators of well-being include the health status, educational level, and economic status of Arkansas residents.

- The GIS Application Lab’s mission is to provide demographic, environmental, marketing and socio-economic data through the development of geopolitical databases and applications of geographic information and spatial analysis systems. This facility assists businesses, governmental agencies, and educational institutions throughout Arkansas with training, database resources, and problem resolution.

- The Workplace Skills Enhancement Program provides information, resources, and services to assist in providing the training necessary to equip workers to participate in today’s global economy. The program is structured to help working men and women to acquire the foundation skills and knowledge essential to perform effectively on the job and to achieve their occupational goals.

- The Management Education and Development Program partners with Arkansas businesses and organizations and specializes in management education and development programs for organizations in both the public and private sectors. The public programs are generic and cover relevant issues of the day. The private programs are customized, on-site workshops, tailored to the needs of Arkansas businesses or organizations. The program annually presents the Arkansas Executive Summit, bringing top business leaders together in a “share and learn” environment.

- The Economic Research and Forecasting Group operates a large-scale econometric model of the Arkansas economy in combination with U.S. macroeconomic forecast services provided by Global Insight, Inc. (formerly DRI-WFEA, Inc.), a leading national forecasting group. The state economic model includes economic and industry components for employment, wages, personal income, housing, and gross state product by sector.

- The Survey and Business Research Operation provides unbiased, comprehensive primary and secondary research efforts to serve a wide range of clients in the areas of industry, economic development, state/city/county governments and agencies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and the public. The unit tracks relevant economic and business indicators through a statewide business conditions survey and a variety of related database efforts.

IEA also has worked closely with external partners. For almost seven years, IEA has worked with the Metro Little Rock Alliance (MLRA), which represents 11 Central Arkansas counties and includes the cities of Little Rock/North Little Rock, Pine Bluff, and Hot Springs. MLRA serves as the economic development marketing agency for this region, which encompasses nearly one million people. IEA has assisted MLRA in its initial organization in 2002 and has conducted two major technical assistance

1. http://iea.ualr.edu/
projects. The first of these projects involved working with a private consulting firm, Angelou Economics, in the development of the MLRA’s first strategic plan. IEA provided the entire “Community Assessment” portion of that plan and helped organize and host numerous focus groups and surveys of regional leaders. The resulting strategic plan has been implemented with considerable success. The regional group has received numerous inquiries from consultants and site selection experts, and several notable businesses have been attracted to the region.

The second project, which took place during 2006–2007, had the Census State Data Center group working with Aristotle, a local web development company, and MLRA to develop an online database and interactive mapping site for the 11-county region. The extensive database provides detailed information for all 11 counties that conform to a 21-table set of data standards recommended by the International Economic Development Council. The website and supporting database are the most important elements of the MLRA marketing effort and have been used extensively both by local developers and by consultants considering the region for new business investment.

**Institute of Government**

The governmental counterpart to IEA is the Institute of Government (IOG), which is housed in the College of Professional Studies. The IOG helps improve the quality of government and nonprofit agency management in Arkansas through its major functions of education, research, technical assistance, and training. IOG has been an integral part of the College of Professional Studies through its Master of Public Administration program. It is the only outreach unit at UALR with a degree-granting program embedded.

IOG’s accredited Master of Public Administration program has six full-time faculty members and has graduated over 400 students who serve in key positions in state and local government and nonprofit agencies. Also available is an MPA/JD concurrent degree program with the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law, as well as graduate certificate programs in nonprofit management and conflict mediation.

Like IEA, the IOG is a multi-faceted organization that includes multiple outreach centers:

- **The Survey Research Center** has expertise in all aspects of survey development, execution, and analysis. It utilizes this knowledge to serve government and nonprofit agencies. The center conducts studies of the attitudes, perceptions, environment, and behavior of groups, organizations, and individuals for state and local government and nonprofit agencies. The center provides a full range of survey research services, including research design, sampling design, and weighting, data collection (by computer-assisted telephone interviewing and mailings), data analysis, report writing, and presentation of results. The Survey Research Center completes

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1. [http://ualr.edu/iog/](http://ualr.edu/iog/)
2. [http://ualr.edu/mpa/](http://ualr.edu/mpa/)
3. [http://ualr.edu/iog/surveyresearch/](http://ualr.edu/iog/surveyresearch/)
$700,000 in contracts annually for state agencies to study public health issues, state resource needs, and other state priorities. Recent clients have included the Arkansas Department of Health for surveys on cardiovascular health and the UALR Racial Attitudes Survey.

- The Center for Nonprofit Organizations has a mission to improve the capacity of the nonprofit sector through an interdisciplinary application of community and university resources, which include the flagship nonprofit academic programs, the minor in American Humanics, and the Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management. The center partners with the Arkansas Coalition for Excellence in providing a clearinghouse for university resources to support the success of nonprofit organizations. One of its first projects was assisting Lion’s World Services for the Blind in planning and development activities. Another example of its work is the 2008 report on the economic impact of nonprofit organizations in the State of Arkansas. The report is titled The Benefit of Doing Good: The Structure, Contribution, and Impact of Arkansas Nonprofits on the State’s Economy and is available as both a full report and an executive summary. The report finds that nonprofits employed almost 70,000 workers in 2005–2007 and paid their workers more than $2.2 billion during the same time period. In 2005–2006, nonprofits received approximately $247 million in grant funds with over 44 percent being funded by out-of-state grantors; they provide $8.3 billion in goods and services to the state.

- The Center for Public Collaboration assists Arkansas leaders, citizens, and organizations with inclusive discourse and effective collaborations on public issues. The center offers training, consulting and facilitation. Serving as the Arkansas clearinghouse for information on collaborative governance, the center is a member of the national University Network for Collaborative Governance. The center has been established to promote collaborative solutions to pressing public problems such as transportation, environmental and water disputes, and to promote participative involvement of citizens in governmental processes. The center supports a life of learning through the Public Dialog Project, non-adversarial deliberative forums where potentially divisive public issues can be explored constructively. It is home to a graduate certificate program in conflict mediation.

- The Arkansas Public Administration Consortium is a collaborative effort with the Master of Public Administration programs at UAF and ASU, administers various management certificate programs for government and volunteer administrators across the state. The consortium trains hundreds of county and state employees yearly through its Certified Public Manager® Program. Its nonprofit training includes the Certified Volunteer Manager Program, which teaches administrators and managers of volunteer programs how to

3. http://ualr.edu/apac/
effectively manage their volunteer staff by providing them with leadership and management training designed specifically for the needs of the volunteer professional.

### Community Advancement

*Pledge Four.* UALR pledges to work in partnership with governmental entities and community organizations and groups to solve community problems and advance the community in other ways.

This pledge reflects the outward orientation of a metropolitan university. It means that UALR will share and leverage its resources through partnerships in active efforts to solve problems and otherwise advance the metropolitan community.

As Chancellor Anderson noted during the first regionalism conference discussed later in this chapter, there are some things that UALR can do more easily, and better, than other groups in the area. Community leaders recognize and value the ability of UALR to conduct research, provide good information, and facilitate discussion and debate in a neutral setting. As a result, the Little Rock metropolitan community has repeatedly approached UALR for assistance in addressing a number of challenges.

### Water Use Studies

In 2000, the mayors and water commission chairs of North Little Rock and Little Rock approached UALR about helping to resolve the decades-old controversy over water issues between the two cities. Commissioned by then-Chancellor Hathaway and chaired by then-Provost Anderson, an interdisciplinary team of six UALR faculty members worked to understand the complexities and history of the two cities, and to find common ground for each city. They ultimately issued a report entitled *Water for Our Future: Overcoming Regional Paralysis.* The report led to a regional approach to water and a formal merger of the two water utilities under a regional umbrella, Central Arkansas Water, which is still in operation today.

The successful outcome of the North Little Rock/Little Rock water study led to UALR’s being asked to conduct a second water study, *Water for Saline County: A Tale of Two Futures,* in 2002 by the county judge and other community leaders in Saline County, perhaps the most litigious county in the state in regard to water issues. Again, an interdisciplinary team of seven faculty members and one graduate student studied and helped resolve decades of controversy among 14 different water purveyors in Saline County (many of whom were suing each other) with recommendations that they jointly establish a Saline Watershed Regional Water Distribution District, a plan which was adopted, approved by the court, and is in place today.

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1. [http://ualr.edu/provost/water.pdf](http://ualr.edu/provost/water.pdf)
Study of Public Transportation

A study of the public transportation system, Central Arkansas Transit Authority, co-chaired by faculty from the College of Professional Studies and the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology, led to significant changes in the infrastructure of the greater Little Rock metropolitan area. In 2003, an interdisciplinary team of nine faculty members and one graduate student conducted a study of Central Arkansas transit issues at the request of the Pulaski County Judge and the mayors of the five municipalities that constituted Metroplan, the regional planning agency. The report, *A Call for Regional Leadership: Public Transit in Central Arkansas*, included benchmarking and evaluation that has produced a better understanding of the needs and the quality of service of the Central Arkansas Transit Authority, the joint public transit agency. The team also provided recommendations for an expanded, better-funded transit system.

And most recently, in 2006, *Breaking the Crime Chain: Making Pulaski County Safe* was completed by a task force of UALR faculty and staff. After a quarter-cent tax increase was rejected by voters despite increasing trends in crime that included a record number of homicides, community leaders asked UALR to examine public safety issues. Chancellor Anderson asked Chancellor Emeritus Hathaway to create a task force of university experts in public finance, law, accounting, criminal justice, communications, and public history to evaluate the needs of the Pulaski County Regional Detention Facility and the sheriff’s office and to scrutinize county financial practices.

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2. [http://ualr.edu/publicsafetystudy/](http://ualr.edu/publicsafetystudy/)
To aid in the process, UALR hosted a conference in Fall 2006 to bring national experts in the field of prevention, intervention, and treatment to the county for discussion with local leaders. After nine months of work, the task force made 16 recommendations. In 2008, after lauding county officials and members of the Quorum Court for their willingness to cooperate with the suggestions made in the report, Chancellor Emeritus Hathaway made a number of suggestions for further improvement.

The recommendations included a requirement that all members of the Quorum Court undergo training on reading and understanding fiscal reports (training that UALR would provide for free); an annual audit of county finances by an outside firm; and evaluation of the prevention, intervention, and treatment programs utilized by the county by a “nationally recognized external entity” as to their financial soundness and effectiveness.

**Centers and Programs for Outreach**

In addition to addressing community, regional, and statewide problems through ad hoc committees and task forces, the University dedicates its resources to serving constituencies through numerous outreach centers and programs. Within these, faculty use their research, teaching, and service expertise to involve students in programs that benefit constituencies. Examples include the following:

**The Center for Literacy**

Located in the College of Education, the mission of the Center for Literacy\(^1\) is increasing literacy achievement in Arkansas. Current initiatives include:

- promoting services to the community, schools, and state to address literacy-related issues through annual conferences, literacy academies, and summer institutes
- providing intellectual resources for supporting literacy efforts within public schools
- building partnerships at the national and professional levels in order to advocate for effective literacy practices, early intervention services for struggling readers, and reading specialists in all schools

**The Juvenile Justice Center**

Located in the Department of Criminal Justice, the mission of the Juvenile Justice Center\(^2\) is to achieve statewide excellence in juvenile justice through research, policy analysis, and education/training. Current programs include the following:

- The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative
- Juvenile Crime Analysis
- Juvenile Court Improvement

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1. [http://ualr.edu/teachered/index.php/home/center-for-literacy/](http://ualr.edu/teachered/index.php/home/center-for-literacy/)
2. [http://ualr.edu/juvenilejustice/](http://ualr.edu/juvenilejustice/)
The Senior Justice Center

Located in the Department of Criminal Justice, the mission of the Senior Justice Center\(^1\) is to address elder crime at the grass-roots level and to address policy issues affecting the elderly. Current programs include

- community seminars on such topics as nursing home abuse, identity theft, sexual abuse of the elderly, fraud, and insurance scams
- a senior abuse hotline
- online training program for Adult Protective Services
- a collaboration with the Arkansas Medicare/Medicaid Fraud Patrol
- a collaboration with the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology Program offered through the School of Social Work

Arkansas Special Education Mediation Project

Located in the Bowen School of Law, the Arkansas Special Education Mediation Project\(^2\) is funded through a grant from the Special Education Unit of the Arkansas Department of Education. Through the project, professionally trained mediators working with law students accomplish:

- mediate disputes between public school districts and parents or other caregivers of children with disabilities who believe the district is not fulfilling its obligations under Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
- educate teachers, parents, and school districts on ways to create or modify students’ individualized educational plan in a way that provides a reasonable accommodation for the child

These outreach centers and programs represent the metropolitan university at its finest—a university with significant resources, working hand in hand with other local organizations to enhance the well-being of its community. This same commitment to promoting social, educational, and economic justice in Central Arkansas is evident in the University’s leadership in the area of race relations.

Annual Survey of Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County

*Pledge Five.* UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the subject of race.

This pledge reflects recognition that race remains a foremost barrier to social and economic progress. Since it is an issue that communities large and small find difficult to confront and therefore often ignore, the University will provide leadership by focusing attention on the issue through an annual survey of racial attitudes and through related activities.

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1. http://ualr.edu/seniorjustice/
In his inaugural address, Chancellor Anderson said, “Race, particularly white-Black race relations, has been a major problem, indeed the major problem, the biggest obstacle to progress, in our state since it was founded in 1836.” Race relations remain a central issue in Little Rock, where the integration of Central High School in 1957, the use of federal troops to control hostile crowds, and the closing of the Little Rock public school system in 1958–1959 polarized and tore apart the city. The effects of this event are still felt in the Central Arkansas region today.

Shortly after taking office, Chancellor Anderson initiated the Annual Survey of Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County. Commissioned by the Chancellor, the survey is conducted by the Institute of Government Survey Research Center. Below is a list of the focus of each study by year.

- **2004.** Focus questions the first year of the survey dealt with general perceptions of interracial relationships, equality, and interracial experiences. The questions asked the first year have been included in all subsequent surveys.
- **2005.** Focus questions were added on experiences with local government; racial profiling; and workplace, social, and other relationships.
- **2006.** Focus questions were added on community experiences, trust, and satisfaction in the areas of housing, education, family life, financial situation, personal health, and safety from physical harm and violence.
- **2007.** Focus questions were added on personal experiences of K–12 education; perceptions of equal access to education, fairness, and trust in the schools; and perception of higher education.
- **2008.** Focus questions were added on health and health care.
- **2009.** Focus questions were added on economic wealth, housing, and financial well-being.

In 2007, when the focus of the survey was on education, the University decided to conduct two surveys: the regular annual survey of Pulaski County residents and an additional survey of students at UALR. The purpose of the second survey was to assess students’ perceptions of race relations on campus and to identify areas for improvement. The student survey was not limited to Black and white respondents.

The results of the campus survey overall were encouraging:

- 93 percent of all student respondents, regardless of race, agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their experiences as a student at UALR.

1. http://ualr.edu/racialattitudes/
• 90 percent of white and Black respondents agreed that UALR students are respectful of others whose race/ethnicity is different from their own.

• Almost 90 percent of respondents indicated that they have made friends with people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds than themselves.

• 89 percent of respondents agreed that UALR faculty members are fair to all students regardless of race or ethnic backgrounds.

There were several results, however, that indicated areas of concern:

• Between 16 percent and 19 percent of minority and international students reported negative racial or ethnic remarks by faculty or staff.

• 25 percent of respondents, regardless of race, agreed that they had been treated unfairly by university personnel at one time or another.

• Respondents who were Black or Hispanic were twice as likely as whites to attribute the unfair treatment to race or ethnic prejudice.

These results led to the formation of the Chancellor’s Committee on Race. Working with the Chancellor and in consultation with various student groups, this committee is charged with bringing the discussion of race on campus to the forefront. This is in keeping with Chancellor Anderson’s stance on fighting racism that “if you don’t face it, you can’t fix it.”

During the 2008–2009 academic year, the committee accomplished one of its first goals—to bring a live campus discussion board dedicated to issues about race. The discussion board is moderated by members of the committee, and its discussion threads can be viewed by anyone who accesses the website. However, to participate one must have an active UALR email account (which includes all UALR students and employees). Since its debut on January 30, 2009, the board has posted such questions as the following:

How should President Obama deal with the issue of race during his presidency? Should he attempt to ignore the issue or address it directly (please explain why you think this is the case)?

and

Many students say UALR courses have challenged their views about race. If a course has challenged or changed your views about race, how did this happen? What beliefs were challenged? What information was offered? What views did you change, if any? (This question references findings from the campus survey.)

Committee members are encouraged by the thoughtfulness of the discussions to date and have plans for advertising it more extensively across campus during the 2009–2010 academic year.

Due to his leadership in Central Arkansas in addressing the issue of race relations, in 2008 Chancellor Anderson received the Humanitarian Award from Just Communities of Central Arkansas (JCCA). Since 1963,

JCCA annually has presented Humanitarian Awards to honor individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to the promotion of respect and understanding among people of diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. These honorees have promoted justice and inclusion through their work and community service.

Regional Cooperation

*Pledge Six.* UALR pledges to be a keeper of the flame on the need for regional cooperation in Central Arkansas.

This pledge reflects a recognition of new realities. In today’s highly competitive global economy, regional cooperation in economic development is a prerequisite of achieving a higher standard of living across the Central Arkansas region. But more than economic development is at stake. In a state with limited resources, communities—whether large or small—that are able to work together can save money and at the same time improve services and amenities for their citizens.

Annual Conference on Regionalism

In the highly competitive global economy of the 21st century, the competitiveness of businesses and the standards of living of communities everywhere are at risk. For business and other leaders in the 11 counties included in the Metro Little Rock Alliance of Central Arkansas, UALR holds an Annual Conference on Regionalism. The purpose of the conference is to set aside old rivalries in order to promote collaboration among regional business interests.

