

Vision in Action

The TCU Undergraduate Experience

Introduction

In response to Chancellor Boschini's formation of *Vision in Action* (VIA), a comprehensive strategic planning objective, a subcommittee of faculty and administration came together to define and determine resources necessary to enhance the TCU undergraduate experience.

The sub-committee consisted of Larry Adams, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Ralph Carter, Professor of Political Science, Barbara Hermann, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs, Jane Kucko, Associate Professor of Interior Design, and Don Mills, Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs. Barry Cohen of Kaludis Consulting was the consultant to the subcommittee.

The sub-committee gathered information from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NESSE), narrative data from eight different focus groups, and the inaugural address and conversations with Dr. George Kuh, Professor and Director of the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana State University(see Appendices). An open Towne Hall meeting was also held in order to gather information from the TCU community at large.

Bruce A. Jilk, AIA, in his text *Designing a Model of the College Campus of the Future*, summarizes significant concepts that complement the features of the TCU Undergraduate Experience as identified in the body of this report. According to Jilk, the following concepts are important to future college campuses:

- Learning occurs in many places.
- Borders among learning settings are diminished.
- The design provides both a sense of place and a sense of community identity for community members.
- Campuses are flexible, accommodating a variety of learning events in the same space.
- The settings promote social interaction.
- Informal learning is enhanced.

Charge to the Subcommittee

TCU Undergraduate Experience

Context

Chancellor Boschini's Fall 2003 Convocation Address provided some observations that are important in framing the strategic questions related to the TCU Undergraduate Experience:

The Commission, which concluded its work in fall 2000, developed a bold blueprint for taking TCU to the next level of academic distinction and reputation. This strategic planning study involved some 500 community and campus leaders. Its 17 task forces examined university-wide issues and addressed the needs of each school and college. Without a doubt, the work of the Commission raised the aspirations and expectations of the University community as never before. Now we must determine where we are in implementing the Commission's recommendations. Until we do so, we cannot plan TCU's future. It is important to remember, however, that the Commission's recommendations were made in an environment very different from today's — a pre-September 11th world, where the dot-com bubble had yet to burst and the future seemed limitless. That reality has changed. Now we must assess how we can narrow our focus and achieve the objectives that best match our character and capabilities.

The TCU Undergraduate Experience is at the center of that redefined future. But what is the TCU Undergraduate Experience? Various TCU publications refer to the TCU Experience in different venues including academic, community, co-curricular, and the global communities. The TCU mission statement --*"To educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community"*—clearly identifies aspects of the undergraduate experience.

However, a formal definition of the TCU Undergraduate experience does not exist. Furthermore, the TCU Undergraduate experience must be discussed from various viewpoints in order to provide the basis for which the future of TCU can be planned and implemented. Therefore, the charge for this sub-committee is to define the TCU Undergraduate experience.

The Charge to the Subcommittee

Each subcommittee must first identify the strategic questions facing TCU that relate to its position paper topic. For the subcommittee on the TCU Undergraduate Experience, the strategic questions need to include:

1. What should be the hallmarks of the TCU Undergraduate Experience?
2. How should the TCU Undergraduate Experience be manifested across all of the undergraduate years?

3. How does the TCU Undergraduate Experience address the needs of the whole student in the context of the TCU mission statement?
4. How can the TCU Undergraduate Experience be implemented in a liberal arts and sciences centered university as reflected in our new core curriculum?
5. What criteria should be utilized in evaluating existing elements of the TCU experience (outcomes) and setting priorities for new initiatives to enhance the TCU experience?

Key Assumptions

The following were key assumptions utilized throughout the process of defining the TCU undergraduate experience:

- Resources are available to implement the TCU undergraduate experience.
- Class size will remain small allowing for one-on-one interaction with faculty.
- Definition of the TCU experience is directed to undergraduates, the predominate population of students at TCU.
- Implementation of the TCU Undergraduate Experience will require change, new ways of thinking, and innovative approaches to all phases of education (including but not limited to teaching, curriculum, co-curricular programs, and facilities).

Findings, Conclusions and Strategic Recommendations

The TCU Undergraduate Experience shall consist of:

- a comprehensive learning community marked by close interaction between students and faculty;
- a rigorous and innovative academic program designed to foster lifelong learning, critical thinking, and effective communication skills;
- a connection to the diverse communities to which we belong – local, national, and international; and
- the training necessary to promote individual empowerment as both responsible citizens and ethical leaders.

