

Initiative 2001
Building a Premier Learning Community
Edwards Campus

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I. Introduction

Twenty-five years ago, the urban core of Kansas City was supported by industry, the landscape of Johnson County was pastoral, and the University of Kansas offered a mix of classes, mostly non-professional, at multiple sites. Today, the urban core of Kansas City has suffered years of decline. Johnson County is on the verge of becoming the largest county in, and the chief economic driver of, the state of Kansas. The University of Kansas has a campus that is positioned by location and mission to add significant economic value to both Kansas City and Johnson County. Twenty-five years from now, the population shift will continue southward and is projected to increase by nearly 200,000 people. Job growth will exceed 100,000. (Johnson County Forecast Data) The University of Kansas Edwards Campus will be at the heart, literally and figuratively, of this region's development.

The Possibility of Impact

The continued growth and development of the Edwards Campus will have a great impact on this region. The community desires the research and scholarship of the University to provide support for policy, practice and technology transfer. The academic programs are not only highly respected but also urgently needed. "Precious few decisions are made in Kansas City with the support of research," reflected a vice president of a local foundation. The president of a major economic development organization in Kansas City believes that "No university has established a foothold here from an intellectual or workforce development standpoint." The president of an energy company asserts that "The companies of Kansas City have enormous difficulty recruiting the talent and skills needed for our present and future workforce. KU has the ability not only to educate that talent and keep them in Kansas City, but also to be the reason companies choose Kansas City as home. Accessibility is key." The Edwards Campus offers the region the proximity to the highly respected research and academic programs of the University, becoming the bridge between the needs of Kansas City and the strengths of the Lawrence Campus.

We educate for tomorrow. Twenty-five years ago, the teachers and researchers of the University of Kansas planted the seeds of possibility in the fertile ground that has become our successful alumni. Today, those former students are entrepreneurs, presidents of corporations and community service organizations, superintendents of school districts, and leaders in the development of civic, economic, and government policy. The seeds we plant at the Edwards Campus today will fortify the progress of our region and strengthen the impact that the faculty, research and programs of the University of Kansas has in its development for years to come.

A Campus Vision

The Edwards Campus of the University of Kansas will play a significant role in the development of the individuals, the economy and the community of the Kansas City region over the next twenty-five years. Through its presence and responsiveness, it will satisfy the recommendations of the Battelle Report (1990) which described the greatest needs of the Kansas City region to be:

- the development of a robust research infrastructure supporting technology, business and community development, and

- a commitment to workforce development through focused undergraduate and graduate programming.

To that end, the Edwards Campus will offer:

- a full-campus environment including multiple buildings, faculty office space, faculty and student services, and technology, including high bandwidth data links with Kansas City businesses and the Lawrence Campus
- a Center for Applied Research supported by a consortium of corporate, community and government partners
- graduate and undergraduate degree programs for the working adult
- academic certificate and professional development programs for the post-baccalaureate and masters' students
- an active presence on community and economic development boards
- partnerships with community colleges, corporations, community service organizations, and school districts.

The vision of the Edwards Campus is to be known as a national leader in higher education for merging the excitement of discovery, which results from academic research and scholarship, with the demands of practice, which reflects the expectation of students and organizations participating in our programs.

The mission of the Edwards Campus is to enrich the development of the individual, the economy and community through:

- nationally accredited and highly respected educational experiences for degree seeking adults
- research opportunities and partnerships which enhance the student experience and respond to the needs of the community
- service which reflects the values of the University of Kansas.

II. The Charge from the Chancellor

The charge of our Task Force was to:

- identify the defining characteristics of a premier learning community at the Edwards Campus
- develop strategies that reflect action and enhance the nature of the educational experience at the KU Edwards Campus.

Our deliberations were to consider:

- the physical and competitive environment
- student demographics
- educational programming

- support services needed to ensure academic success
- opportunities unique to our campus
- the role that technology will play in the delivery of the KU experience
- the role that research assumes in enriching the student environment.

III. Premier Learning Community Characteristics

The Premier Learning Community of the Edwards Campus will possess the following characteristics:

- a strong orientation to serve students, faculty and community
- faculty who express a shared commitment to the Edwards Campus student
- high-quality programs which contribute to the development of the individual, the economy, and community
- a physical environment which supports the academic needs of the Edwards Campus faculty and students
- an environment that attracts a high quality and diverse student body.