In his opening statement at the first summit, “Solutions Big Enough to Fit the Size of the Problems” in 2004, Chancellor Anderson quoted from his inaugural address to explain his belief in the reason for and the importance of such a conference:

> Beginning next fall, UALR will convene an annual conference on regionalism in Central Arkansas as a means of achieving stronger communities and a better life for everyone in the region... There is a growing list of problems that no longer lend themselves to solution in a single community, and a number, perhaps most, of them affect local economic competitiveness... 

A quick list would include workforce quality, transportation, water quality and availability, air quality, waste disposal, law enforcement, cultural institutions and opportunities, public health, and libraries. In a number of communities these challenges exceed local capacity. . . .

We need a regular forum that will increase the likelihood that leaders throughout the region will become acquainted, will see opportunities to solve problems together, and will develop the desire and capability to work together. We need to develop solutions big enough to fit the size of the problems. I fear that if we as a region do not pull

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2. [http://www.arkansasjustcommunities.org/events/humanitarian_awards/](http://www.arkansasjustcommunities.org/events/humanitarian_awards/)
together, then the tide of global competition is going to push our region into the backwaters of the world economy. . .

There are some things [that UALR] can do, perhaps more easily and better than others. When we have the resources, we should assist the community—broadly defined—in solving its significant problems. . . The University can call people to the table as a neutral convener. We can provide good information and analyses. We can provide experts. We can shine light on possible paths to a better future. We can facilitate conversations. When desired, we can facilitate decision-making. But county and municipal officials, along with business and civic leaders and concerned citizens across the region, are the ones who must decide whether, when, and how to join together for mutual advantage. . .

Why will the University involve itself in regionalism? Because so much is at stake for our region that the University ought to try to make a difference. This is our region, this is our place. If the region prospers, we prosper. If the region suffers, we suffer.1

The 2008 conference,2 co-sponsored by the Arkansas Business Publishing Group and KUAR radio, explored the looming crisis of labor shortages in the United States and discussed implications for Central Arkansas. Featured speakers at the conference included Ed Gordon, author of The 2010 Meltdown; Jim Clinton, executive director of the Southern Growth Policies Board; and Mike Cassidy, president and CEO of the Georgia Research Alliance. At a lunch panel, Central Arkansas government, education, and business leaders discussed the implications of labor shortages in Arkansas and what can be done to address them. The conference also engaged participants in interactive workshops in the afternoon to discuss strategies for developing, attracting, retaining, and nurturing human resources in the state.

Community Advancement

Pledge Seven. UALR pledges to work as an active partner in revitalizing the University District, the area of the city immediately around the University.

This pledge embodies UALR’s desire to be a part of, not apart from, the city. The University accepts responsibility to join with city government, area businesses, churches, neighborhood organizations, and others to strengthen an area in the urban community that has been in slow decline.

Like many urban/metropolitan campuses, over the past few decades, the area adjacent to the campus has been undergoing changes. As growth has moved westward in the city (and beyond the city limits), the area around the campus has experienced the issues many urban campuses face, such as declining housing stock, marginal commercial and retail businesses, short-term rental expansion, the loss of home ownership, and increases in crime rates. However, the University has been very conscious of its

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2. http://ualr.edu/regionallstewardship/
Chapter Four: The Connected Organization

“footprint” in the community, not only as community member, but also with the understanding that a declining area can discourage students, faculty, staff, and the larger community from wanting to associate with the campus.

University District Partnership

Currently, the University District\(^1\) is home to approximately 10,000 residents, roughly 6 percent of Little Rock’s overall population. In general, the University District residents are less affluent and more diverse than those in many parts of the city. The dominant characteristics of the larger University District are its traditional people-scaled neighborhoods that are interspersed by active and resource parks, the Coleman and Rock Creek waterways, local schools, houses of worship, and the UALR campus. Unfortunately, many in the metropolitan region view the University District as a pass-through corridor lined with unsafe and obsolete shopping center “strip malls” with large areas of bleak, un-landscaped asphalt parking areas.

The University District Partnership preceded and informed UALR’s 2004 strategic planning and campus master planning efforts. The steering committee, consisting of a coalition of neighborhood business, community, and institutional leaders, as well as city, regional, and state department and agency representatives, engaged in a long-term planning process to address the continuing problems common to the larger community of which the University is a part. The planning and policy framework for the University District Partnership consists of a revitalization plan that describes major physical development projects that will upgrade the basic public infrastructure of the area and a strategic plan that addresses socio-economic conditions of the area and describes partnerships for delivering programs and services. Both plans were completed in mid-2007, and although published separately, contain complementary information and recommendations.

The revitalization plan, prepared by an urban planning firm, Wallace Roberts Todd, with public involvement in three community workshops, identifies the needs of the area surrounding the University: revitalization of obsolete commercial and light industrial areas; preservation of heritage natural resources; strengthening of residential neighborhoods, schools and community institutions; creation of livable, safe, and people-focused district centers; and enhancement of opportunities for racial and economic diversity in the district.

A series of recommendations addresses the reuse and revitalization of the district for residential, natural resources, commercial, and institutional uses with comprehensive circulation improvements that would create a multi-modal, people-focused movement network. The long-term revitalization plan is to place in and around campus a variety of university-linked programming, community-based programming, and community-based businesses that reflect a University District area.

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/universitydistrict/
The strategic plan, created by members of the steering committee, outlines long-term strategies for accomplishing the nine goals identified by the University District Partnership:

- **Historic Character.** Establish the University District as a destination of choice that attracts new families and businesses.
- **Housing.** Establish the University District as a place where every type of Little Rock household can find a suitable, affordable home.
- **Public Safety.** Establish the University District as a place where people feel safe in their homes and walking in their neighborhoods.
- **Education.** Raise academic achievement at every educational level within the University District population.
- **Economic Development.** Improve the economic well-being of families, individuals, and businesses within the University District.
- **Environmental Quality.** Improve the environmental quality of the University District.
- **Cultural Identity.** Establish the University District as a primary international business, arts, and cultural destination within the Central Arkansas metropolitan area.
- **Human Services.** Reduce dependency and improve living conditions for persons with special needs living in the University District.
- **Technology.** Establish the technology infrastructure in the University District so that residents and businesses can make full use of e-government and e-business services.

When released in 2007, there was reason to be optimistic that the recommendations articulated in the revitalization plan and strategies outlined in the strategic plan could and would be achieved at a pace consistent with the plan’s design. Indeed, some of the features of the plan are being worked on as is detailed below. However, the economic downturn experienced nationwide over the past 18 months jeopardizes the ability of the city, the state, and the University and its partners to continue to implement the plan as envisioned. Nonetheless, the necessity of continued progress on the plan ensures that it will remain a high priority for UALR.

**Oak Forest Initiative**

The University District Partnership initiative is an outgrowth of previous work in the area with the Oak Forest Initiative, a precursor to the University District Plan. In 1994, UALR started the Oak Forest Initiative in the neighborhood immediately east and north of the campus with funding assistance from both the federal level and the City of Little Rock. Work in this area continues today.

The centerpiece of the neighborhood initiative has been UALR Children International.
UALR Children International

UALR Children International\(^1\) (previously UALR Share America), is made possible by grant funding from Kansas City-based Children International, better known for its humanitarian programs for children and families in poverty outside the United States. The grant funding over the last decade has totaled over $5 million. Approximately 1,800 children in Little Rock are served each year by UALR Children International programs.

UALR Children International works side-by-side with schools, parents, and partners to offer programs for both students and parents. Programs include distribution of school supplies, after-school programs, various outreach groups, emergency situation assistance, and health care outreach, including dental work.

In addition to its partnership with Children International, the multifaceted Oak Forest Initiative has included the after-school Neighborhood Homework Center with tutoring and summer camps for neighborhood children. Fourteen UALR academic units have participated in the initiative, with academic departments often developing service-learning opportunities for their students. Examples include the following:

- Construction management faculty and students have built two playgrounds and renovated the UALR Children International director’s office.
- After-school programs at three sites include educational enrichment programs taught by certified teachers and UALR students with a focus on mathematics and literacy. Last year’s assessment indicated the performance of participants improved 72 percent from pre-test to post-test.
- Faculty and students from the Department of Audiology and Speech have provided hearing screenings.
- The Labor Education Program has offered neighborhood parents computer training and job-readiness programs. Since 2000, 91 parents have completed the program, resulting in 22 percent gaining employment and 66 percent receiving job promotions.
- In partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the city, and Habitat for Humanity, faculty and students have rehabilitated five existing houses and built ten new houses. These ten are the first new additions to housing stock in this area in several decades.
- The UALR Department of Athletics, with major private donations, has renovated the dilapidated baseball field in Curran Conway Park, a city park. This is now one of the best baseball facilities in the Sunbelt Conference.

Many of the departments do significant service-learning activities at Children International, providing a benefit to both the students and the children. Nursing courses, for example, offer multiple services to Children International. They do physicals on all of the students who are

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UALR athletes pitch in for Habitat
Students help to build home on temporary site near Alltel Arena

BY MICHELLE HILLEN
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

As a swimmer for the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Chelsea Churchill is more at home in the pool than on a construction site.

But Friday, Churchill and nearly 70 other UALR student athletes swung hammers, measured door frames and braced walls as part of a Habitat for Humanity project going on in conjunction with the NCAA Tournament.

"To imagine we are actually going to build a house is really cool," Churchill said during a break from nailing plywood onto wall frames at a temporary building site across from Alltel Arena. "I’m having a blast."

The project, a partnership between the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Habitat for Humanity and Lowe’s, began as a way for the NCAA to help victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita along the Gulf Coast, said Dana Thomas, spokesman for the association.

Now in its third year, the program has been expanded to include other parts of the country, Thomas said.

"This gives us a unique opportunity to reach out to those student athletes and explain how important it is to do community service and be involved," she said.

UALR is the host institution for the first- and second-round games of the 2008 NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Championship at Alltel Arena.

Students athletes from men’s basketball, women’s volleyball, women’s soccer men’s and women’s golf and men’s and women’s cross country and track teams volunteered, UALR assistant athletic director Richard Turner said.

"Our students just embraced this," he said.

The NCAA provided $60,000 to cover the entire cost of the 1,300-square-foot home. Lowe’s also contributed $10,000 to Habitat for Humanity of Pulaski County for future projects.

The students were divided into three groups of roughly 20 students. Each group was set to work two-hour shifts throughout the day from noon until 6 p.m.

Turner said he expected the students to help build exterior and interior walls.

"Basically, we are unskilled labor under the supervision of the Habitat for Humanity and Lowe’s people," he said. "It’s really a neat process."

James Scott, a junior on the men’s basketball team, said it was fun to interact with his teammates, as well as fans heading to see the tournament games.

"It’s a whole new experience," Scott said of the construction work. "I haven’t hammered my finger yet, so I’m fine."

Once the frame is complete, the walls will remain on display at Alltel until Monday. After that, the walls will be broken down and transported to the home’s permanent location on 5th Street in North Little Rock, said Megan Cole, director of development for Habitat for Humanity of Pulaski County.

"We will go pick it up and move it," Cole said. "It won’t be completed [at Alltel], but we will get some of the framework done."

The nonprofit housing organization has done similar projects, with homes being built off-site and moved to a new location. It does add to the cost, but for this project, Cole said, the NCAA is paying for the move.

When complete, the home will be turned over to Kenya Gilbert, a single mother of two, Cole said.

Gilbert will pay for the home through a combination of a 20- to 30-year low-interest mortgage loan and "sweat equity," which includes volunteer work for Habitat for Humanity. The house is expected to be completed in six weeks.

"This is just a real blessing for me," said the first-time homeowner, who was on hand Friday to meet with the volunteers and watch her home take shape.

Gilbert has cerebral palsy and said she is particularly glad that the home will be wheelchair-accessible. Her sons, Chase, 6, and Kendrick, 4, are excited to finally have their own room, she said.

"It is kind of hard to explain in words," Gilbert said. "I am just ecstatic. I am just ready for it to be here."

When they finished with their shifts, students signed the plywood walls and wrote notes to Gilbert, whom they had met earlier that day.

"It’s really awesome to be able to see who is going to be living in this house," Churchill said. "She was [very appreciative.] She seems very nice."
in Children International. Each semester, six clinicals, two days a week, working in Franklin, Wakefield, and Bale Elementary schools in the Little Rock School District are offered. This is done twice each semester, for a total of 12 days. Approximately 300–500 physicals are completed each year. In the course Nursing 2520, Pediatrics, Body Mass Index (BMI) assessments for both Little Rock and Pulaski County School Districts have been done. In 2008, eye and hearing screenings for Pulaski County were included. Such community service is organized by the course coordinator.

The scope and success of the Children International programs have been possible only because 31 organizations, both public and private, have joined as Partners in Service.

Community Outreach

Objective 6. The University will expand its cultural programs to contribute to the quality of life in Central Arkansas.

As a community member and a metropolitan university, UALR is not isolated from the community or its neighbors. There is a steady stream of visitors to campus to attend events such as the annual conference focused on the results of the racial attitudes survey discussed earlier, various cultural events presented through Artspree,¹ and continuing education and training events. Visitors also use university facilities for a wide variety of reasons.

KUAR and KLRE

One of the ways UALR reaches out to the community and contributes to the cultural life of Central Arkansas is through its two public radio stations² administered through the College of Professional Studies. KLRE-FM 90.5 is a 40,000-watt station broadcasting classical music 24 hours a day. KUAR-FM 89.1 is a 100,000-watt station affiliated with National Public Radio that focuses on news and information.

The stations, which have won numerous awards, are commercial-free and reach 70,000 listeners each week. They inform, enrich, and entertain, and they provide hands-on experience to students from UALR, other area colleges, and Central Arkansas high schools who are interested in careers in broadcasting.

In addition to providing listeners access to national music, information, and news programs, the two stations offer numerous locally produced programs on Arkansas events, people, politics, culture, history, and the arts. Often produced in conjunction with community groups or organizations, these programs work to inform and educate the community:


¹. http://ualr.edu/artspree/
². http://kuar.org/

5a Example of Evidence
In responding to external constituencies, the organization is well-served by programs such as continuing education, outreach, customized training, and extension services.

5d Example of Evidence
The organization’s facilities are available to and used by the community.

5d Example of Evidence
The organization provides programs to meet the continuing education needs of licensed professionals in its community.
• *Arts Scene*. A program that examines latest news about the visual and performing arts, produced in cooperation with the UALR College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

• *At the Symphony*. A preview of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra’s upcoming Masterworks concerts

• *Biography Arkansas*. A one-minute program featuring brief biographies of well-known Arkansas natives

• *Here’s To Your Health*. Reports on health and medical news produced by UAMS and hosted by Dr. T. Glenn Pait

• *Izzy Investigates*. A look at the many aspects of classical music with Conway Symphony music director Israel Getzoff

• *Library Report*. Book reviews from Bill Jones, courtesy of the Central Arkansas Library System

• *Notes on Music*. Brief vignettes about musical history, written and produced by a retired UALR music professor

• *Once Upon a Book*. Reviews on children’s literature by Dr. Toran Isom of the UALR Department of Rhetoric and Writing

• *Picture This*. A series of audio essays that explores various art issues, from architecture to photography, hosted by UALR Department of Art gallery director, Brad Cushman

• *Science Café*. A monthly interview show about a science topic, produced in cooperation with UAMS

• *Stories of the Community*. One-minute vignettes that feature the history and culture of Little Rock’s African American community and are produced in conjunction with the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage

• *Tales from the Trail of Tears*. One-minute historical features about the Trail of Tears, produced with the UALR Sequoyah National Research Center

• *Weekend Arts Update*. A weekly listing of performances and exhibits scheduled around Arkansas for the weekend, hosted by Ann Nicholson

Recently, UALR signed an agreement with a local television station that will allow the radio stations to share antenna space on the TV station’s new tower at a nominal cost. This in-kind gift, valued at $2.7 million over a 25-year-period, will improve the stations’ signals, allowing both to reach a larger audience.

**Channel 62**

In 2007, Chancellor Anderson dedicated approximately $190,000 in annual funding toward upgrading the university cable television station, Channel 62 University Television.¹ UALR hired a station manager and a videographer and upgraded equipment. The station now airs videos of campus speakers and cultural events, documentaries on faculty and student research, videos of speakers at the Clinton School, and many other programs sponsored by the University.

1. http://ualr.edu/tv/
Speakers Series and Panel Discussions

The UALR campus maintains an active schedule of speakers, panel discussions, and cultural events that enrich the educational experience of students and the local community. Departments from every college feature special events throughout the year, and the Office of Campus Life sponsors dozens of additional events, many of which are suggested by students themselves.

Winthrop Rockefeller Distinguished Lecture Series

The Winthrop Rockefeller Distinguished Lecture Series is one of the most popular campus-wide events at UALR. Generously underwritten by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, the series brings nationally known speakers to the Little Rock community. Recent speakers have included anthropologist Dr. Richard Leakey (2008) and civil rights leader Julian Bond (2007).

These lectures are free to the public and are often at standing-room capacity. The series is coordinated from within the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, although representatives from across the University offer assistance, suggestions, and support. In connection with the lecture, the University offers related events such as classes and exhibits, to connect the speaker and the subject pedagogically for the students and the campus.

75th Anniversary Lecture Series

In 2002, to celebrate 75 years of existence,1 UALR hosted a lecture series that brought national and international figures to the community. Events were underwritten by various groups and departments on campus. They included the following:

Danny Glover, actor and advocate for literacy. Glover received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Amnesty International, served as the first Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Development Programme, and was honored with the first Kunstler Racial Justice Award for his work on a variety of social issues.

Edward James Olmos, actor and executive director of the Lives In Hazard Educational Project, a national gang-prevention program funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. Olmos’ lecture was sponsored by the Hispanic Heritage Month Planning Committee.

Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister of Pakistan. Now deceased, Bhutto was the first woman elected to lead a modern Islamic nation. She overcame government persecution and a lack of political experience to rise to the top of the Pakistani government. Her lecture was sponsored in part by the Arkansas Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the UALR Middle Eastern Studies Program.