Strategic Recommendations

The TCU Undergraduate experience consists of seven dimensions:

- Interaction,
- Academic rigor,
- Curricular-co-curricular,
- Diversity,
- Citizenship and leadership,
- Global learning, and
- Residentiality.

The strategic recommendations of the subcommittee compliment the recently approved revised university core curriculum. The new core was designed to:

- Foster human experiences and endeavors through the liberal arts and sciences, and
- Instill the importance of religious, historical, literary, and cultural traditions, and
- global awareness, and citizenship and social values into TCU students.

The proposed enhanced TCU undergraduate experience compliment the new core in that it is based upon the liberal arts and sciences tradition, fosters citizenship, leadership, and global learning, and encourages students to leave TCU with the ability and desire to contribution to the common good.

The Seven Dimensions of the TCU Undergraduate Experience

Interaction

The TCU undergraduate experience shall be characterized by:

- Close interaction between students, faculty, and staff in order to foster an academically stimulating learning environment.
- Frequent interaction with faculty and staff who teach, tutor, advise, mentor, and counsel in both formal and informal settings.
- Scholarly research opportunities with faculty in order to create a stimulating environment focused upon discovery, creativity, and life-long learning.

Academic Rigor

The TCU undergraduate experience shall embrace and offer:

- A liberal arts and sciences based education that challenges students to think critically, formulate positions, develop grounded thoughts and effectively communicate ideas.
- Opportunities for rigorous, active and collaborative learning. The experience should contain “surprises” in intellectual development.
- Dense, challenging, and innovative opportunities that develop citizens who care and work towards the common good of society.

Curricular/Co-Curricular

The TCU undergraduate experience shall have elements of:

- A total, seamless learning experience in curricular and co-curricular settings—an “educational eco-system”.
- Integration of curricular and co-curricular environments resulting in an array of culturally enriching and academically rigorous educational experiences.
- Co-curricular experiences that provide opportunities for students to develop skills and talents to live, work, and play in a community that values diversity and to integrate the academic experience into daily living.

Diversity

The TCU undergraduate experience shall include diversity of every kind resulting in:

- Students who embrace difference and change in all aspects of their lives.
- An academic environment that fosters learning in diverse groups and communities both internal and external to TCU environment.
- Students who embrace individuals from various cultures, ethnicities, economic, and political backgrounds, and anyone “different” from themselves.

Citizenship and Leadership

The TCU undergraduate experience shall include:

- Education for responsible citizenship and leadership.
- Emphasis upon the development of individuals who value integrity, personal responsibility, and ethics.

- Opportunities to learn and practice citizenship and leadership for the greater good and to be civically engaged and culturally enriched within the campus and larger communities.

International Learning

The TCU undergraduate experience shall form students who are:

- Knowledgeable of and sensitive to their communities and leave TCU willing to make valuable contributions to community, country, and world.
- Connected to the world through experiencing international programs and interacting with international students and faculty.
- Exposed to the global society.

Residentiality

The TCU Undergraduate Experience shall emphasize a sense of community by providing:

- A safe and supportive campus environment that fosters the development of life-long relationships.
- A living and learning environment that incorporates the pursuit of knowledge and the exchange of ideas.
- A residential experience that serves to bind students to the university for life.

Assessment

In addition to defining the TCU Undergraduate experience, the subcommittee also addressed the issue of assessment. TCU currently participates in regular assessment utilizing the National Survey of Student Engagement (NESSE). This survey is nationally recognized and provides valuable and valid data pertinent to the TCU undergraduate experience. Therefore, the subcommittee recommends the continued utilization of NESSE to evaluate how well TCU is providing the TCU undergraduate experience as defined in this report. Possible NESSE question items that might be utilized are found in Appendix 6.

Resource and/or Policy Implications

INTERACTION

Interaction between faculty, students, and staff is one of TCU's hallmarks and maintaining it is imperative. However, it will take new resources to do so.

While the student body has gradually increased in size, the full-time faculty and staff have not increased at the same rate. Thus, we must hire a number of new faculty. The sub-committee of the TCU Undergraduate experience discourages any growth in student numbers without the appropriate increase in resources to support and ensure an enhanced TCU undergraduate experience.