IV. Analysis of the Environment

A. A Strong Orientation to Serve Students and Faculty

1. A full spectrum of services to the adult student

	Present State	Desired State
Admissions	No centralized process. Too many stops.	Computer assisted applications. One-stop process. GRE, GMAT Test preparation. Financial aid support.
Advising	Non-uniform	Establish definition of advising. Clarify role of program director versus role of faculty. Faculty on-site. Web-based information.
Bookstore	Inadequate	Full-service facility. Lounge included. Books by phone or internet.
Bursar	Rules not applicable to our student population. Billing process confuses company reimbursement.	Credit card use. Rules recognize differences & needs of our students, employers, programs.
Food Service	Inadequate	Full food service tied in with bookstore & student lounge space.
Registrar	Driven by Lawrence campus policies	Rules recognize difference of student population. Full implementation of PeopleSoft (on-line registration) for <i>our</i> population. Transcript availability.
Technology Support	Good to excellent but variable depending on student requests.	Sufficient resources, adequate training and proactive support leading to optimal use of technology.

2. A full spectrum of services to the faculty

	Present State	Desired State
Adequate office space	Inadequate office space or non-existent.	Create a home for faculty & graduate assistant support.
Technology support	Good to excellent but variable depending on faculty requests.	Sufficient resources, adequate training & support leading to optimal use of technology.
Clerical and graduate assistant support	Minimally helpful	Adequate support of resident faculty
High-speed data links	Adequate	Enlarge the bandwidth via microwave or fiber. Commitment to take advantage of high-speed technology.
Distance education expertise	Uncoordinated efforts & lack of uniformity of processes for video links.	Build a sound instructional development enterprise at KUEC to support all classes.

3. Ease of Access

	Present State	Desired State
Adequate hours of operation	Adequate	More use of weekend & Friday evenings. Continue surveying students.
Access to the library of "One University"	Policies are different & inconvenient. Lawrence Campus policies are not always applicable to KUEC students.	Seamlessly integrate policies to respond to our population. Improve on-line availability.

B. Faculty Commitment

Characteristics	Present State	Desired State
Presence on campus for student interaction	Poor – No space & minimal support Perceived disincentive for taking part at KUEC re: Promotion and Tenure	KU faculty housed at KUEC with full opportunity for performing all faculty obligations. Provide all support & space. Develop better communication system to create virtual meeting space. Make participation at the KUEC a clearly valued element in the promotion and tenure and merit raise process. Perfect a mechanism to provide incentives for delivery of special course or program offerings.
Advocacy for Edwards Campus students in departmental courses, programs, and degrees	No formal mechanism	KULC appointment of "Faculty Ambassadors" in each school or department.
Integration of research expertise and research opportunities in student class and program experiences	Missed opportunities	Develop new models of research, which maximize interest of faculty/students, e.g., faculty fellowships in corporations, schools and human services.

C. High Quality Programs

Characteristics	Present State	Desired State
Degree experiences which reflect the academic integrity of the University of Kansas and awareness of the unique delivery needs of this population.	Integrity is sometimes questioned. Growing use of adjuncts.	Agree on standards that assure integrity of experience within context of KUEC student environment. Limit use of adjuncts to a prescribed level and build development process, which bring the adjuncts closer to the curricula and their mission. Create a faculty development workshop and orientation for all adjunct faculty.
A move from supply-driven academic programming to demand-driven, market-based academic programming.		Develop comprehensive academic plan that responds to educational needs of the Kansas City region.
Awareness of and participation in the economic and community development of the region.		Develop a reward structure which promotes community involvement by faculty in the KC area.
Non-degree experiences at the post-bachelors and masters level which provide for workforce development.		Create academic experiences which respond to the workforce needs of the community.

D. A Supportive Physical Environment

Characteristics	Present State	Desired State
Office space to support faculty presence	No commitment – Not adequate	Short term: allow mission to drive decisions for space. Reassign Continuing Education space for faculty use. Long term: design adequate office space in Campus Master Plan.
A research infrastructure for faculty and students	Non-existent	Establish relationship/procedures with Vice Chancellor of Research to expand research scope and partnerships beyond the Lawrence Campus. Requires faculty to be resident.
Classroom space and technology to support a growing campus and demands for alternative delivery of instruction	Outgrown existing space. Technology adequate but only because most faculty members have not learned to use it. Classroom space is not flexible.	Formalize plans for the next building. Control class scheduling to maximize use of space. Explore weekend scheduling. Flexible design for classroom and technology space in existing and new building.
Meeting space for student groups	Inadequate	Design lounge, meeting space, secondary learning space in Campus Master Plan.
Parking	Inadequate during peak hours 4 – 10pm.	Short Term: Review scheduling process to maximize classroom use and diffuse parking pressure. Long Term: Campus Master Plan must accommodate long-term growth of programs & resulting parking demand e.g., multi-level parking.