Ben Stein, attorney, economist, syndicated columnist, former speechwriter for Presidents Nixon and Ford, screenwriter, and author. Stein has written and published 16 books and taught as an adjunct professor at American University, the University of California at Santa Cruz, and Pepperdine University.

Spike Lee, producer, director, actor, and writer. Lee has established himself as one of Hollywood’s most important and influential filmmakers. Critically acclaimed and often controversial, Lee’s films have earned him Academy Award nominations, Chicago Film Festival Critics and L.A. Film Critics Association awards, and the Cannes Film Festival’s Best New Director award.

Juan Williams, one of America’s leading journalists and news analyst for National Public Radio, appearing regularly on the newsmagazines Morning Edition and Day to Day. Williams previously hosted public radio’s national call-in show Talk of the Nation and was an editorial writer, op-ed columnist, and White House reporter during a 21-year career at The Washington Post. He is author of the critically acclaimed biography, Thurgood Marshall—American Revolutionary, as well as the nonfiction best-seller Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, 1954–1965.

All activities were free and open to the public, and all were well attended. Many of the speakers met with students and spoke to classes, allowing them to interact with some of the most prominent activists and leaders of the 20th century.

College and Department Events

On an ongoing basis, colleges and departments sponsor a wide range of lectures and public speaking events that draw from experts in many areas of expertise. These events, often produced in conjunction with community groups and organizations draw the attention of members of the local community. Such events help support the mission of bringing educational opportunities to Arkansas and promoting the common good.

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

The College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences has a rich palette of cultural events to offer the area. Arkansas citizens have the opportunity to consider philosophical and ethical questions, listen to a variety of musical events, attend lectures on significant historical events, and view a wide variety of theatrical offerings:

- The Department of Philosophy and Liberal Studies has partnered with the Arkansas Humanities Council since Fall 2000 in sponsoring and promoting public lectures by prominent scholars on ethical issues facing contemporary society. Some of the topics presented include “The Ethics of the Death Penalty,” “Citizen Choice and Urban Sprawl,” “Ethics and the Use of Animals in Medical Experimentation,” “Just War? Jihad and Terrorism,” and “Sexual Orientation and Discrimination.”
Chapter Four: The Connected Organization

- The Department of Art maintains three galleries in the Fine Arts building that showcase varied works from visiting artists, traveling exhibitions, competitions, faculty work, and student work. Exhibits in 2008–2009 included the following:
  - Captain America: Operation Zero Point, Marvel Comics, Mitch Breitweiser, Illustrator; Elizabeth Breitweiser, Digital Colorist
  - Comic Vernacular = Artwork inspired by cartoon animation and comic books

Exhibits by visiting artists often are accompanied by a lecture or discussion by the artist.

- The Department of Music sponsors concerts that include UALR students, faculty, and ensemble groups. Each year, the department offers free and low-cost concerts to the general public. In 2009, in Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall, there were 52 university-sponsored music events and four events sponsored by external constituents. Of those, seven were concerts/recitals given by UALR faculty, and nine concerts/recitals were given by guest performers. Ensembles that perform at these concerts include the following:
  - UALR Community Orchestra
  - UALR Percussion Ensemble and Trojan Pep Band
  - Student Music Recital
  - UALR Wind Ensemble
  - UALR Gospel Chorale
  - UALR Guitar Ensemble
  - UALR Opera Theatre performance of La Tragédie de Carmen with orchestra
  - UALR Community Chorus performance of Carmina Burana, with orchestra
  - UALR Concert Choir

- The Department of Theater Arts and Dance similarly offers a wide variety of events. Performances in the 2008–2009 season included Lear’s Daughters; Fringe Festival; Endgame; and the Dance Concert.

- The Evenings with History series, sponsored by the University History Institute, presents UALR faculty members sharing their current historical research. Although the presentations are aimed at a general audience, each offers insight into historical scholarship. The nationally recognized series covers a variety of eras, areas, and subjects.

- The Department of Psychology offers the Marie Wilson Howells Speakers Series. In 2008, Dr. Alice Dreger, professor of clinical medical humanities and bioethics and Guggenheim Fellow, presented “Sex and Social Justice: Three Cases Involving Children.” Dr. Dreger is an expert in the area of problems faced by children who are intersex and is involved in developing new standards that will be used in the treatment of a variety of problems related to sex and gender.
• The Cooper Lecture Series, organized by the William G. Cooper, Jr., Honors Program in English, a community outreach program, enhances the educational experience for both students and faculty. The program usually hosts six to eight speakers per academic year. In general, speakers give a formal lecture or reading, meet with particular classes, and conduct question-and-answer sessions with interested students and faculty. The Cooper committee’s goal is to create a coherent and stimulating lecture series that ideally includes both critics and creative writers. Past lecturers include Dr. Julia Bolton Holloway, medievalist and curator of the English Cemetery in Florence, who presented her lecture “Iron Chain, Golden Ring: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Florence’s English Cemetery, and Freedom from Slavery.” Betty Booth Donahue presented “An American Indian Reads Captivity Narratives: Just Whose Story Is This?”

**College of Business**

Through its lectures, the College of Business does much to promote economic and business advancement throughout Central Arkansas. The Business Forum, in operation since 1979, has traditionally presented five prominent speakers who address major state, national, and international issues. The Forum has recently switched its structure to present one national expert per year speaking on a topic of importance.

• A panel of national experts examined the banking crisis.
• Dr. Ed Gordon addressed the issues contained in his most recent book, *The 2010 Meltdown*.
• Mr. Dennis Avery discussed *Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1500 Years*, which he co-authored.
• Dr. Paul Fiorelli, director of Cintas Institute for Business Ethics at Xavier University, spoke on “Moral Meltdown: The Ethics Behind the Bailout.”

**Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology and the College of Science and Mathematics**

The Colloquium Seminar Series in Applied Science is a weekly lecture series sponsored jointly by the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology and the College of Science and Mathematics. Scientists from all over the world have come to talk on topics of interest to engineers and scientists. Below is a partial list of the Spring 2009 speakers:

• Dr. Rajender S. Varma of the National Risk Management Research Laboratory gave a talk entitled “Sustainable Synthesis of Organics and Nanomaterials Using Microwave Irradiation.”
• Dr. Harold S. Park of the University of Colorado gave a talk entitled “Surface Effects on the Mechanical Behavior and Properties of Nanomaterials.”
• Dr. Paul Timmers of the General Information Society & Media European Commission gave a talk entitled “Citizen Rights and Opportunities for Information Technology Innovation.”
• Dr. Taner Akkin of the University of Minnesota gave a talk entitled “Imaging Tissue Microstructure and Function with Optical Coherence Tomography.”

• Dr. Mun Choi of the University of Connecticut gave a talk entitled “Sooting Behavior in Microgravity Droplet Combustion.”

• Dr. Krishnaiyan Thulasiraman of the University of Oklahoma gave a talk entitled “Duality in Graphs and Networks.”

• Dr. Yusuf Ozturk of San Diego State University gave a talk entitled “Spatially Adaptive Mobile Ad-Hoc Networks.”

UALR William H. Bowen School of Law

The Bowen School of Law created the Arnold Lecture Series, a lecture series that brings noted legal minds to the school. The lecture series honors the late Honorable Richard S. Arnold, former Eighth Circuit Judge, Chief Judge, and Senior Judge; and his brother, Eighth Circuit Judge Morris S. Arnold. The Arnolds served together on the Court for more than 12 years. Justice Antonin Scalia, who was a classmate of Judge Richard Arnold at Harvard Law School, praised the late judge as “a jurist of brilliant intellect and man of greater compassion.” In his address, Justice Scalia argued for his preference that decisions of moral consequence be resolved by the people through their elected legislatures rather than by judges. In 2007, Justice Clarence Thomas delivered the second Arnold Lecture before a standing-room-only crowd in the Friday Courtroom.

Jack Stephens Center

Athletic events also bring the community to campus. The Jack Stephens Center (Stephens Center), created through a matching grant and a $22.4 million gift from long-time supporter Jackson T. Stephens, features a full-court practice gym named after UALR alumnus Derek Fisher, a team member of the Los Angeles Lakers; an academic support center for students athletes complete with 23 computer terminals; a first-class weight room; an athletic training room; locker rooms for basketball and volleyball; and a NIKE team store. In addition, the arena houses the offices for the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball coaches, as well as the athletic administration and support staff.
In addition to being the home court for the UALR Trojan basketball teams, the Stephens Center provides the first on-campus site for December and May UALR graduation ceremonies. Area high schools also use it for graduation as well as for other events such as the state basketball play-offs. The center is the northern anchor of the campus and offers a high-profile venue for community events.

Other Resources

UALR maintains exhibits, archives, and other resources that are open to the public. These include two significant archives:

- *Sequoyah National Research Center.* The Sequoyah National Research Center serves tribal communities and the general public by developing and maintaining the means to access the contents of one of the largest repositories of Native American materials in the world and by providing educational resources through various media and public programming. The center documents all aspects of Indian life from the Indian perspective. In addition, it maintains the largest collection of Native newspapers and periodicals in the world in hard copy and film, including press histories from 1828 to present. The center also collects and disseminates the literary works of Native writers past and present through the Digital Library, Chapbook series, and the most comprehensive online bibliography of Native writing in the world. The center highlights the work of Indian artists through the preservation and display of one of Native America’s finest art collections. It also collects the publications of, and other information on Indian organizations, including business and professional groups as well as advocacy agencies.

Dr. Bill Wiggins displays pieces from the collection of Native American Art, one of the SNRC’s major features.

1. http://ualr.edu/sequoyahcenter/
To foster communication and understanding, the center sponsors the Sequoyah National Research Center Annual Symposium, a conference of Native people. Every year, between 175 and 250 attendees from across the nation and from many tribes come to Little Rock to discuss issues of common interest.

- **Arkansas Studies Institute.** Built through a collaborative effort between UALR and the Central Arkansas Library System, this facility in downtown Little Rock houses materials that are historically significant to Arkansas and the surrounding region, including the trans-Mississippi Valley. Included are the papers of former Arkansas governors Dale Bumpers, Winthrop Rockefeller, Jim Guy Tucker, and Frank White. Additionally, Ottenheimer Library, the main library in the library system, is the state’s only depository of European Union documents and is a depository for Arkansas state documents. The library archives are available to scholars and the general public alike.

### Meeting the Educational Needs of Working Professionals

UALR commits significant physical, financial, and human resources to meeting the educational needs of both licensed and unlicensed professionals in the community. To that end, UALR offers continuing education programs that provide credit- and non-credit-granting courses for post-secondary learning programs and continuing education units. Aimed at professionals working in the field, post-secondary learners, and adult learners, these programs are designed to provide quality education for workforce training and personal enrichment. These programs are intended to encourage individuals to expand their knowledge base and stay up-to-date on current trends in their field.

### College of Professional Studies

**MidSOUTH Center for Leadership and Training**

The only unit on campus devoted entirely to professional training and continuing education is the MidSOUTH Center for Leadership and Training (MidSOUTH), a community service unit of the School of Social Work. MidSOUTH provides leadership, training, and support in the areas of addiction, child welfare, technology, distance learning, and organizational development. MidSOUTH has five training locations across the state and offers many training opportunities for a wide variety of Arkansas professionals. Programs include the following:

- **The MidSOUTH Summer School (MSSS®) on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Programs** is in its third decade as the main substance abuse training conference in the State of Arkansas and its surrounding region. Since its inception in 1973, the conference has reached over 46,000 people across the United States through a variety of education delivery methods. The conference offers quality continuing education for treatment and prevention professionals.

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2. [http://www.midsouth.ualr.edu/](http://www.midsouth.ualr.edu/)
The purpose of MSSS is to provide a forum for cost-effective and relevant workshops dealing with the unique challenges faced by individuals delivering treatment services, prevention programs, and related alcohol and other drug education. One of the unique characteristics of MSSS is that representatives from a broad range of prevention, education, self-help, law enforcement, child welfare, mental health, corrections, and treatment groups serve as a constituent coalition for the funding, development, and direction of the conference.

- **The MidSOUTH Training Academy** provides training for the child welfare services workforce in Arkansas. New staff training is provided for staff of the Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services. The continuing education program offers training on a broad range of child welfare topics to both staff, foster parents, adoptive parents, and individuals and organizations serving children and families in the community.

- **The MidSOUTH Prevention Institute** is a workforce development initiative that strives to assist prevention professionals in their efforts to plan, implement, and evaluate science-based programming around the prevention of substance abuse, violence, and other high-risk behaviors. Institute resources include training, technical assistance, and a resource library housed on the UALR campus.

- **The MidSOUTH Addictions Training Network** is a workforce development program with a primary focus on the competencies required of substance abuse treatment counselors. The network provides training for people seeking to become Certified Alcohol Drug Counselors and people seeking recertification as counselors. The network also serves other professionals in need of substance abuse treatment training to fulfill their certification/licensure requirements and members of the general public with an interest in substance abuse treatment.

- **The MidSOUTH Arkansas Substance Abuse Certification Board** develops, tests, and certifies counselors and supervisors in the field of substance abuse. MidSOUTH provides administrative support to the board.

### School of Mass Communication

The School of Mass Communication offers professional development opportunities for high school media teachers during the Little Rock School District’s in-service conference days. This is in direct response to a request made by high school media advisors during the annual High School Journalism Symposium. Teachers complained that their required in-service meeting time was wasted because nothing was available specifically for media advisors. In response, the School of Mass Communication has begun offering web design sessions and advanced media sessions taught by faculty and designed particularly for high school media teachers.
Department of Criminal Justice

Since 2008, with the assistance of the Office of Justice and the Office of Victims of Crime, the Department of Criminal Justice has offered the Arkansas Victim Assistance Academy, a 40-hour, one-week academy designed to provide victim service providers with intensive training tailored to the needs of Arkansas victim service providers. Participants learn about the following:

- the history of victim advocacy
- dynamics of the criminal and juvenile justice systems from arrest through post-sentencing
- victim points of contact with the legal system
- victim mental health needs
- legal issues for victim advocates
- working with the Victim Information and Notification Everyday system, which provides crime and release data on all prison inmates
- domestic violence and orders of protection
- child victimization
- sexual assault victims
- cyber crime
- working with rural victims
- substance abuse and victimization
- vicarious victimization

Upon successful completion, academy graduates are certified as victim service providers. Graduates also earn three college credits transferable to any accredited institution of higher education. This is the only program of this nature in the state, and UALR is proud to be able to provide this service to the community.

College of Education

The College of Education hosts several reading recovery and comprehensive literacy trainings for teachers from all over the state, hosting more than 500 teachers and administrators each time. They also hosted the Arkansas Professors of Educational Administration meeting for the state administrator training faculty in 2008–2009, which is designed to meet the needs of professors of educational administration.

Center for Gifted Education

Through the College of Education’s Center for Gifted Education,1 more than 500 teachers a year receive training in teaching advanced placement courses at the Arkansas Advanced Placement Professional Development Center, a division of the Center for Gifted Education. The center also organizes UALR’s Advanced Placement (AP) Summer Institute at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts in Hot Springs.

1. http://giftedctr.ualr.edu/
The College Board-endorsed Summer Institute provides pre-AP and AP instruction in English, mathematics, social studies, science, art, and foreign languages.

**Interpreter Education Program**

The Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education Center (MARIE) is a collaborative effort between UALR and the University of Northern Colorado in Denver. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the MARIE Center serves as an interpreter educational center for 11 states: Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

The new MARIE Center is part of an innovative and coordinated national effort to improve interpreting skills and to provide training opportunities to interpreters across the United States. The MARIE Center is one of six regional/national centers that form the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers.

The objectives of the consortium are:

- identifying the current state of interpreting
- fostering effective practices in interpreting and interpreter education
- increasing the number, diversity, and readiness of interpreters in the field
- maximizing regional resources and expertise through information sharing and elimination of duplicate efforts
- promoting consumer self-advocacy and effective utilization of interpreters
- creating a national network of local interpreter education partners

**College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences**

**Department of History**

For the past four years, the Department of History has worked with the Little Rock School District through a federal Teaching American History grant of $2 million. The grant has involved using UALR faculty in various teaching situations designed to upgrade the skills of junior high and high school teachers. Teachers received in-service credit for participating in this project.

**Department of International and Second Language Studies**

Through a No Child Left Behind grant, the department conduct monthly professional development seminars on campus for approximately 25 area foreign language teachers each year. The seminars focus on how teachers can incorporate the national foreign language standards into their teaching and assessment of student learning.

1. http://ualr.edu/marie/
Department of Rhetoric and Writing

With support from the federal government, UALR partially underwrites the Little Rock Writing Project, a network of area K–college teachers who have successfully completed intensive preparation in the pedagogy of writing. The core work of the project is carried out by Teacher-Consultants:

- the Summer Invitational Institute for Teachers, which provides summer study in writing theory and practice and qualifies teachers to be a part of the project network
- continuity programs, which support the Teacher-Consultants
- professional development programs for all teachers

The project requires significant outreach and collaboration with local public schools, improves the writing done in schools, and creates good relationships with local educators. In addition, the project often serves as a gateway for students into the master’s program.

Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology

CyberTeacher Program

The Information Technology CyberTeacher Program is a four-week, 12-credit-course that prepares “teacher leaders” to instruct colleagues and students in technology. Each fall, these teachers return to the classroom equipped with the information technology skills necessary to be a 21st century teacher. Summer 2008 marked the eighth year of this partnership between the Little Rock School District and UALR. Twelve teachers participated in four weeks of intensive technology training. The school district purchased laptop computers and paid the tuition for participants.

Information Technology Certificate

The Information Technology Certificate is designed for working professionals to increase their value in today’s business market. This hands-on program teaches information management techniques and provides innovative solutions to information-related problems. Participants learn the gateway technologies from Microsoft, including data management, spreadsheet applications, graphical presentations, web design, business concepts, and communication skills.