Further, new faculty growth will have physical impacts on the university. Finding office space for new hires, classrooms, and a strong infrastructure is necessary in order to provide an effective learning environment. Additionally, getting related disciplines in the same building would be a benefit to both our students and faculty. For example, there is no good reason for AddRan departments to be scattered all over campus or for some to be housed in metal buildings. Such physical facilities send clear messages to all concerned about how important those departments, their subjects, and their faculty are to the broader university.

Despite these costs, getting faculty numbers back in line with what we advertise will allow us greater possibilities to have smaller classes with more opportunities for interaction as well as more time for our important advisement and mentoring roles. According to surveys of our students, that is one of our strengths. We should spend money to maintain it.

ACADEMIC RIGOR

Again, reducing class size is an important first step in increasing the academic rigor that should mark the TCU undergraduate experience. However, academic rigor has several components that require 'changing the culture' at TCU.

First, faculty must buy into it. Holding students to higher levels of performance and/or greater mastery of their subjects may result in considerable student resistance initially. If we are going to get students to accept this as the new reality, faculty members within and across all departments and disciplines must participate. That means multiple, reinforcing efforts must be made to show that TCU means to have a rigorous academic program, that faculty will expect more of students, and faculty will deliver more in terms of teaching/learning effectiveness.

Enhancing academic rigor should mean more than having harder tests or being more demanding on papers (although both of these steps may be necessary). It also means that faculty may have to retool and incorporate more effective strategies and tactics in the classroom. For many, this will be hard work, and they will have to be convinced that it is both necessary and expected. New resources may be needed both to pay for rewards to those who embrace this challenge and to pay for increased pedagogical training and retraining of TCU faculty.

Second, enhancing academic rigor means changes on the students' part as well. They will have to 'buy into' this change. They will need to accept a greater responsibility for their own learning and show less tolerance for academic misconduct (may call for discussion regarding a TCU honor code).

CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR

The challenge to producing a seamless web of curricular and co-curricular learning experiences is to bridge any gap that exists between faculty and staff. At TCU, many co-curricular roles involve significant staff assistance or leadership. Faculty and staff must respect and embrace each other's roles in a joint partnership to create an 'educational ecosystem' –an environment in which all human and non-human resources of the university and all activities that arise in that setting contribute to the goal of preparing students for lifelong learning and personal success after college.

The ability to create such an 'educational ecosystem' is facilitated by having students living on campus. Consequently, the percentage of students residing on campus should increase, and this will require the construction of more residence halls. New resources must be found to pay these expenses.

DIVERSITY

TCU is located in increasingly diverse local, state, national and international communities. The subcommittee views diversity in broad terms: diversity in racial and ethnic backgrounds, diversity in religious views, diversity between Texan and non-Texan U.S. students, diversity between U.S. and international students, diversity in socioeconomic class status, etc. Our students must be exposed to that diversity, as dealing with those from other backgrounds or having other values will continue to mark their adult experiences. Students can be exposed to such diversity here on campus, but that presupposes that:

- TCU will continue to diversify the student body. This will require a commitment from the university in terms of scholarship dollars expressly for this purpose – whether to recruit U.S. or international students who contribute to our increased diversity.
- TCU will continue to promote off-campus academic programs. We currently have TCU programs in Washington, DC; Puebla; London; and Florence and we participate in 'study abroad' programs around the world. The proposed TCU undergraduate experience supports study abroad as part of our global educational mission. Making such programs accessible to more students will require more scholarship resources.

Again, the greatest way for students to experience such diversity is to live on campus.

CITIZENSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

The ability to create responsible citizens requires the efforts of both faculty and staff. This means we make ethical behavior a more visible emphasis in the courses that we teach, the behaviors that we manifest to others, and the activities that we organize and sponsor. Again, repetition is the key. If the entire TCU community makes ethical and responsible citizenship a priority, then it will be reflected in the things we do and the lessons we stress (and stress and stress). Again, repetition is important in such cases. Making it clear that we expect ethical and responsible citizenship from everyone means incorporating such themes into all that we do.

Training leaders is a focal point for TCU. We must do this well, both in terms of the academic study of leadership (whether in the social sciences, business, education, or other academic realms) and co-curricular or site-based leadership training activities. We must continue to distinguish 'leadership' from 'activism' and promote both. Activism relates to the citizenship topic above. Promoting leadership involves training students in terms of the various ethical issues involved as they seek to lead others to achieve group goals, as well as the more specific skills and techniques to persuade others, manage organizations, or guide assorted groups and entities.