E. An environment which attracts a high-quality and diverse student body

Characteristics	Present State	Desired State
Clearly articulated recruitment strategies for each program	Isolated examples exist, at best.	Create a plan specific to the needs of each program and has elements of outreach, e.g., Wyandotte County.
An aggressive marketing and public relations plan	Plan in early stages of development.	Implement a long-term marketing/public relations campaign and integrate with recruitment strategies.
Faculty involvement in student recruitment	Limited by program.	Increase faculty visibility in community; faculty presence in recruitment process.

V. Opportunities

The analysis of the environment, which reflects input from students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community leaders, provides the University of Kansas Edwards Campus with unique opportunities:

- the Edwards Campus can be valued as and is desired to be a more significant provider of economic and workforce development in the Kansas City region.
- the Edwards Campus can be the pathway to research partnerships between the University of Kansas and organizations in the Kansas City region.
- the Edwards Campus can function as the premier provider of demand-driven educational programming at the post-masters, masters, post-baccalaureate and undergraduate levels.
- the Edwards Campus possesses extraordinary levels of interest and good will from the corporate and not-for-profit sectors in Kansas City which are willing to invest in the development of programs and facilities.
- the Edwards Campus can be the University of Kansas beta site for unique and alternative modes of course delivery.

VI. Goals

A. A Strong Orientation to Serve Students and Faculty

1. A full spectrum of services to the adult student

Admissions - Create a simple and uniform admissions process, including financial aid, for KUEC students which merges technology and person-to-person interaction.

Establish a test preparation (GMAT, GRE) service for prospective students as a recruitment tool.

Advising - Establish and promote a consistent and comprehensive faculty and professional staff advising mechanism to ensure student satisfaction and progress.

Bookstore - Include a full-service bookstore in campus master plan including web-based or phone ordering/shipping, and gathering space.

Bursar/Registrar – Create bursar and registrar functions and policies, which serve the unique KUEC population.

Food Service –

Study the viability of providing a full food service to KUEC based on student traffic.

2. A full spectrum of services to the faculty

Create a superior environment of services and space which encourages faculty commitment to reside at KUEC and enhances their opportunity for academic development in teaching, research and service.

Ease of Access –

Survey students on an annual basis to monitor adequacy of hours of operation.

Access to the library of "One University" –

Establish an integrated library system in which access to all materials and service is transparent to the user, and evolves according to student needs.

B. Faculty Commitment

Develop an incentive/reward structure that makes participation at the Edwards Campus a clearly valued element in the promotion and tenure, and merit increase process.

Develop an Edwards Campus advocacy agenda in all schools and departments.

Develop new models of research, which maximize the interests of faculty and students and respond to the needs of the Kansas City region, e.g., faculty fellowships in corporation, schools and human services, an Applied Research Center.

C. High-Quality Programs

Draft a comprehensive academic plan (See Appendix IV for short-range programming plans) for KUEC which:

- Outlines long-range academic programming needs for the region with an immediate focus on engineering, software development and technology.
- Identifies university resources required to meet those needs.
- Assures continuous quality improvement of courses and programs through:
 - Assessment of student evaluations and instructional development support
 - Faculty orientations and faculty development workshops
 - Specific development programs for adjunct faculty.

- Establishes a mechanism for creating new programs.
- Increases visibility and participation of faculty in individual, economic and community development activities.

D. A Supportive Physical Environment

Develop an interim plan for campus expansion: partner with businesses and schools for classroom and laboratory space.

Maximize use of existing space through office/space sharing and reassignment (e.g., Continuing Education, infant lab, Telnet, and library).

Develop a Campus Master Plan, which accommodates planned growth and includes faculty office space, flexible classroom space, meeting space for students, lounges, secondary learning space and parking.

Establish relationship/procedures with Vice Chancellor for Research to expand research scope and partnerships to the KC region through the KUEC.

E. An environment that attracts a high-quality and diverse student body.

Develop a comprehensive marketing/public relations plan which heightens awareness of the high-quality programs at KUEC.

Create recruitment strategies that reflect the unique qualities of each academic program with respect to their adult student market and have elements of outreach to attract a diverse student body.