College of Science and Mathematics

Department of Mathematics and Statistics

In 2005, the department hosted a retreat at Winthrop Rockefeller Institute for mathematics teachers from area middle schools, high schools, community colleges, and universities. The purpose of the retreat was to

1. http://ualr.edu/writingproject/
2. http://technologize.ualr.edu/informationtechnology/?page_id=4
develop relationships among mathematics teachers and to create recommendations on ways to improve students’ performance as they transition to higher level mathematics courses.

Arkansas STRIVE

Arkansas STRIVE provides professional development to secondary science, math, and computer teachers and provides summer research experience and training in teaching with inquiry and problem-solving approaches. Held at UALR, this statewide program is sponsored by the State of Arkansas, a grant from the No Child Left Behind program, and donations from local industries, businesses, and other universities.

Annually, this program places up to 40 teachers in eight-week research positions in universities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. The program was developed by a consortium that is comprised of UALR and

- Arkansas Departments of Education and Higher Education
- Arkansas Environmental Federation
- National Center for Toxicological Research
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

Welcoming the Community on Campus

In keeping with the metropolitan mission of UALR that recognizes a university is a public investment, the University makes its facilities available to the community in order to promote discussion, learning, and community involvement. Over the past ten years, UALR has hosted a wide array of conferences:

- The Juvenile Justice Reform Task Force is a day-long meeting of 50 individuals discussing the future of juvenile justice in the state. As part of that meeting, Advocates for Children and Families held a press conference to release their report on juvenile justice in the state.
- The District 7 History Day competition brings to the campus several hundred junior high and high school students on one Saturday in March. In 2009, History Day used the large conference rooms (Ledbetter rooms) in the Donaghey Student Center as well as four or five classrooms and the Dickinson Hall auditorium.
- The Engineering Scholars Program was a two-week summer program in 2008 that provided hands-on training in electrical, mechanical, telecommunications, computers, and robotics to 17 high school students in engineering laboratories. The students were accommodated in UALR dorms.
- The School of Mass Communication has hosted several conferences/meetings over the past few years:
  - Investigative Reporters and Editors’ Regional Conference in March 2005

1. http://ualr.edu/strive/
• The National Broadcasting Society National Executive Board and National Advisory Council in 2003 and 2004
• The Girl Scouts of the USA Arkansas Council Realignment Committee PR and IT Sub-committee meetings in 2008
• *The Arkansas Academy of Science Conference* was held on campus a number of years ago and will return to UALR in 2010.
• *The Arkansas Woodworkers Association*, a group of individuals who practice wood craft, meet in the Applied Design Facility in Plaza 300. Professor Mia Hall typically serves as hostess.
• *Winners of the Arkansas Times’ Academic All-Star Competition*,¹ the only comprehensive effort in Arkansas to recognize academic achievement, are honored at a ceremony at UALR, where they receive plaques and cash awards.
• The Department of Music hosts each year several competitions and auditions, as follows:
  • *Four all-day piano competitions* for the Little Rock Music Teachers Association and the local Piano Teachers Association
  • *The UALR Piano Competition* for pre-college students
  • *Metropolitan Opera Regional Competition* (UALR hosted the competition recently and will return to that role next year)
  • *The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra’s late spring and early fall auditions* for new musicians in the orchestra, as part of its partnership with the symphony orchestra. In turn, the UALR Community Orchestra rehearses off-campus at Byrne Hall.
• *The Arkansas Dolphin Lasar Swim Team*, a year-round competitive swim program serving swimmers in Little Rock and surrounding communities, holds both its practices and home competitions in the Donaghey Student Center Natatorium.
• *The Engineering Olympics* for middle and high school students are hosted each year in the Stephens Center by the College of Engineering and Information Technology. Eight schools participated.

Philanthropic Activities of Staff and Students

The Staff Senate, the Student Government Association, and organized student groups are active in philanthropic activities.

Staff Senate

The Staff Senate organizes the following service projects each year:

- **Helping Hands Project**, which collects and distributes non-perishable items to UALR families that submit an application to receive a food basket and a Kroger gift card towards the purchase of a meat item during the Christmas holiday season.
- **Staff Open House**, which provides to the campus a chance to meet and greet other employees whom they may not otherwise get a chance to meet. This event also kicks off the Helping Hands Project, with the Teacup auction.
- **Book Scholarships**, which grant two scholarships for books to UALR staff: the Jerry Crittendon and PepsiAmerica’s scholarships. The employee submits an application to be chosen for the scholarships.
- **Staff Achievement Awards**, which recognize UALR employees for three types of service: the Community Service award, Personal Growth award, or Service to UALR award. The employee who wins in his/her nominated category receives a $1,000 scholarship.
- **Red Cross Blood Drive**, which occurs four times a year for the UALR campus

Student Organizations

Registered student organizations at UALR have been involved in a variety of community service and/or philanthropic activities over the years. UALR usually has 80 to 100 registered student organizations on campus at any point, and many of those are involved in community service. The events below are those directly related to the Student Government Association,1 the Panhellenic Council (council of sororities), and Interfraternity Council (council of fraternities),2 as well as various other registered student organizations.3

- In 2003–2004, the National Panhellenic Council and the Interfraternity Council partnered with the UALR baseball team to collect food for the Arkansas Rice Depot. Over 1,000 food items were collected by 60 students. In 2004–2005, these groups raised over $3,000 for Arkansas Children’s Hospital during the Greek Week. Phone Phrenzy and in 2005–2006 exceeded that amount by $1,000.
- For the past several years, various student organizations have participated in the King Academy, which includes day-long service at one of several organizations in the metropolitan area and culminates on the annual holiday in participation in Marade.

1. http://ualr.edu/sga/
2. http://ualr.edu/greeklife/
(Dr. Martin Luther King Day parade), which includes a luncheon featuring a speaker who reminds participants of Dr. King’s ideals about equality and service. Organizations that have been served by these students include the following:

- March of Dimes
- Arkansas Rice Depot
- The Watershed Project
- Helping Hands
- Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center
- Our House Shelter
- Senior Citizens Activities Today, Inc.
- The Pulaski County Juvenile Detention Center
- UALR Children International
- St. Francis House

In 2006, the Student Government Association began recognizing student service with the Community Service Award. In 2006–2007, the Student Government Association and the Global Issues Group, another student organization on campus, co-sponsored the Poverty Awareness Convention. Nonprofit organizations came to campus, presented information, and advertised volunteer opportunities. Approximately 300 students attended and participated in a food drive.

Other recognized student groups, such as the Anthropology Club, the Alliance, the School of Law Bowen Athletic Department and Bowen Lambda often hold fund-raisers or volunteer their time for local organizations. For example, in 2009, the Alliance performed an all-volunteer version of The Vagina Monologues.

Administration, Faculty, and Staff Community Involvement

Administration, faculty, and staff at UALR serve or have membership in a variety of state and national organizations. UALR is a member of the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce, with Chancellor Anderson representing UALR at meetings. The Chamber boasts over 1,800 members with approximately 150,000 employees throughout Central Arkansas; many of these members provide UALR with feedback in one way or another (both negative and positive) about the direction of the University. As a result of Chancellor Anderson’s leadership in the Chamber of Commerce, the new Bachelor of Arts in Dance received letters of support not only from cultural organizations in Little Rock but also from Chamber business owners who recognized the value of culture how it enhances the economy.

Other faculty and administrators serve with groups such as the Board of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, National Association of Social Work, the Women’s Project, and Heifer Project International. This participation allows the University to identify areas of need and growth.
Service to Professional Organizations

As professionals, UALR faculty members serve in significant roles throughout their academic professions in many ways as board members, administrators, and editors or reviewers:

- Dr. Roslyn Knutson, a Shakespearian scholar, was invited to England to lecture on her research at the Globe Playhouse in London where Shakespeare’s plays were performed 400 years ago. Dr. Knutson had previously been invited to give a series of lectures at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington.
- Dean Wanda Dole was elected the secretary-treasurer of the American Library Association’s Statistics and Evaluation Standing Committee.
- Dr. Susan Hoffpauir served on the Board of Directors for the Arkansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers from 2001 to 2009, most recently as president.
- Dr. Charles Anderson is the executive editor of the journal Literature and Medicine, co-published by UALR and UAMS.

Faculty service extends to the local and national community; at UALR faculty are encouraged to use their expertise in all areas. Following are some examples of service:

- Dr. Carolyn Turturro has assisted advocacy groups for the homeless by conducting the Survey of the Homeless in Central Arkansas since 2001 to achieve a better estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the Little Rock/North Little Rock area and to increase the understanding of service providers about their needs. Since the project began, undergraduate and graduate social work students have assisted in the research by collecting data.
- Dr. Victor Ellsworth, former chairman of the Department of Music, has organized the UALR Community Orchestra that provides the rare opportunity to rehearse and play in an orchestra to music lovers who otherwise would never have the experience. Among other participants young and old, one octogenarian has been able to continue her life-long love of playing the violin by participating in the community orchestra.
- Dr. Margaret (Beth) McMillan used her expertise in geographic information systems to assist first responders in Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina. She volunteered to help develop maps that detailed road conditions, power outages, and facilities with hazardous materials information used by the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Her work was noted on CNN Radio.
- Dr. Bevan Keating directs the UALR Community Chorus, which is comprised of nearly 90 members drawn from UALR students, faculty, and staff, as well as the greater Little Rock community. The choir is open to singers at all levels of musical ability who wish to participate in choral masterpieces accompanied by full orchestra. No formal audition is required. The Community Chorus performs jointly with the UALR Concert Choir, an auditioned ensemble, in two
major concerts each year. In March 2009, the Community Chorus celebrated its fifth anniversary with a performance of Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana* at Second Presbyterian Church in west Little Rock.

- Dr. Lars Powell, Whitbeck-Beyer Chair of Insurance and Financial Services, testified before a congressional subcommittee investigating the availability and affordability of insurance in May 2008.
- Prof. Win Bruhl, chairman of the Department of Art, was selected as a single representative of the United States in an International Linocut Symposium in Klenova, Czech Republic, in October 2006.
- Dr. Mark Funk, chairman of the Department of Economics and Finance in the College of Business, has an ongoing television spot devoted to economic issues on KHTV Today’s Channel 11.

**Upon Reflection**

- UALR dedicates its resources to advance economic prosperity, social and physical well-being, educational development, and cultural vitality in Central Arkansas in ways valued by external constituencies.
- UALR faculty and students are involved actively in service.
- The multiple ways in which UALR faculty, staff, and students are involved in service needs to communicated more effectively to the University community.
Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to the future challenges and opportunities.

Core Components

2a The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

2b The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

2c The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

2d All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

On December 12, 2002, the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees (UA Board of Trustees) named Dr. Joel Anderson the eighth chief executive officer of UALR. At that time, Dr. Anderson had more than 30 years of experience at the University. After joining the institution in 1971 as an assistant professor of political science, he had advanced through every academic level at UALR, had served as president of the University Assembly and Faculty Senate, and had acted as chair of the Department of Political Science on three occasions. In 1977, he became the first Dean of the newly created Graduate School, where he assisted in designing and approving the first 17 master’s degrees offered by UALR.

Dr. Anderson was named Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in 1984. In this position, he assisted in implementing the Donaghey College of Information Science and Systems Engineering—now the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT)—with majors in systems engineering and information science and a minor in information technology for non-technology majors. He also provided leadership as UALR began to offer doctoral programs.

By the time he became Chancellor in 2003, Dr. Anderson had been instrumental in shaping, guiding, and achieving the vision, values, goals, and strategic priorities of UALR for almost 30 years. He understood that UALR was evolving as an institution, with an added focus on engineering and technology as well as growth potential in doctoral programs, and he knew the mission of the institution was evolving as well. When he tasked the then-new Provost, David Belcher, with conducting a broad strategic planning initiative, Chancellor Anderson did so in the context of re-visioning the institutional mission in light of the changing societal and economic trends.

The strategic planning process that resulted in UALR Fast Forward\(^1\) demonstrates the process for setting and obtaining university goals. As has been discussed previously in this self-study report, the Provost provided leadership as external and internal constituencies worked together for over a year to identify UALR’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The data garnered from this process determined the goals, objectives, and pledges delineated in the strategic plan. Once these were vetted to the University and community, groups across campus developed the specific strategies to implement the plan. Thus, with appropriate leadership from the Chancellor, organizational goals were developed through collaborative processes involving campus governance structures and external constituencies.

UALR Fast Forward provides a thorough and thoughtful analysis of institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and embodies the physical implementation of the mission and values documents over the next ten years.

\(^1\) http://ualr.edu/about/strategicplan/
Joel Anderson and three friends left around 10 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 30, 1962, for an impromptu trip to the University of Mississippi. They drove all night and arrived in Oxford, amidst rioting, just before dawn on the day James Meredith was to be admitted as the university’s first black student.

“I think part of it was the desire to be at a place where history was happening and by that time in my life I had certainly come to the point of being very supportive of the civil-rights movement,” says Anderson, now chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Anderson and his friends were swept up in a raid at dawn in Oxford, interrogated by FBI agents and put on a military bus until after dark. Then federal marshals decided they were harmless bystanders, unchained them from the other prisoners and set them free.

“I wouldn’t say it was a really frightening day but it was certainly scary in the sense that we had no idea what was going to be coming next,” Anderson says, describing U.S. marshals standing around holding their guns and breathing through gas masks because the air was still saturated with tear gas sprayed the day before.

He grew up in the small northeast Arkansas town of Swifton, and his family espoused the prevalent Southern white opinion that segregation was “a proper arrangement.” His teachers at Harding College (now Harding University) in Searcy, which was segregated until his senior year in 1963, saw things a little differently.

“There were faculty members there who despite the official policy in favor of segregation held the view that the school ought to be integrated and that it was simply wrong for Christians to embrace such a practice,” says Anderson. “That was very eye-opening to me. Over time, with a lot of conversations, as well as a lot of reading, I also came to the conclusion that the kind of discrimination that I had seen everywhere toward blacks was simply wrong, that it was sinful.”

In his inaugural address as UALR chancellor in September 2003, Joel Anderson announced plans for UALR’s Institute of Government to poll Pulaski County residents annually on racial attitudes as a tool to evaluate perceptions that can be the root of conflicts.

“As chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Joel Anderson is growing a campus with outstanding faculty. He does it with a home-grown intellect.”

By Kimberly Dishongh Special to the Democrat-Gazette

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Joel Edward Anderson Jr.

‘UALR has made great progress in recent decades, but it is still a young university, and we need to speed its development.’
Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

The analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats is addressed at the end of each chapter in UALR Fast Forward with a section on “selected planning implications” that summarizes the main findings presented and delineates the implications they have for planning. For example, some of the implications noted at the end of Chapters 1 through 5 include the following:

Understanding Capacity

- Controlling expenditures is the first requirement in maximizing resources.
- In light of the constraints of state funding when the University is seeking to hire faculty in the competitive national market, the University needs to secure other sources to pay moving expenses and start-up equipment costs for new faculty.
- The University should and will continue to make a fundamental contribution by providing a significant component of the community’s creative class—its faculty and professional staff as well as a number of students. As the University grows stronger and larger in any of its academic disciplines, this fundamental contribution will grow larger as a by-product.
- The University should move forward with community partners in developing plans for revitalizing the University District.

Environmental Scanning

Within the state, particularly in the higher education funding arena, UALR must work persistently to increase understanding of UALR’s role, contributions, and needs.

- The better rates of student retention and graduation at other metropolitan universities in the peer group suggest that UALR should improve its performance on these two indicators, and the comparative entering ACT scores suggest a need to focus attention on admissions criteria.
- Among universities in Arkansas, UALR clearly has a niche—transfer students. If enrollment continues to increase at two-year campuses in the state, enrollment of transfer students is likely to increase at UALR. This niche and its potential for growth make paying careful attention to the policies and procedures that facilitate or delay the progress of transfer students an obvious priority.
- Given legislative term limits, and given that the two major sources of university revenue—state appropriation, tuition and fees—are dependent upon the good will and understanding of others, UALR needs to follow a carefully constructed communication plan.

Such issues are further developed in UALR Fast Forward’s Chapter 7, which presents a more detailed analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), and concludes with a comprehensive
overview of the analysis that matches the identified SWOT (listed below). In addition, fiscal issues are addressed in part in Chapter 6 of *UALR Fast Forward*, “Planning Environment,” which presents projections of the University’s financial resources based on data available at the time and assesses the role UALR will play in providing graduates who will lead in the new knowledge-based economy of Central Arkansas.