INTERNATIONAL LEARNING

The TCU undergraduate experience shall formulate students who are connected to the world. There are many different venues in which students can be exposed to the world such as course work, international travel, and increased diversity on campus. However, in order to develop students who are responsible citizens in the global community, TCU should investigate requiring an international experience of all students. By international experience we mean traveling to a foreign country for a period of time that allows immersion in another culture while studying a particular discipline. TCU has several study abroad programs that serve as models. Additionally, with nearly 30% of all students at TCU already participating in some form of international study, the goal of having all students participate in study abroad appears achievable.

RESIDENTIALITY

Progress on most of the goals above is facilitated by a residential experience for students. Living on campus produces optimal results for creating a seamless educational ecosystem that promotes diversity, responsible citizenship and ethical leadership. Unfortunately, current facilities do not allow many students to

live on campus. More residence halls need to be constructed, and this requires new resources.

Additionally, the residential experience could be enhanced in two other ways:

1. providing alternate living communities adjacent to campus and within walking distance of the student center, the recreation center, the library, etc. Such communities (whether composed of apartments, duplexes, triplexes, etc.) would allow those students who prefer to live “off-campus” to still be an active part of the broader residential campus community.
2. constructing new “on-campus” housing facilities with an eye to the possibility of some faculty members living there. The idea of some faculty members (single or married) living amongst our students merits investigation. While the subcommittee does not envision such faculty playing any formal roles in residence management, the presence of such adults as mentors and role models has an intriguing appeal.

3.

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Chronology of How Committee Worked.

The subcommittee met regularly (nearly every Wednesday) beginning January 14th, 2004. Whenever there was a focus group, that replaced the regularly scheduled weekly meeting which was held on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

The committee began there work by:

Defining the charge for the committee.

Reviewing general statements published in various TCU brochures that identified characteristics of the TCU experience

Reviewing the Report Card written by Nowell Donovan

The committee gathered information regarding what the TCU experience should be by:

Holding Focus Groups (see Appendix 2).

Studying the results from the focus groups.

The members of the subcommittee independently condensed the information and submitted their interpretation of the top 10 hallmarks of the TCU undergraduate experience.

Based upon the subcommittee's expertise and analysis of information gathered, the hallmarks of the TCU experience were defined.

Evaluation of the TCU Undergraduate experience will be assessed utilizing the National Survey of Student Engagement (NESSE) survey.

Appendix 2

Focus Groups

During the spring 2004, the following focus groups were held to gather information relative to what the TCU Undergraduate Experience should be. The following is a list of the groups that participated in focus groups followed by the date the focus group was held).

Board of Trustees (1/29)

Administrative Council (2/04)

Students Intercom: (2/05)

Alumni: (2/06)

Staff Assembly: (3/02)

Faculty Senate: (3/04)

Admissions: (2/18)

Community—(2/27)

Parent's Council: (3/5)

A Towne Hall Meeting was held March 31st and attended by approximately 60 people. Dr. George Kuh was present at the Towne Hall and offered closing comments.

Appendix 3

Notes from the Focus Groups

Ralph Carter

What should be the Top 10 hallmarks of the TCU Undergraduate Experience?

1. A challenging academic program that emphasizes an interdisciplinary, liberal arts and sciences approach to learning and the development of critical thinking and communication skills
2. A challenging academic program that presses students work harder and smarter than they have before, thereby easing the later transition to the professional world of work
3. Interactions between students and faculty (both in and out of class) that provide opportunities for good advisement and mentoring relationships
4. Interactions between students for mutual learning outside of class
5. Connecting students to the diverse communities around them:
 - local (community outreach efforts)
 - national (internships)
 - global (study abroad; international students at TCU; internationally-oriented courses; foreign language training)
6. An emphasis on ethical training (in both coursework and in co-curricular roles)
7. An emphasis on promoting responsible and effective citizenship
8. An emphasis on promoting responsible and effective leadership
9. A residential and/or co-curricular experience that serves to bind students to the university for life
10. Instilling an appreciation for life-long learning

Jane Kucko

The TCU Undergraduate experience should provide/develop:

1. An academically rigorous environment that challenges students to critically think, formulate positions, and develop grounded thoughts.
2. An academic environment that instills the need for life-long learning. Students should leave TCU with a passion for learning rather than an expectation that they have been "trained."
3. An academic environment that fosters working one on one with faculty including research projects.
4. Students who understand and accept change.
 5. A blend of students who are leaders and followers--overall students should believe they are empowered and can and will make a difference.
6. Students who are exposed to the global world including and perhaps more importantly students who embrace diversity in all aspects of their life.
7. Students who are sensitive to their communities and leave TCU willing to make valuable contributions to the community, country, and world.