### SWOT Analysis

**Threat: New Competitors**
- PTC, Other Universities, Students going Out-of-State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative Institutional Strengths</th>
<th>Relative Institutional Weaknesses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• comprehensiveness of academic programs</td>
<td>• limited on-campus student housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• graduate programs</td>
<td>• commuter campus image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• technology</td>
<td>• shortage of private scholarships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• class schedule</td>
<td>• higher tuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• faculty</td>
<td>• limited advertising budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attractiveness to transfer students</td>
<td>• limited student recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attractiveness to minority students</td>
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**Threat: Neighborhood in Decline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative Institutional Strengths</th>
<th>Relative Institutional Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• outreach units</td>
<td>• relevant experience limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• grants and contracts, e.g., Children International</td>
<td>• available funds limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• faculty (expertise)</td>
<td>• negative perceptions of city (e.g., exaggerated crime rate) taints image of University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• success with minority students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• commitment</td>
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**Opportunity: Location**
- Large professional communities, UAMS, PTC, Diverse demography, Job opportunities for students, Numerous partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative Institutional Strengths</th>
<th>Relative Institutional Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>• graduate and professional programs</td>
<td>• cumbersome governance mechanisms for joint programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• joint degree programs</td>
<td>• competition for freshmen and sophomores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• student transfer processes</td>
<td>• retention and graduation rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• campus climate positive for minority students</td>
<td>• shortage of private scholarships—limited support structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• graduate degrees awarded to minorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• accommodating class schedule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• commitment and experience</td>
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Although a SWOT analysis done today would look different in some ways, the assessment of capacity and environmental scanning that occurred during the strategic planning process produced a realistic foundation for the University’s successful planning. *UALR Fast Forward* continues to guide the University’s responses to the challenges it faces.
UALR is committed to fulfilling its mission to improve the quality of its educational programs and respond to future challenges and opportunities. This is demonstrated in the following mission objective:

*Responsiveness:* The University has a responsibility to remain responsive to a changing environment and society. This responsibility includes a continuous assessment of the University’s strengths and weaknesses in planning for and meeting internal and external needs. It also includes developing the faculty, staff, and students’ desire and capacity in order to create an academic community that is open to change and ready to meet the demands of a dynamic environment and student body. (Adopted by Faculty Senate, 1988)

This chapter, “The Future-Oriented Organization,” will focus on how UALR has responded to and continues to respond to various challenges and changes that affect the University’s ability to fulfill its mission while working to its full capacity in the future. These challenges include the following:

- Challenge: Responding to State Educational Needs and Demographic Shifts
- Challenge: Responding to Changing Needs of Constituents
- Challenge: Responding to Changing Technology Needs
- Challenge: Responding to Globalization
- Challenge: Responding to Ongoing Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
- Challenge: Responding to Faculty and Staff Professional Development Needs
- Challenge: Responding to Fiscal Issues
- Challenge: Responding to Physical Capacity Needs

**Challenge: Responding to State Educational Needs and Demographic Shifts**

Three reports cited in *UALR Fast Forward*—the Report of the Task Force for the Creation of Knowledge-Based Jobs, the Milken Institute Report, and AngelouEconomics Report—describe Arkansas’s need for new high-tech, knowledge-based jobs to advance economic development in Arkansas. UALR’s ability to help prepare graduates for these types of jobs was specifically mentioned in the recommendations of three reports.

**Task Force for the Creation of Knowledge-Based Jobs**

In 2001, the director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development established the Task Force for the Creation of Knowledge-Based Jobs as part of an effort to formulate an economic development strategy for the state. In its report, the task force noted

In the new economy, the things that matter most are college, graduate science and engineering degrees, research, intellectual property, new business starts and expansions, and participation in global commerce.
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

The task force urged that priority for university resources focus on degree programs that will make the largest contribution to the economic development of the region, and it made favorable note of UALR’s Donaghey College for Information Systems and Systems Engineering or the “Cyber College.” Today, this college is known as the Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology (EIT).

**Milken**

In 2004, the Milken Institute issued its report titled *Arkansas’s Position in the Knowledge-Based Economy*. This report gives a valuable, detailed analysis of the state’s strengths and weaknesses in the new high-tech, knowledge-based economy. In its overall ranking of states on the State Technology and Science Index, Arkansas is 49th out of 50.

The Milken report stresses that Arkansas needs to educate a technologically skilled workforce; to expand support for research, intellectual property, and commercialization; and to provide an environment congenial to innovation. In this discussion, the report references UALR twice. Again, the “Cyber College” is identified as one of the “critical programs and initiatives that nurture the development of a technologically skilled workforce in Arkansas.”

In its discussion of how to boost the critical areas of research and science in Arkansas by developing research clusters, the report notes

> Attempting to develop a research cluster from the ground up is both risky and expensive, which means that the three most viable candidates are the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, the University of Arkansas Medical School in Little Rock, and the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, even if other candidates such as Arkansas State University in Jonesboro might establish itself as such further in the future.

**AngelouEconomics**

The Metro Little Rock Alliance, a group of business and civic leaders in Central Arkansas counties, retained the services of AngelouEconomics, a consulting firm in Austin, Texas, to design an economic development strategy for the 11-county region. In 2004, the consulting firm issued its final report.

The AngelouEconomics report included recommendations similar to those of the other two, urging priority attention to workforce development and education, entrepreneurship, and quality-of-life factors. In a list of seven priority recommendations, the second listed by AngelouEconomics was, “Invest and expand UALR to become a premier higher education institution.” As with the others, the report urged support for the “Cyber College” [Donaghey College of Engineering and Information Technology] and for an expansion of engineering offerings.
In response to these reports, UALR has expanded its academic offerings in targeted areas to meet local, state, and regional needs for graduates in knowledge-based, high-tech areas. What was known as the “Cyber College” became EIT. The mission of the college is to “educate the next generation of technical professionals in the skills and knowledge base necessary to create and manage the technology based enterprises… this mission includes technological education at all levels…”

Since its inception in 1999 when it began offering two baccalaureate degrees in information science and systems engineering, the college has expanded its curricula to include three additional baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the areas of computer science and engineering technology, both mechanical and electrical. The college is developing a PhD in Integrated Computing that they plan to offer in Fall 2010.

**Demographic Shifts**

In addition to responding to state economic needs, UALR has been affected by three specific demographic shifts: an increase in two-year college transfer students, an increase in the Latino population in Central Arkansas, and an increase in veterans entering or returning to college. The first is both an opportunity and a threat while the remaining two are opportunities for the University.

The increases in the Latino population and in two-year college transfer students are discussed in *UALR Fast Forward*, and strategies to address them are articulated under Goal 1, Objective 7: “The University will increase the number of baccalaureate degree graduates by 20 percent in five years.”

- UALR will focus increased recruitment efforts on transfer students from both two-year and four-year campuses.
- The University will place shared personnel on site at Pulaski Technical College (PTC) to facilitate the transfer of students from one institution to the other.
- UALR will aggressively recruit minority students and will work with advocacy groups and the state legislature to make it easier for recently arrived Latinos to enroll without penalty in the state’s public colleges and universities.

The ways in which the University has responded to these events is described below.

**Transfer Students**

The demographic shift that has affected UALR the most over the past decade is the increase in students who take courses at a two-year institution before transferring to UALR. As mentioned in Chapter 3, “The Connected Organization,” the ratio of first-time entering freshmen to first-time entering transfer students each year has changed from approximately 1:1 in 2002 to almost 1:2. This fact is both a threat to and an opportunity for UALR.
Over the past decade, the number of two-year institutions in Arkansas has grown to 22, and more UALR students take their lower-level courses at two-year institutions, most often at nearby PTC. The result has been a substantial drop in the number of first-time entering freshmen at UALR. The figure below shows the effect PTC had on lower-level enrollment at UALR after opening in 1991. Although the sharp downward trend of the 1990’s has been replaced with a stable but flat trend during this decade, it is unlikely that UALR will rebound to pre-PTC lower-level enrollment.

However, the increase in students attending two-year institutions also is an opportunity for UALR. UALR Fast Forward states:

UALR has a singular role among public universities in Arkansas in serving transfer students, 1,151 of whom entered UALR in Fall 2004 [projections for Fall 2009 are over 2,200]. Each year UALR admits more transfer students as a percentage of undergraduate enrolment than any other Arkansas four-year campus. The significance of this service for the state cannot be overstated, given the state’s compelling interest in seeing a higher percentage of the Arkansas population hold at least a bachelor’s degree.

Goal 1, Objective 7 states, “UALR will focus increased recruitment efforts on transfer students from both two-year and four-year campuses.”

The groundwork for accomplishing this objective was laid in the late 1990’s when UALR and PTC began working more collaboratively (as discussed in Chapter 4, “The Connected Organization”). In 2004, the institutions worked together to establish an advising office on the main campus of PTC for students interested in transferring to UALR. The
liaison officer in this office has advised and assisted hundreds of PTC students and serves as a resource by providing information about UALR admissions and financial aid processes as well as policy regarding transfer credit. The liaison also acts as a representative of UALR at recruitment fairs and PTC community activities.

Directly related to UALR Fast Forward, Goal 1, Objective 7, were changes in transfer credit policy and the creation of the Office of Transfer Student Services. In 2008, using initial findings from the Chancellor’s Fast Track Transfer Project (discussed in detail in Chapter 4, “The Connected Organization”), the Faculty Senate created more flexible policy regarding the transfer of general education or core credit. This change allows faculty to address the unique needs of each transfer student rather than feeling constrained by policies largely created for students without transfer credit.

The purpose of the Transfer Office is to expedite the articulation of core transfer credit, trouble shoot for faculty and staff on core transfer issues, and help inform policy change that will reduce barriers for students with core transfer credit. In order for the Transfer Office to accomplish its purposes effectively, faculty have delegated some transfer articulation authority to it with oversight from faculty governance structures.

**Increase in the Latino Population**

From 1990–2000, Arkansas’s Latino population grew by 337 percent, the second highest growth rate in the nation. The number of residents in the state who are Latino is projected to increase to 240,404 by 2020 or to approximately 7 percent of the total population. In 2006, there were approximately 100,000 documented and undocumented Latinos living in Arkansas.

Since 2000, the number of Latino students at UALR has increased 83 percent, with a 28 percent increase in the last three years. One way UALR is connecting to the Latino population is through its partnership with the Mexican Consulate, which is located across the street from the campus. When the Consulate opened in 2007, Chancellor Anderson noted at the opening ceremony that “a consulate is government at its best. It is government helping citizens directly.” Since then, Andres Chao Ebergenyl, Mexican Consul, has joined the UALR Board of Visitors and plays an active role in supporting UALR’s connection to the Latino community.

**UALR Fast Forward** rightly recognizes this shifting demographic as an opportunity and states, “With its record of welcoming minority students, UALR could become the campus of choice for this growing segment of the state’s population.” However, the focus of the University has been more on helping Latinos acclimate to Central Arkansas than merely on recruitment. **UALR Fast Forward** commits the University to working with advocacy groups and the state legislature to make it easier for recently arrived Latinos to enroll without penalty in the state’s public colleges and universities. Additionally, the University has initiated programs to address specific needs of this population.

*Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization*

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2a Example of Evidence

The organization's planning documents demonstrate that attention is being paid to emerging factors such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.
The Citizenship Radio Training Project grew out of discussions during a meeting of the Latino Task Force at UALR in 2004. The task force noted that citizenship training is needed by many immigrants but is accessible to few. Conflicting work schedules, inadequate transportation, and lack of childcare keep most immigrants from participating in English as a Second Language and citizenship classes hosted by adult education centers. To meet this need, UALR created the Citizenship Radio Training Project with funds from three private foundations—the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Arkansas Community Foundation, and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

The project offers immigrants a citizenship training course delivered through the use of a radio program, a handbook, and facilitated group discussion sessions. The course is a semi-self-paced independent study with opportunities for participants to interact with other students during two group discussion sessions facilitated in the three cities where the program is piloted: Little Rock, Fayetteville, and Fort Smith.

**Increase in Veterans Entering or Returning to College**

At the time UALR Fast Forward was developed, no one knew the extent to which Army National Guard and Army Reserve units would be utilized in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan or that a new GI Bill with expanded educational benefits would be developed. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have affected the lives of many UALR constituencies including students and other Central Arkansas residents in the Army National Guard or Army Reserve who were deployed.

UALR has always welcomed veteran students and has been a Service-Members Opportunity College (SOC) member since the early 1980’s. Long-standing policy allows students in the military to receive a full refund of their tuition and fees when a semester is interrupted due to deployment orders. After discharge from active duty, they have one year to use the Free Semester Grant for tuition and fees.

However, despite these accommodations for students called to service, past university policies have not been especially “military friendly.” For example, prior to last year, the most academic credit veterans could receive for their military training was 12 hours of lower-level electives and three hours of physical education. This has changed recently.

During the 2008–2009 academic year, UALR contacted the continuing education unit of the Army National Guard located at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock (this unit serves all Army National Guard members worldwide) to discuss ways in which the University could better serve veterans. In response to meetings with educational counselors at Camp Robinson, the following was achieved:

- Policy on how military education credits are evaluated as transfer credits was changed by Faculty Senate. The new policy states: “... military education credit evaluated by the American Council on Education will be accepted as transfer credit at UALR.”

- A task force to help plan a comprehensive, holistic approach to meeting the needs of active duty, National Guard, and retired military personnel who are interested in attending UALR either
through online, hybrid, or traditional programs was created. Recommendations from this task force resulted in the appointment of a military ombudsman located in the Provost’s Office. UALR is now listed in the 2010 Guide to Military Friendly Schools.¹

- A plan to educate faculty and staff about “trauma informed” best practice models of support needed to help military veterans succeed on campus was created. In February 2009, faculty and staff participated in the Academic Impressions Webinar Psychological Needs of Returning Veterans sponsored by Educational and Student Services.

**Challenge: Responding to Changing Needs of Constituents**

Long-range state educational needs and demographic shifts are not the only things to which UALR responds. A significant number of other changes have occurred due to UALR’s relationship with its external constituencies and the effective environmental scanning UALR does. This environmental scanning has resulted in fresh, inventive programs offered by UALR as well as different types of services provided to Arkansas to help improve its economic status and help accomplish UALR Fast Forward’s Goal 1, Objective 3: “The University will give priority to new academic programs which promise the greatest impact on meeting the needs of Arkansas in such areas as economic development, health care, education, and social welfare.” All of these responses demonstrate how UALR supports change and innovation within its structure to help meet the needs of its constituencies.

**Certificate Programs**

Graduate certificate programs are an example of this. In 2000, UALR had one graduate certificate program—Marriage and Family Therapy; now there are 19. These certificates are designed for professionals in the community who wish to further their skills in a particular area or advance their careers. Although most are too new to evaluate their viability, many are thriving. Particularly popular are the certificates in Conflict Mediation, Management, Reading/Literacy Coaching, Rehabilitation Counseling, Accountancy, and Taxation.

UALR also offers joint certificate programs. In 2009, UALR received approval to offer the Graduate Certificate in Technology Innovation, a program offered jointly through the College of Business and EIT. The certificate is designed for post-baccalaureate students and working professionals interested in business and technology innovation. It is intended to provide people in the workforce with technical skills and the tools necessary to develop, evaluate, and implement ideas for new products, services, and processes in their field of interest.

This approach to meeting the needs of constituents by a four-year institution is unprecedented in Arkansas. UALR has worked closely with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education in developing these programs to meet the needs of Arkansans.

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¹ [http://militaryfriendlyschools.com/](http://militaryfriendlyschools.com/)
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

Bachelors of Applied Technology and Applied Science

Another population of constituents with unique needs is the one comprised of those who have completed an associate degree in applied science (AAS) but who need a baccalaureate for professional advancement or to pursue a new career. Historically, these students have not been able to apply most of their previous academic work toward a bachelor’s degree at UALR due to the fact that they had not completed a liberal arts core of courses. Previously, faculty felt strongly that it was not the role of UALR to accommodate these students through degree programs that built upon their pervious academic work. Even though change at an institutional level tends to occur slowly, UALR faculty have demonstrated the ability to adjust their perceptions and change processes expeditiously when needed and have become more open to exploring the development of such programs as a result of two developments.

The first was the increase in transfer students coming to UALR, as described earlier in this chapter. Over the past decade, as the number of transfer students rose to 70 percent of the student population, UALR faculty have realized that transfer students are UALR students. In 2006, Chancellor Anderson challenged the faculty’s long-held belief that students should complete a majority of their coursework at UALR by asking them to consider whether more liberal transfer policies would result in graduates who were less prepared for their professional lives or for graduate school. This challenge led to the Transfer Pilot Program discussed in Chapter 4.

The second development was the changing relationship between UALR and the closest two-year college, PTC, also discussed in Chapter 4. As the institutions began to work more collaboratively, the faculty became more sensitive to the needs of students with AAS degrees and more willing to find ways to accommodate them.

In 2006, to meet the needs of these students, EIT began offering the Bachelor in Applied Technology (BAT). Located in the Department of Engineering Technology, the BAT has options in Industrial Computing and Manufacturing Management. The goal of the program is to provide students who have an AAS with a path to a baccalaureate degree that builds on their previous academic work. The program accepts 60 credit hours from the AAS and applies them toward the UALR core requirements and technical electives.

In addition to the BAT, faculty in programs located in three different colleges—the College of Professional Studies, the College of Business, and the College of Science and Mathematics—are developing baccalaureate degrees in applied science to accommodate students with the AAS. These will be considered by the Undergraduate Council in Fall 2009.

Offering the BA in Interpretation at Tulsa Community College

Another way UALR is offering innovative programs is through interstate collaborations. In 2004, Tulsa Community College (TCC) approached the Interpreter Education Program at UALR seeking a university partner to provide TCC AA in Interpretation graduates an opportunity to earn a
bachelor’s degree in interpreting. In the mid-2000’s, national reports were highlighting concerns about the failure of school systems to provide certified and qualified educational interpreters. Oklahoma’s response to these concerns was the passage of the Educational Interpreters for the Deaf Act in 2002. This legislation established minimum educational standards and certification for school personnel in Oklahoma who function as interpreters in classrooms.

Additionally, faculty at TCC knew that by 2012, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf was going to require a baccalaureate degree as a prerequisite for taking the national certification test. Since there are no baccalaureate programs in interpreting in Oklahoma, TCC approached UALR for assistance because UALR’s baccalaureate interpretation program is nationally recognized for its quality.

The result was an interstate collaboration between TCC and UALR wherein students who complete an associate’s degree in the Interpreter Education Program at TCC can continue their studies to complete the BA in Interpretation: ASL/English at UALR via distance education. The program is delivered on-site in Tulsa through interactive video and online courses. Students are required to travel to Little Rock to complete a required service-learning component.

The program has been successful. Currently there are ten students set to graduate in Spring 2010, and ten more are ready to start the program this fall. Because of its success, UALR has been approached by associate programs in Texas to duplicate the program there. Progress on establishing similar collaborations in Texas has stalled because of technology problems with the available interactive video equipment. However, through a grant from the UALR Office of Extended Programs and help from its staff in Scholarly Technology and Resources, the interpretation program is creating an innovative web-based interactive classroom that they will begin testing this fall.

UALR’s support of innovation goes beyond offering creative programs. The University also provides the necessary resources to develop groundbreaking ideas in the areas of business and technology through supportive infrastructure. An example is the Office of Innovation and Commercialization.

Office of Innovation and Commercialization

The Office of Innovation and Commercialization (OIC) is designed to assist faculty, staff, and students to move their innovative research and creative work into the marketplace for public use. The OIC is directed by the Vice Provost for Innovation and Commercialization (VP for IC), a position created in 2006. The VP for IC at UALR provides a bridge between the innovative research coming out of the University’s labs and the marketplace by incubating start-up companies, finding venture capital to help them grow, and coordinating with the UA System for technology transfer and technology licensing. The VP for IC is also the focal point of contact for outside organizations, companies, and individuals that may want to collaborate with UALR faculty.

1. http://www.uark.edu/ua/tlo/inventors/
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The OIC assists faculty, staff, and students to move their innovative research and creative work into the marketplace for public use by developing the infrastructure needed to license to outside organizations. This is achieved by working closely with faculty, staff, and students to create invention and intellectual property disclosures. When disclosures show a potential for commercial success, the OIC provides the methodology to seek intellectual property protection (copyrights and patents) for the research and/or creative work, then attempts to identify commercial partners to negotiate a license and option agreements for continued development. It may also recommend that inventors create a new company to commercialize their own innovations. If a technology is commercialized successfully, the revenues are distributed among the researcher(s) and the University.

The first projects on which the office focused were the result of work currently being conducted in the Nanotechnology Center. During its first year, the center has published 20 papers in refereed journals, presented at international conferences, created a significant number of patent applications, partnered with firms in and out of Arkansas, and formed one new firm in Little Rock. It is expected that the center will provide the technical foundation for two to three new firms a year and that its work will enhance the scientific and economic development of Central Arkansas.

UALR has demonstrated that it is supportive of innovation and change through its ability to adapt its academic programs and infrastructure to meet the changing needs of its constituencies. As it does so, the University becomes more relevant to the community and more effective in accomplishing its mission.

Challenge: Responding to Changing Technology Needs

In addition to preparing graduates for high-tech, knowledge-based jobs by adding programs and majors specifically for that reason, UALR is helping prepare all its graduates to work with technology by integrating it across campus and in classrooms. Goal 1, Objective 8 reads:

> The University will be the high tech campus in Arkansas where relevant technology is prominently available and used extensively by students, faculty, and staff.

Despite increased expenses, major strides have been made toward achieving this goal. Technology is used extensively in research, teaching, and administrative functions at UALR and sets the University apart from other institutions in the state. Since 1999, the annual investment in UALR’s Office of Computing Services has grown by 107 percent. However, this budgetary figure does not capture the increase in information technology (IT) costs that have occurred across the campus. In colleges, libraries, and other organizational units, technology support staff positions have been funded, additional hardware and software have been purchased, and maintenance expenditures have increased.
An effect of the increase in technology on campus has been an increase in online course offerings. As discussed in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization,” UALR currently offers 369 courses online, including 110 graduate-level courses. Corresponding with the increased number of online courses available is an increase in the number of students taking them. Most online sections of courses fill more quickly than those offered on campus. From 2004–2005 to 2008–2009, the number of undergraduate students and graduate students taking at least one online course each year has grown from 2,688 to 5,553, and from 759 to 1368, respectively. Currently, almost 60 percent of UALR students take at least one online course annually.

There also has been an increase in international students who take UALR courses online. As discussed in Chapter 3, “The Learning-Focused Organization,” the Master of Science in Information Quality program links students in four countries and four states.

In response to the increased focus on the use of technology, the Office of Off-Campus Programs became the Office of Extended Programs,¹ and a deanship was created to coordinate and supervise the development and deliverance of technology-enhanced instruction on- and off-campus. The Dean of Extended Programs has been charged with creating a streamlined and efficient structure for these initiatives. Additionally, the Office of Extended Programs is responsible for training and supporting faculty in their use of technology through the Scholarly Technology and Resources (STaR)² office.

UALR also has used renovation projects as a means of increasing access to technology on campus. Since 2000, the major renovations made at the Bowen School of Law included adding state-of-the-art academic technology in all classrooms and a video capture system in most classrooms. Similarly, renovations made to Stabler Hall, which houses most of the classrooms for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (AHSS), made it one of the most technically advanced classroom buildings on campus. The building is now completely wireless, and all of the classrooms have state-of-the-art computer and audio-visual

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¹ http://ualr.edu/extendedprograms/
² http://ualr.edu/star/
equipment. A digital learning and collaboration center aids in language instruction, and a state-of-the art computer classroom accommodates instruction in subjects such as social science statistics and methodologies.

Systematic replacement of technology partially is paid for through the use of student technology fees. This has allowed a steady cycle of upgrading technology without being dependent completely upon state funding. It also has allowed increasing the number of technology classrooms available to students. For example, the College of Education has a three-year replacement plan for faculty technology, replacement of teaching stations in priority use smart class rooms, and for upgrading and replacement of EAST lab technology in the college. The plan has been in effect for approximately four years and has allowed the College of Education to create three additional sole-use smart classrooms for college faculty and adjunct use.

AHSS has a five-year replacement plan for technology in its technology-enhanced and computer classrooms, a three-year interim software update cycle for its classroom computers, and a five-year plan to replace departmental technology used in student advising. The classroom and software replacement plans have been in place for five years, and this is the first year for the advising technology replacement plan. The technology fees and systematic replacement plan, along with generous help from the institution, have allowed the college to add an additional computer classroom, a digital language lab, and 23 presentation-style classrooms. The computer classroom supports upper-level social sciences and statistics classes, and the digital language classroom supports second language classes at all levels.

Although the increased use of technology has affected all UALR students positively, one population in particular has benefitted—students with disabilities. The Disability Resource Center1 has worked hard to incorporate the principles of universal design in both on-campus and online course development. All websites must meet accessibility requirements for screen-reading software, and certain classrooms throughout campus are equipped with technology such as Typewell, a speech-to-text software used for deaf and hearing-impaired students which enables students to see on their laptops what is being said in class. A transcriber who has been trained in this program sits in on the lecture, and his or her notes are transmitted wirelessly to the student’s laptop.

In addition to working to accomplish Goal 1, UALR has made progress on Goal 7, Objective 2, which commits the University to developing and supporting the proper infrastructure to expand the information technology resources of the campus to ensure effective and efficient use of technology.

Work on this objective has included maintaining Internet2 status as a user of advanced network applications. This next-generation Internet infrastructure allows researchers to send large files, images, and streaming video. It has almost 2,000 times the bandwidth available on a broadband connection. Maintaining Internet2 status will be accomplished by establishing a connection to the Arkansas Research and Education

1. http://ualr.edu/disability/
Network (ARE-ON),\(^1\) which is a regional optical network that will connect the 11 four-year public universities to a high-speed national network.

After the connection to ARE-ON is complete, the National Lambda Rail network will be available to the campus community. The National Lambda Rail runs over fiber-optic lines. This major initiative of U.S. research universities and private sector technology companies provides the infrastructure to advance research and experimentation in networking technologies and applications.

UALR also has created two advisory committees to ensure that faculty and staff are communicating about technology needs. The first, for technical support personnel, meets regularly with the Department of Computing Services to coordinate the support of technology on the campus. The other, the BANNER Users Group, is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate that addresses technical support for academic and other programs.

To support the use of technology by faculty and staff, a training unit in the Department of Computing Services specializes in developing and delivering training for BANNER, the University’s administrative software application. The training is developed by first defining employee work roles and tailoring specific training classes based on the employee’s job duties and responsibilities. Additionally, the Ottenheimer Library Strategic Planning Training Task Force conducted a training needs assessment of all its employees in 2007 and identified computer training as the most pressing need. The task force developed a pilot training module to help accomplish its educational goals.

Additional support of technology will be necessary if UALR intends to be a high-tech campus. The Customer Satisfaction Evaluation conducted by MGT found that, although 80.2 percent of the student respondents were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of the Student Technology Support Services staff, only 72.7 percent were satisfied with technology services.

**Challenge: Responding to Globalization**

At the end of UALR Fast Forward’s Chapter 6, “Planning Environment,” the following implications for planning are identified:

> In Arkansas, UALR must play a larger role in enabling the community and the state to compete in the global, increasingly knowledge-based economy. Policies, programs, and resource allocations must be shaped accordingly.

UALR Fast Forward’s Goal 1 recognizes that UALR constituencies operate in a diverse, global society: “UALR will provide programs of study that will educate students to live, work, and lead in the complex, technological, diverse world of the 21st century.” To help accomplish this

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\(^1\) [http://www.areon.net/](http://www.areon.net/)
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goal, UALR offers support for students and faculty interested in studying elsewhere, as well as educational courses of study that focus on international affairs.

In 2007, the functions and units related to international students and international studies reorganized into one operational unit housed under the auspices of the Office of the Provost. This increased the effectiveness and consolidated many of the functions being performed by the previously separate offices. The newly formed Office of International Services provides comprehensive assistance and support for approximately 300 international students.

International students and faculty represent more than 60 countries and enrich the educational experience for all members of the University by exposing them to different cultures. UALR’s international students enhance the campus environment, provide a variety of different viewpoints, and help cultivate global awareness among UALR students.

Programs Abroad offers students deeper cultural exposure. Through this program, UALR students have the opportunity to study and immerse themselves in another country and culture, thus expanding their view of the world. While working to fulfill major and minor coursework requirements, students also acquire firsthand knowledge of another culture, develop or improve fluency in another language, hone skills critical for professional success, and gain a global perspective.

UALR has bilateral exchange agreements with Karl-Franzens Universität in Graz, Austria; Université d’Orléans in Orléans, France; City University of Hong Kong in Hong Kong (SAR); Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara in Guadalajara, Mexico; and Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo in Pachuca, Mexico. In addition to formal exchange agreements, UALR students have additional short- and long-term study and internship opportunities in locations such as Austria, Egypt, France, Germany, Great Britain, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and Yemen. Beyond UALR-sponsored programs, the Programs Abroad office assists students in finding, applying to, and receiving credit for opportunities abroad administered by other universities or institutions.

In addition, over 40 UALR faculty and staff have taken the opportunity to travel and work abroad at the Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria. The exchange program is designed to internationalize the UALR curriculum and stimulate innovation in UALR’s delivery of services to students by providing faculty and staff with an in-depth introduction to the workings of a foreign university. Costs of the program are partially underwritten by UALR.

Students also have the option of majoring in international business, through the College of Business’ BBA in International Business. The international business program uses an interdisciplinary approach to study the intricacies of the international marketplace. This major focuses

1. http://ualr.edu/international/
2. http://ualr.edu/academics/?page_id=10
3. http://ualr.edu/bba/libus/
on the complexities and interconnections between the world’s markets and cultures. The goal is to prepare students to be managers in the 21st century.

There is a foreign language emphasis and a general business emphasis within the international business major. Students accepted into the international business program are advised by the international business coordinator and faculty. Currently, the college is pursuing the addition of an International MBA program. This program will further the study of business in the international community and infuse both language and culture as a part of the studies.

The infusion of an international focus throughout the curriculum helps educate students about other cultures. One such program is the Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program.1 This program is multidisciplinary and endowed by the University of Arkansas King Fahd Fund for Middle Eastern Studies.

The Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program has a dedicated group of faculty specializing in the Middle East. Academically, the UALR Middle Eastern Studies Program offers a series of courses on the Middle East and is centered on a projected academic minor in Middle Eastern Studies.

The Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program also conducts monthly events (lectures, conferences, films) on the Middle East aimed at the academic community and the general public. Because of its generous endowment, the program is able to distribute grant monies among UALR faculty and students interested in pursuing specific scholarly endeavors. The UALR Ottenheimer Library has a large and growing collection of books, periodicals, and other sources on the Middle East. The Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program also funds UALR student participation in the Model Arab League and other simulation programs.

The Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program’s chief goal is to foster knowledge of the Middle East and of the Islamic world among the UALR campus community, the community of Little Rock, and the State of Arkansas. The program has begun offering free, non-credit, Arabic language classes open to the general public. This will have a far-reaching impact within the greater Little Rock community and around the globe.

Another UALR global initiative designed to facilitate the acclimation of Latinos to Central Arkansas is the Bringing Mexico to Arkansas Schools Program (BMAP) sponsored by the Arkansas Global Programs.2 The program increases teacher and student awareness of Mexican culture, provides a study tour of Mexico, and sponsors community events and teacher conferences.

To date, BMAP has had a direct affect on 12,000 students, 600 teachers, 66 schools, and 40 communities. BMAP has reached many additional Arkansans through its website, community outreach at international festivals, school outreach, the traveling exhibit on Mexican culture, and

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1. http://ualr.edu/minors/mest
2. http://ualr.edu/arkansasglobalprograms/
museum exhibits. Most importantly, BMAP has helped teachers interact positively and productively with students and families who have a culture and language different from their own. In addition to improving intercultural understanding and opening cultural dialogue, the project has encouraged educational partnership and exchange.

Arkansas Global Programs also coordinates the Bringing China to Arkansas Program, which provides the first opportunity Arkansas teachers have to learn about China in-depth; the Bhutan Small Businesswomen Development Project, which provides Bhutanese entrepreneurs with small business training at UALR and elsewhere in Little Rock; and the Southwest Minorities Cultural Heritage Project, which orients and trains cultural heritage experts on the protection and preservation of minority heritages in western Sichuan Province, PR China.

**Challenge: Responding to Ongoing Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness**

As described in Chapter 3, “The Learning Focused Organization,” UALR has created an assessment infrastructure that maintains a system for collecting, analyzing, and applying evaluation data at all levels of the institution. Ensuring the quality of academic, support, and resource services through data-based evaluation is a priority at UALR. This is evidenced by Goal 2 in UALR Fast Forward which states, “UALR will provide a student-centered educational environment.” Under this goal, Objective 1 commits the University to

organ[ing] its operations and shap[ing] its practices, policies, and procedures to be as student-centered as possible, as evidenced by increased student satisfaction and success.

This assessment infrastructure helps UALR respond to changing external and internal challenges, as well as provide valuable information on the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Significant resources have been allocated to build an infrastructure that supports assessment on campus. Annually, each college, the Ottenheimer Library, and the Office of Testing Services and Student Life Research\(^1\) receive assessment funds through the Office of the Provost. These funds are used to support assessment efforts in a variety of ways, such as to purchase program evaluation instruments or to pay for faculty and staff to attend assessment conferences.

Support also is provided through the Provost Assessment Advisory Group (PAAG). PAAG is led by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Academic Policy, and includes a representative from every college, Educational and Student Services, and the Ottenheimer Library. This group is responsible for reviewing assessment plans for all new degree programs and providing a direct communication link between the college assessment teams and university administration.

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1. [http://ualr.edu/testing/](http://ualr.edu/testing/)
PAAG manages the Assessment Central website. The purpose of Assessment Central is to showcase what UALR is doing to promote assessment excellence and accountability to stakeholders both on and off campus, provide access to assessment resources for faculty and staff, and provide information on assessment events. Assessment Central also is linked to college assessment websites where annual assessment progress reports are posted. These reports include information on student learning objectives, assessment measures, most recent assessment findings, and curricular changes or other decisions that were the result of assessment findings.

Institutional-Level Assessment and Feedback

At the institutional level, achievement of the University mission is evaluated annually through assessment of progress made on the goals and objectives articulated in UALR Fast Forward, as described in Chapter 2, “The Distinctive Organization” and this chapter. As each goal and objective is revisited, the extent to which identified strategies have or have not been successful becomes apparent. Using this information, the University is able to continue effective strategies and revise or discontinue those that are not.

The University also receives annual institutional data through the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement and periodically through the faculty survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute. These data provide organizational-level information about student and faculty perceptions of each other and the institution. These data have been used during the self-study process to identify the misperception held by faculty that students do not care about and do not participate in service

opportunities (discussed in Chapter 4, “The Connected Organization”). Now that this issue has been identified, strategies for addressing it will be developed.

UALR also receives feedback from external constituencies. The UALR Board of Visitors which includes prominent business and civic leaders (discussed in Chapter 1, “The Distinctive Organization,”) is charged with advising the Chancellor on ways of maintaining high standards in the development and operation of UALR. Additionally, the growing Alumni Association provides the University with a rich source of information about its effectiveness in preparing them for professional employment, further education, and a life of learning.

**Programmatic-Level Assessment and Feedback**

At the departmental level, all academic programs have articulated processes for assessing student learning. This begins with identifying measurable student learning outcomes formulated by program faculty based on the knowledge and skills graduates will need for professional competence and/or for pursuing further education. Faculty construct five-year program assessment plans that outline how achievement of these outcomes will be measured. The results of the assessment are used to improve both curriculum and teaching.

Academic units are required to submit annual program assessment progress reports for each of their degree programs. These reports are based on the learning goals and strategies set out in the unit’s five-year assessment plan. The student learning objectives and outcomes of each program in the unit—doctoral, master’s, undergraduate major, and/or certificate level—are clearly articulated in the plans.

These reports focus on the student learning goals addressed that year: what student learning objectives were measured for those goals, which assessment measures were used, how stakeholders were involved, what the assessment findings were, and how the findings will be used for program improvement. Additionally, in an effort to “assess assessment,” programs are asked for feedback regarding assessment processes at UALR.

Oversight of degree program assessment is provided by college assessment teams composed of faculty from college departments. These teams review annual assessment reports submitted by the degree programs and provide feedback to help improve evaluation processes, help clarify how assessment data are used, and/or suggest further use of data. Each college determines how the assessment team will function and the form in which feedback to programs regarding their assessment processes will be given. After program assessments reports are reviewed, a summary of assessment in the college is posted on the college website. In this way, assessment processes, findings, and use are available for review by administrators, students and other stakeholders.

Periodic external review of academic programs is another evaluation component. Programs with accreditation are reviewed every seven to ten years by professional accrediting organizations and must provide evidence of the currency and relevancy of their curricula and pedagogy.
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Such reviews also include information on graduation rates, passage of licensing exams, employment rates in the professional area, and alumni satisfaction with the program.

Accreditation site visits by external professional peers often involve interviews with university administration to assess support for the program as well as meetings with students and community constituents to ensure the program actively involves each in evaluation of program effectiveness. Site visitors provide programs with feedback on their strengths as well as areas that need improvement. Continued accreditation is evidence that the program is providing graduates with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful professionally.

In April 2008, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board directed the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) staff, to revise the existing program review process to ensure quality academic programs that support Arkansas’s economic development goals and to reduce barriers to graduation. This was done in cooperation with the public colleges and universities.

For accredited programs, nothing changed. Their accreditation reviews will serve to fulfill quality assurance requirements. However, the adopted policy requires that every non-accredited academic degree program participate in a self-study process and produce a report that includes the following:

- a clear statement of the programs goals and objectives
- a detailed discussion of the programs curriculum linked to goals and objectives
- evidence that program faculty are qualified
- a description of program resources
- a discussion of instruction delivered via distance technology
- a discussion of how the program supports the academic success of students
- evidence of ongoing program assessment that has resulted in program improvement
- evidence of program effectiveness

The self-study report must be reviewed by two unbiased out-of-state reviewers, approved by ADHE, who are affiliated with programs similar in mission and scope to the program under review. One of these reviewers must conduct an on-campus site visit of the program. ADHE program review guidelines and timelines are available online.1

UALR was supportive of these changes and played a major role in formulating the new processes. Many of the procedures adopted were in keeping with the University’s strategy of “strengthen[ing] the University’s internal system of academic program review” articulated in UALR Fast Forward under Goal 1, Objective 1.

1. http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/Pages/aa_academicproposals.aspx
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Educational and Student Support Services Assessment and Feedback

Assessment also is integrated into student services units (discussed in Chapter 3, The Learning-Focused Organization”). The Division of Educational and Student Services conducts ongoing evaluation of its programs. This reflects the division’s commitment to improving support and academic services that complement and enhance student learning. Each of the departments within the areas of Student Development, Enrollment Planning, and University College submit five-year assessment plans that provide information on the methodology used to assess goals and objectives on an annual basis. Unit assessment components with a timeline and status updates measure the outcomes, monitor progress, and permit continuous improvement. Data are available, and accumulated descriptions can be obtained on the website for each unit. A selection of assessment data and outcomes that support decisions made about effective services and student learning is available online.1

Challenge: Responding to Faculty and Staff Professional Development Needs

The idiom human resources is such a generic term for the most important element within the University—the people. The faculty, staff, and administrators are what make UALR unique, vibrant, and an exciting place to work. The importance placed on people is apparent in Goal 6 in UALR Fast Forward, “UALR will support and strengthen its human resources.”

To achieve this goal, in the last five years, UALR has worked to provide faculty with expanded professional development opportunities:

• provided orientation and mentoring programs for new faculty, including special programs for international faculty
• sought additional funding to support faculty development, travel, and other professional activities of faculty. New policies regarding indirect cost income has sent dollars directly to primary investigators and departments to use for travel and faculty development.
• reviewed and approved a new faculty roles and rewards document. The purpose was to ensure that expectations of faculty and the ways in which faculty are rewarded are aligned with the roles which faculty must play in a metropolitan university. The document was endorsed by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2007.
• revised the Ottenheimer Library’s faculty governance documents to meet the new standards in 2007

In addition, the University is developing policies and practices to encourage and support enhanced efforts in recruiting a strong and diverse faculty. One step toward is that the University now pays to bring in two candidates for interview; previously, the University only paid for

2b Example of Evidence
The organization uses its human resources effectively.

2b Example of Evidence
The organization intentionally develops its human resources to meet future changes.

2b Example of Evidence
The organization’s history of financial resource development and investment documents a forward-looking concern for ensuring educational quality (e.g., investments in faculty development, technology, learning support services, new or renovated facilities).

one, though departments could pay to bring others to campus. Additionally, the Ottenheimer Library developed a diversity plan in 2007 and routinely posts job ads to minority listservs.

**Salary Issues**

To ensure UALR’s ability to compete for qualified faculty, administrators have been working with state officials to increase funding for faculty salaries to enable the campus to compete in the national market. This has been difficult to do in the current economic climate.

UALR also has been working to bring salaries up to or above Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) averages in order to reward the faculty appropriately. While SREB averages have been achieved in some disciplines, this has not been possible for all. During one recent budget cycle, UALR ensured that all assistant professors were at $40,000, all associate professors were at $45,000, and all professors were at $50,000. Periodically, the institution has been able to allocate a modest amount of money during the budget process to allow deans to address equity issues.

At the Bowen School of Law, the former dean partnered with the UAF law school dean to advocate at the Arkansas General Assembly for an increase in litigation filing fees. These fees provide funds for the Administration of Justice Fund, which is allocated to the two law schools. The resulting increase afforded UALR’s law school the opportunity to increase substantially the salaries it pays its faculty, thus assisting the school in competing nationally for faculty.

An issue raised repeatedly during the information-gathering component of *UALR Fast Forward* was the role of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty on UALR’s campus. Several departments rely heavily on these faculty members in the teaching, research, and administration of the department. In the Department of Rhetoric and Writing, for example, 12 of the 22 faculty are full-time, non-tenure track. Of these faculty members, four currently hold terminal degrees and one is completing a doctorate. Out of these instructors, one runs the University Writing Center, one directs the First-Year Composition Program, and one was the lead writer for the last institutional accreditation report in 2000. The faculty members obviously are valuable to accomplishing the mission of the department and the University.

Despite their importance to the functioning of the University, full-time non-tenure-track faculty have had no ability to advance—other than annual pay raises, they had no “rewards” or promotion system similar to the one available to tenure-track faculty. To remedy this, an objective in *UALR Fast Forward* was the creation of a Faculty Roles and Rewards Task Force to review the roles and rewards for full-time, non-tenure-track faculty. Faculty Senate will begin work on this in Fall 2009.

Objective 3 of Goal 6 reads, “The University will continue to provide professional development opportunities and to reward staff appropriately as evidenced by salaries at the appropriate market rate and by the satisfaction level of staff.” Staff salaries have long been a concern of the administration, and UALR has consistently worked with state officials to increase funding for staff salaries to enable the campus to
continue to compete for talent in the regional market. In a recent budget cycle, UALR upgraded one of the lowest staff positions on campus which, in raising the floor, resulted in higher average for all staff salaries. In addition, within resources available, the University addresses staff salary equity issues on campus.

With each budget cycle, some progress is made. In addition, the University has worked very hard to keep fringe benefit programs under control in an effort to strengthen this source of compensation for staff. For example, although the institution’s costs for providing health care benefits have risen by $2 million over the last five years, rather than raising employee insurance costs, the institution has absorbed the increase.

**Professional Development**

UALR also actively supports and encourages professional development for faculty and staff, whether through the tuition discount policy, on-campus professional development opportunities, or through providing financial support for off-campus/external professional activities and other opportunities.

The tuition discount policy is one of the most popular on-campus development opportunities available to UA System employees. Many faculty and staff take advantage of it; full-time employees of UALR, their spouses, and their dependents are eligible for tuition discounts. Employee discounts are 90 percent of tuition for classes taken at UALR or 70 percent of tuition for classes taken at any other UA System campus. Employees must have supervisor approval, may take only one course during normal working hours in lieu of a lunch hour, and will be reimbursed no more than 11 credit hours per fall/spring term and a total of six credit hours in the summer.

Employee tuition discount applies to any undergraduate or graduate (master’s-level) course of study, except for the following professional and terminal programs:

- the Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA)
- the online Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling (MARC)
- Law (JD)
- all doctoral programs (EdS, EdD, PhD)

Spouses and dependent children are also eligible for a tuition discount for classes taken within the UA System campus, although fees are not discounted. Spouses and dependent children may take up to 132 undergraduate credit hours at the discounted rate. Discounts for spouses and dependent children are 50 percent of tuition for classes taken at UALR or 40 percent of tuition for classes taken at any other UA System campus.

Some of the staff have received multiple degrees from UALR in this way. Karen Palmer, the administrative assistant in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing, has obtained an AA in Interpreting for the Deaf (1988), an
AA in General Studies (1997), a BA in Liberal Arts (1998), and a MA in Professional and Technical Writing (2005) during her employment at UALR.

The Provost’s Office also provides funds for faculty development workshops before the fall term and throughout the year. The Provost's Office has underwritten the expenses for dozens of faculty to attend workshops and conferences on timely issues in academe, particularly assessment and support of the values in the core curriculum. Mini-grant programs are administered through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs as well as the Provost’s Office.

Various campus units also offer faculty development workshops for topics relating to specific disciplines. Other units on campus offer workshops related to their mission and aim. For example, Project PACE, a program of the Disability Resource Center, offers faculty and staff training, consultation, and technical assistance to improve learning environments. Project PACE promotes equity, inclusion, usability, and sustainable learning environments at UALR through the provision of training solutions, consultation, technical assistance, Internet resources, and products.

Project PACE offers workshops and presentations to faculty, staff, and administrators at postsecondary institutions statewide. These workshops can be provided campus-wide, in departmental or in-service meetings, or as sessions for a conference. Topics offered include Reframing Disability, Universal Design, Web Accessibility, and Universal Design of Online Courses. PACE also co-sponsors workshops through the state affiliate organization of AHEAD. Current funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Education and UALR.

Off-Campus Duty Assignments

UALR consistently invests in off-campus duty assignments (OCDAs) as a primary means of faculty development and renewal. Faculty members use their OCDAs primarily to conduct research or for instructional or curriculum development activities. Faculty become eligible in their seventh year of continuous service. Applicants for successive off-campus

1. http://ualr.edu/pace
2. http://ualr.edu/academics/?page_id=17
The state’s Armed Forces officers-to-be have a ball.

**High Profile**

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

**Daniel Franklin Littlefield**

In a labor of love, Dan Littlefield has gathered American Indian materials over the years for the Sequoyah Research Center at UALR. The collection is internationally renowned.

**By Kimberly Dishongh Special to the Democrat-Gazette**

Dan Littlefield set out in 1971 to gather Indian newspapers and periodicals that could serve as research materials for students in his American Indian studies class at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

That simple — though dogged — mission has turned into an internationally known archive that serves scholars and researchers alike.

Since 1983, the Sequoyah Research Center and the American Native Press Archives have made available to the public a comprehensive collection of American Indian newspapers, periodicals and other publications in hard copy and on microfilm, including press histories that date back to 1828. A recent addition is the J. W. Wiggins Native American Art Collection of paintings, sculptures, beadwork, pottery and wood carvings.

Littlefield has been director of the center since 2005.

The Sequoyah Research Center is a warehouse lined with rows of shelves, most with neatly stacked boxes labeled with the type and dates of publications that are stored inside. It moved in May from a temporary home, on the third floor of Ottenheimer Library on the UALR campus, into a space in the University Plaza strip mall.

Littlefield and others are still working to unpack and organize the materials in this latest temporary location. Long-range plans call for the center to move into a new university building now in the conceptual stage, near the strip-mall parking lot.

The center is the research headquarters for the Arkansas chapter of the Trail of Tears Association.

“We have the largest collection that I know of about the Trail of Tears of anywhere outside the National Archives,” says Littlefield. “We have just tried to concentrate on collecting material on that for the National Park Service. We’ve done some research for them on the National Historic Trail, which comes through Arkansas, and so much of the research that has been done in this region has been done in this collection.”

“We really have collected materials basically for the five tribes. We’ve worked on the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Creeks. We still have most work to do on the Seminoles. We’ve done them to the extent that we should have, but there are other tribes in the country that have moved into the act, and we’re still collecting material on them.”

Among the archive’s holdings are the manuscripts, special collections and legal papers of figures in fields ranging from journalism to medicine. An example is the papers of Paul DeMain, chief executive officer of News from Indian Country, including documents related to his work as campaign manager.
duty assignments must have completed six years of continuous service at UALR since the last off-campus duty assignment. Off-campus duty assignments are not automatic but must be judged meritorious.

![Number of Faculty on OCDA](image)

A faculty member approved for an OCDA is paid full salary for one semester or half salary for two semesters. Since 2003, an average of 20 OCDAs per year have been approved, at an annual cost of half a million dollars.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs provides travel funds when possible for faculty and students presenting research at a conference. Colleges also provide support. During the 2007–2008 academic year, the College of Business awarded each tenured faculty member $600 and each tenure-track faculty member $1,000 for their research expenses. The College of Professional Studies offered matching grants of up to $500 for first author’s domestic travel (up to $800 matching for international travel). In a new initiative, the College of Professional Studies began granting up to four summer research grants (three at $5,000, one at $10,000), starting Summer 2008. They also have used assessment funds to send faculty to assessment conferences.

**Challenge: Responding to Fiscal Issues**

The economic status of the state impacts the institution’s ability to accomplish its goals. Ninety percent of UALR’s annual operating budget is generated by two sources of revenue—state appropriations, and tuition and fees. The University’s ability to be pragmatic in planning is reflected in the fact that state funding is listed as both a strength and a weakness in the SWOT analysis conducted during the strategic planning initiative. As a strength, the state’s record shows a steady if very modest increase in state financial support, as reflected in constant dollars through the years. Additionally, the Arkansas General Assembly has been willing to fund new university initiatives that target state health needs or economic development goals.

As noted in *UALR Fast Forward*, UALR received $53 million from the state in fiscal year 2004–2005. At that time, had UALR been a private institution, based on the assumption of a 5 percent annual yield it would have required an endowment in excess of $1 billion to provide that level of annual funding. In the discussion of state funding weaknesses, however, the following is said:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2b Example of Evidence</th>
<th>The organization’s resources are adequate for achievement of the educational quality it claims to provide.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2b Example of Evidence</td>
<td>The organization’s planning processes are flexible enough to respond to unanticipated needs for program reallocation, downsizing, or growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted in the preceding section, state funding is a strength when put in the perspective of the size of the endowment that would be required to provide funding equal to the annual state appropriation. However, when compared with the funding levels that other state governments provide their public universities, the level of state support for UALR is a weakness. With UALR funded at only 78.4 percent of the average of universities across the country with a similar set of programs, it is difficult for UALR to pay competitive salaries, provide a competitive number of scholarships, keep abreast of technology, adequately fund the library, maintain buildings, etc.

By any national standard, tuition levels are low at all public universities in Arkansas. Over the last ten years, UALR tuition increases, which must be approved by the UA Board of Trustees, have averaged 4.95 percent per year. However, UALR, cognizant of the socio-economic status of its student population, is understandably reluctant to generate increases in revenue through tuition.

Although UALR is underfunded, thanks to a conservative approach to budgeting, UALR has weathered recent budget cuts with a minimum of pain. All budget planning at UALR occurs within the larger context of UA System and state appropriations. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in behalf of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, coordinates statewide planning and budgeting in higher education. UALR’s annual budget request to the Arkansas General Assembly and governor is approved through this process. Once funding decisions have been made by the state, UALR’s budget must be reviewed and approved by the UA Board of Trustees.

The budget process at UALR changed dramatically with the launch of UALR Fast Forward. Each budget request—one-time, on-going, and personnel—must be tied to and justified by a goal in the strategic plan. This change of mindset forced campus decision makers to look at the strategic plan and justify to themselves and the administration that their request supported UALR Fast Forward and, in turn, the mission of the University.

Budgetary planning for the 2008–2009 fiscal year proved to be especially harrowing due to uncertainty about how the downturn in the nation’s economy would affect state revenue and appropriations. Campus leadership was asked to present three budgets: one with no budget cuts, one with ten percent budget cuts; and one with 25 percent budget cuts. Though the financial picture currently appears to be less dismal than anticipated, this exercise in fiscal restraint demonstrates that UALR is able to adapt its plans to financial realities when necessary.

As stated above, during the annual budgetary process, planning is linked to the goals and objectives of UALR Fast Forward. Each vice chancellor, working with unit heads, analyzes his or her respective university division and establishes budgetary priorities. For example, in academic affairs, the budgetary process begins in January when members of the Deans Council discuss budgeting priorities for the coming year within the context of the strategic plan, mission of the University, and expected resources. After funding priorities have been established, council members discuss general resource requests, from faculty and staff
positions to funding for retention initiatives to equipment, and identify the funding priority the request addresses. These discussions inform the budget requests of each unit head.

During formal budget hearings for academic affairs, budget requests linked specifically to the goals and objectives of UALR Fast Forward are presented in an open forum that includes faculty leadership. After these hearings, the Provost considers all requests again within the context of identified priorities and expected resources and creates the budget request for the academic affairs unit.

In March, the budget requests for all units are presented at the Chancellor’s budget hearings, which are open to the campus. Each vice chancellor presents his or her budget requests with justifications linked to the strategic plan. The Chancellor makes decisions about UALR’s budget requests in April after appropriation decisions have been made by the Arkansas General Assembly. The Chancellor then presents UALR’s budget requests to the UA Board of Trustees for final approval.

After the budgeting process is over, leadership groups of other major divisions on campus hold annual retreats to discuss progress made on the strategic plan and to prioritize goals for the year. Campus leadership then comes together at the annual Chancellor’s Leadership Group retreat, traditionally held in late July, to discuss progress made on UALR Fast Forward and re-prioritize goals in light of the fiscal, academic, and legislative context; to review concerns from the past academic year and discuss upcoming cutting-edge issues in higher education; and to continue to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that face the University.

Enhancing resources

The limitations inherent in the University’s major funding sources—state appropriations and tuition dollars—are addressed in Goal 8: “UALR will develop a strategy to enhance resources to accomplish its mission.” Objective 1 of this goal is as follows:

The University will develop a funding strategy that will align potential sources—such as internal reallocations, state appropriations, tuition, fees, grants, contracts, foundation awards, federal earmarks, private donations, local tax support—with appropriate goals.

To help accomplish the strategies developed for this objective, the University has strengthened the Office of Development1 by adding four positions, including additional field staff, accounting staff, and a research office. With the added resources, this office has been able to create a viable structure and solid foundation to cultivate all facets of private giving to the University. Many of the strategies developed for this objective have been achieved.

1. http://ualr.edu/development/
Three examples of the effectiveness of the Office of Development are the growth in successful fundraising, the progress made to date on the University’s first comprehensive campaign, “It’s Time for UALR,” and the participation of faculty and staff in the annual campus campaign.\(^1\)

UALR has been particularly successful with its fundraising. Since 2005, UALR has added several privately funded scholarships for teacher education students; received funds for privately endowed scholarships to support teacher education students, including one which exceeds $800,000 in the corpus of the trust; and created annual fundraisers such as Blue Jeans & Birkenstocks, which provides scholarship funds for the School of Social Work. The University has continued to expand and develop “Finale,” the AHSS’ performing arts fundraising dinner, and raised more than half of the $100,000 Alumni Scholarship funds at an alumni-attended “Taste of Latin America” 2009 fundraiser.

The fundraising success is the result of increased outreach to alumni with the hiring of a new director and additional staff. In 2006, staff made 31 meaningful contacts with alumni; in 2009, 164 contacts were made. In addition, the number of alumni giving to the Alumni Scholarship fund annual solicitations has increased steadily—from 12 in 2006 to 276 in 2009. Annual gifts to the alumni scholarship fund are on the rise. In less than five years, UALR has been able to increase the number of endowed scholarships, both need-based and merit-based, by 20 percent. The alumni endowment earnings currently produce interest for 16 scholarships. Conservative forecasting puts award amounts one year ahead of schedule.

In 2005, UALR launched the silent phase of the comprehensive campaign. During this phase, UALR raised over $100 million; over $50 million was raised in 2008 alone, a clear indication of the community’s support for UALR. Examples of giving include the following:

- The late Jack Stephens gave $2.2 million for the building of a new events center, the Jack Stephens Center, which allowed UALR to hold graduation on campus for the first time.

1. http://ualr.edu/campaign/
• The Trinity Foundation gave $6 million in 2005 to endow the creation of the mechanical and electrical engineering options in Systems Engineering. This gift is seen as a positive step in meeting the engineering employment needs in Central Arkansas.
• In 2005, the George W. Donaghey Foundation made a special $5 million pledge dedicated for the new EIT building.
• In 2008, the Willard and Pat Walker Foundation created a $1 million endowment for nursing scholarships.
• In 2007, William and Connie Bowen gave the Bowen School of Law $1 million for an unrestricted endowment used by the Dean of the college to meet emergency and special college needs.
• Tom and Marge Schueck recently pledged $1 million to create an endowed deanship in EIT.
• UALR alumna Phyllis Keltner gave $50,000 to endow a fund for the operation of the University Writing Center.

The campaign steering committee, formed in 2006, provides feedback on initial campaign strategies, develops volunteer leadership, helps expand the base of prospective donors, and serves as informed advocates for the campaign.

In 2008, the public phase of the campaign was initiated with a campus-wide picnic for faculty, staff, and students (pictures are available online).1 The picnic was an enormous success—1,500 t-shirts were given out in 45 minutes, or, as a voice-over on the picnic slide-show says, “That’s 37-and-a-half shirts A MINUTE!” The excitement is apparent in the faculty and staff’s contributions to the campus campaign. In 2008, 53 percent of faculty and staff—or 750 members of the UALR community—contributed, exceeding that year’s goal of 50 percent. Last year, top-level administrators gave $1 million to the comprehensive campaign. When

Bowen adds to law-school legacy
Ex-dean gives $1 million to UALR, hopes to spur other donors

BY JOHN KRUPA
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE
William H. Bowen, a former lawyer, banker and aide to then-Gov. Bill Clinton, has given a $1 million gift to his namesake law school at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, officials said Tuesday.

While most donations are earmarked for specific purposes like scholarships or construction projects, the W.H. Bowen School of Law can use the donation as it sees fit.

"An unrestricted gift of $1 million means you can work on scholarships, you can work on academic excellence, and you can do it in a way that fits your needs at the time," said Dean Kumpuris, chairman of the UALR Board of Visitors. "It means a lot to the law school."

The donation was also made in the name of Bowen's wife, Connie.

Bowen, who was the law school's dean from 1995 to 1997, said he saw the need for more unrestricted gifts during his tenure. He hopes that the donation spurs other philanthropists to consider similar gifts.

"You had to climb over a pretty big wall to get over that attitude."

Bowen, 85, has long-standing ties to the legal community in Arkansas. He earned his law degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 1949. He returned to Little Rock to practice law in 1954.

He later turned to banking, serving as chairman and chief executive officer of then-First Commercial Bank in Little Rock.


See BOWEN, Page 6B
the campus campaign began in 2001, a mere 6.5 percent of faculty and staff contributed. Over the years, participation rates have increased at an amazing rate.

In 2007, 13 offices and departments across campus reached 100 percent giving.

- Construction Management
- Sequoyah National Research Center
- AVC Facilities and Services
- Gifted Programs
- Education and Student Services
- Office of Recruitment
- Office of Campus Life
- Office of Communications
- Academic Success Center
- UALR Alumni Services
- Athletics Department
- Office of the Budget
- Office of the Provost

Less than two years later, twenty-five units had 100 percent participation, and many more had over 75 percent participation.

State funding is more likely to decrease than increase, especially in current economic times. UALR’s work with the Office of Development—hiring a new director, strengthening alumni involvement, expanding the University’s donor base—is long overdue. The strides made toward achieving this objective have had a positive effect on the image of UALR.

**Creating a Strong Public Identity**

UALR recognized in *UALR Fast Forward* the need to develop and follow a carefully constructed communication plan in order to enhance its image. Objective 2 reads: “The University will vigorously communicate who it is and what it does for the people of Arkansas in order to increase understanding and support at local, state, and [f]ederal levels.” In order to accomplish this, the University has begun communicating the accomplishments and contributions of its students and faculty through a vigorous media campaign.

The media campaign is aimed at multiple audiences, including prospective and current students; parents of these students; high school counselors and teachers; Central Arkansas business and community leaders; alumni; prospective and current donors; local, state and U.S. elected officials; residents and business owners in University District; and print and electronic media. This media campaign has included developing various Web 2.0 media outlets such as a YouTube channel, various pages and streams on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Ning, and MySpace; and electronic advertising.
More traditional advertising has included the UALR Magazine; an award-winning television campaign; billboards; daily radio spots; TV spots highlighting faculty and staff; a re-designed website; and various micro-sites aimed at recruiting specific groups such as non-traditional students, returning students, and international students. Earned media includes increased newspaper coverage of UALR and its faculty, staff, and students, including three “High Profile” features in one year in the only statewide newspaper—the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

KTHV, the CBS affiliate, made UALR a strong partnership offering. The station manager and sales team agreed to broadcast a series called Project Arkansas stories that talked about UALR programs and projects that were economic forces in Arkansas. UALR spotlighted research, university initiatives, faculty experts, and students. A professor of economics, Dr. Mark Funk, did a regular interview each Friday night live on Arkansas’s economy. During the general election, a group of faculty was invited to give commentary on specific issues on election night. Project Arkansas was so popular that UALR has negotiated the program for another year in added value.

In addition, the promotions department at KTHV did a series of four one-minute vignettes as added value that featured UALR students who had overcome adversity to come to college.

KTHV was not the only added value partner. Arkansas Business, a weekly business publication, gave the University a 3 to 1 ad buy as their contribution to UALR’s comprehensive campaign. Hola! Arkansas, a Latino publication, gave the University a one-free for one-buy ad schedule, as did Arkansas Democrat Gazette, the statewide newspaper. KATV, the ABC affiliate, produced a 30-minute program about UALR today and aired it twice in prime time. The University also receives a 25 percent match for the spot buy.

This negotiation has set a precedent for ad campaigns for UALR. Each year, the University looks for good advertising buys, but also asks for partnership relationships that will help extend the buy and reach into the community.

Throughout this process, the University has focused on communicating a consistent message about UALR’s mission, community leadership, and strong academic programs. To increase the consistency of this communication and to improve and market the UALR brand, there has been a focus on enforcing conformity to the campus standard—including the use of the new logo, introduced in 2004, and a standardized website format.

1. http://youtube.com/ualr
1. http://ualr.edu/magazine/
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

2b Example of Evidence
The organization’s history of financial resource development and investment documents a forward-looking concern for ensuring educational quality (e.g., investments in faculty development, technology, learning support services, new or renovated facilities).

2b Example of Evidence
The organization has a history of achieving its planning goals.

Challenge: Responding to Physical Capacity Needs

As previously discussed, part of the University’s long-range planning activities included creating the Campus Master Plan. UALR On the Move1 gives physical form to UALR’s strategic vision and strengthens what Chancellor Anderson describes as the “power of place.” The master plan is intended to be a living document—a flexible framework for phased development of the campus over the period of a decade. Its purpose is threefold:

- to guide the physical development of the UALR campus—its buildings, open space, circulation, and infrastructure—consistent with the University’s strategic vision
- to create a vibrant, memorable, and safe student-life experience
- to expand the University’s presence and leadership role in the greater metropolitan Little Rock region

At its most detailed level, the master plan contains specific, tangible recommendations for future development of the campus physical resources. At its most comprehensive level, the master plan crafts a vision for the campus clearly linked to the University’s strategic vision and goals.

The recommendations outlined in the Campus Master Plan were based on a ten-year planning horizon, from 2005 through 2015. In the past four years, the University has made progress on implementing the master plan. The following have been started or completed:

- **Stabler Hall renovations**, which houses most of the classrooms for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, make it one of the most technically advanced classroom buildings on campus. The building is now completely wireless, and all of the classrooms have state-of-the-art computer and audio-visual equipment. A digital learning and collaboration center aids in language instruction, and a state-of-the-art computer classroom accommodates instruction in subjects such as social science statistics and methodologies.

- **Donald W. Reynolds Center for Business and Economic Development houses the College of Business Administration, Arkansas Small Business Development Center, and Institute for Economic Advancement.** This building has specialized classrooms to enable technology transfer, distance education, and research to advance economic development in Central Arkansas. Its meeting rooms, library, and information clearinghouse resources are available to the faculty, staff, students, and the metropolitan community.

- **The Jack Stephens Center**, a 149,000 square foot athletic center that features a full-court practice gym named after UALR alumnus Derek Fisher, an academic support center complete with 23 computer terminals, a first-class weight room, an athletic training room, locker rooms for the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams, and offices for the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball coaches, as well as the athletic administration and support staff.

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1. [http://ualr.edu/about/masterplan/]
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

• The Dr. Ted and Virginia Bailey Alumni and Friends Center, available to campus and community groups for meetings, programs, and social functions, and home to the Office of the Alumni Association and the Office of Community Engagement

• University Plaza, a 22-acre shopping center bordering Asher Avenue directly south of the campus, purchased and much of it renovated. This space is now home to the public radio stations KUAR and KLRE, the Sequoyah National Research Center, the Applied Arts Program, the Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology, Public Safety, and components of the Department of Construction Management.

• North and South Halls, two apartment-style on-campus residential halls that hold 164 students each and annually are filled to capacity.

• A building under construction that will accommodate programs of EIT. This facility is partially funded through appropriations authorized by the Arkansas State Legislature. The college intends to move into this new space in Summer 2010.

• New signage throughout campus

• Campus Drive was closed to create a pedestrian corridor and improve safety on campus

In 2009, UALR was one of only three universities in Arkansas to receive funding of $4 million in federal educational stimulus money. UALR will use these funds to replace an aging and inefficient heating, ventilation, air-conditioning system in Fribourgh Hall that houses faculty and student research labs.

For the past year-and-a-half, it has been difficult to miss the other big construction project on campus, the Coleman Creek Project. In its current state, Coleman Creek is a hidden landscape with adjacent green space that runs throughout the length of the campus. UALR On the Move highlighted the area as a “missed opportunity” and said “a restored and accessible natural amenity of this significance would be the envy of many a university.” In addition to being a natural resource to the community, Coleman Creek is also a historic site. The area was once a site where members of the Chicksaw and Choctaw nations stopped for water during the forced migration known as the Trail of Tears. Coleman Creek will serve as the centerpiece of the campus and as a natural resource to the community.

Construction started in December 2008 on the $650,000 donor-financed effort to create the Trail of Tears Park. The five-acre plot of what was concrete, asphalt, old restaurants, and a bowling alley is well on the way to returning to its natural state with native trees, rocks and grasses. A time-lapse video of the deurbanization is available online.¹ UALR’s partners in the restoration, which Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola said was the biggest “de-urbanization” project in Little Rock, include Audubon Arkansas, the Chamberlin Family Foundation, FTN Associates, and Design Consultants, Inc., along with many private donors to the project.

1. http://ualr.edu/colemancreek/
Chapter Five: The Future-Oriented Organization

Dr. Dan Littlefield, director of UALR’s Sequoyah National Research Center, said the new park will include footpaths creating a “circle of life” in which three historical markers will be placed to identify the creek as a stop-over along the foot, horse, and wagon path known as the old Southwest Trail—now Asher Avenue.

The undertaking is the first part of the Coleman Creek Greenway Project, described in UALR On the Move, to create a 47-acre greenway reaching the full length of campus with lush vegetation, bicycle and walking trails, benches, and other amenities that complement the natural settings along the creek. The restoration project will provide an outdoor laboratory for biologists, earth scientists, and hydrologists for teaching and research activities and will unite the campus and tie Coleman Creek to a regional open space system that includes the Fourche Creek Wetlands and War Memorial Park, which will have long-term impact for years to come.

Upon Reflection

- UALR is achieving the goals and objectives set forth in its strategic plan, UALR Fast Forward.
- UALR conducts effective environmental scanning.
- Staff professional development opportunities need to be increased and expanded.
- UALR has made a concerted effort to develop the alumni office. As Alumni Association membership increases, the University benefits through direct assessment of its effectiveness in preparing graduates professionally and as life-long learners; an enhanced reputation in the community; and additional partners in recruitment.
- Enhanced program review criteria give UALR an opportunity to identify programs that need to be strengthened or discontinued.
- UALR supports its human resources. Specific examples include absorbing increased insurance costs and committing to raise faculty salaries to Southern Regional Education Board averages.
- UALR’s conservative approach to budgeting has helped it weather state and national economic downturns; however, overall funding remains an issue.
- UALR’s image in the community is improving as evidenced by a 9.4% increase in enrollment Fall 2009.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

The accreditation self-study process built upon the strategic planning initiative, conducted in 2004-2005, that resulted in UALR Fast Forward, the University’s strategic plan. Four goals were identified for the self-study process:

1. conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of progress made on the goals and objectives outlined in UALR Fast Forward
2. conduct a thorough evaluation and update of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the strategic planning process
3. identify emerging institutional goals based on self-study process
4. secure reaccreditation of the University for the maximum available term of ten years

The preparation of the report included a review of progress made on the goals and objectives in UALR Fast Forward and an evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified during the strategic planning process. The specific results of the review and evaluation are discussed in the report. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to summarize the emerging institutional goals that were identified in the accreditation self-study process.

Emerging Institutional Goals

The self-study report discusses progress made on the goals and objectives of UALR Fast Forward and evaluates the earlier SWOT analysis within the context of the criteria for accreditation. This review and evaluation identified two particular goals and objectives that need to remain priorities for UALR. The first is Goal 7, Objective 2: “The University will continue to expand the information technology resources of the campus to ensure effective and efficient use of technology.”

The Customer Satisfaction Evaluation conducted by MGT indicated that, although 80.2 percent of the student respondents were satisfied with the courtesy and friendliness of the Student Technology Support Services staff, only 72.7 percent were satisfied with technology services on campus. If UALR intends to be a high-tech campus, having a strong infrastructure to support technology is essential.

The second is Goal 8: “UALR will develop a strategy to enhance resources to accomplish its mission.” As long as UALR depends heavily on state appropriations and tuition as major sources of revenue, adequate funding will remain an issue. Although the University has made progress on expanding its revenue base by developing alternative funding sources such as contracts, foundation awards, federal earmarks, and private donations, these and additional sources of revenue need continued cultivation.

Two institutional goals emerged during the self-study process. The first is increasing effective communication among administration, faculty, and staff. The lack of communication was identified during the self-study
process several times. A major example was that, although significant progress on UALR Fast Forward has been made and annually is discussed by campus leadership at the Chancellor’s Leadership Retreat, faculty and staff had not received an update. Another was the faculty’s lack of awareness about both the number of service opportunities available to students and the number of students who participate in these.

The University has developed effective communication structures at the administrative level. This structure needs to be extended across campus to ensure that faculty, students, and staff are aware of UALR’s progress and priorities. The result will be a stronger sense of community and shared vision.

The second institutional goal that emerged is integrating the enhanced role of research into the metropolitan university mission of UALR. As discussed in Chapter 1, “Introduction,” the University’s expanding role as a leading research institution in Arkansas positively affects the campus, the community, and the state.

However, faculty are grappling with the implications this has for UALR’s metropolitan mission, its traditional focus on teaching and service, and expectations regarding the criteria for tenure and promotion. The goal of integrating the enhanced role of research into UALR’s mission will continue to evolve over the next few years. Identification of it during the self-study process allows the University to address it early and openly in productive campus-wide discussions.

**UALR Fast Forward**

The functionality and flexibility of UALR Fast Forward is apparent in the evidence provided for the five accreditation criteria. The strategic plan continues to provide a clear plan for achieving the mission of UALR. Although the University faces challenges, both internal and external, and has areas of weakness to address, its strengths and opportunities make it a vibrant, thriving institution of higher education. Evidence of this is the fact that UALR’s Fall 2009 enrollment is its highest ever at 13,167, an increase of 9.4% from Fall 2008.

UALR is advancing the vision described in UALR Fast Forward. It is becoming a leader in providing excellent educational programs, conducting cutting-edge research that addresses real-life issues, and partnering with for-profit and nonprofit businesses and organizations to solve problems and promote prosperity in Central Arkansas and beyond.
Chapter Six: Conclusion