Don Mills

My thoughts (other than this is harder than I thought it would be),

- 1) Challenging academic program
 - interdisciplinary
 - critical thinking
 - verbal and written communication
 - comprehensive, but liberal arts and sciences based
- 2) Residential experience
 - opportunity to create and experience community
 - relate to students who are "different"
 - build life-long relationships and connections
 - learn to work in diverse groups and communities
- 3) Co-curricular experience that:
 - provides students opportunities to develop skills and talents
 - provides opportunity to live, work and play in a community that values diversity
 - allows students to have practical application of knowledge acquired from the academic experience
- 4) Programmatic emphasis on:
 - developing responsible, active, ethical citizens
 - developing responsible, active, ethical leaders
 - character and spiritual development
- 5) Connections to the world of work
 - internships
 - effective understanding and presentation of self
- 6) Connections to the world
 - international programs of travel and study
 - international students at TCU
 - foreign language and culture requirement
 - international orientation in curriculum
- 7) Connections to faculty and staff
 - Advisors
 - Mentors

- Counselors
- 8) Graduates should:
- Be an engaged learner
 - Be a prepared citizen
 - Have a developed character
 - Be a knowledgeable worker
 - Exhibit high ethical standards
 - Understand effective leadership in theory and practice

Larry Adams

Hallmarks of the TCU Experience

1. Students should be presented with opportunities for rigorous, active learning. The experience should contain "surprises" in intellectual development.

2. Students should be provided with a total, seamless learning experience in curricular and co-curricular settings ---- an "educational eco-system."

3. The TCU experience should provide educational opportunities "to learn to affect your world" in diverse, changing communities. Such activities should include the local community --- educational partnerships, internships, service, etc. --- and extend to the global community --- living & learning abroad, learning with and from non-U.S. students at TCU, etc.

4. Education for responsible citizenship and effective leadership should be vital components of the TCU experience.

5. Students' experiences should be characterized by frequent interaction with faculty and staff members who teach, tutor, advise, mentor and counsel in both formal and informal settings.

6. TCU students should have the opportunity to learn and develop in "first-class" facilities and with premium learning resources.

7. A commitment by the university to value-add the components of the mission statement in order to develop traits and qualities in every student to contribute to the common good.

Barbara Herman

It would be my hope that our *students* are **the** hallmark of TCU, such that they leave here having become lifelong learners, prepared to do the following in their communities, careers, and personal lives:

Relate
Communicate
Think
Create
Contribute/Serve
Change/Grow

I believe that this preparation best takes place when the university provides:

- (1) Close interaction between students & faculty/staff**
- (2) An academic curriculum that is innovative & challenging and emphasizes active & collaborative learning**
- (3) Integration of the curricular & co-curricular, resulting in an array of enriching educational experiences**
- (4) Exposure to diversity of every kind**
- (5) A global perspective in every way possible**
- (6) Opportunities to learn & practice leadership [for the greater good] - and to be civically engaged & culturally enriched - within the campus & larger communities**
- (7) An emphasis on the development of integrity & personal responsibility**
- (8) A safe & supportive campus environment with residential living at the core**
- (9) Access & affordability for students from all economic backgrounds**
- (10) A clear sense of the university's mission/vision/values & future direction**

Appendix 4

Inaugural address by Dr. George Kuh

"We Shall Be Known By What We Do"

Good morning.

Chancellor Boschini, Trustees, faculty, staff, students, other members of the Texas Christian University community, and guests, I am honored to participate in this historic event. My charge is to offer some ideas about enhancing the quality of the undergraduate experience at TCU. I also want to take this opportunity to pass along warm regards from the Trustees of Indiana University and my President, Adam Herbert. In addition, I bring greetings from two members of the Class of 2002, Brian Estrada and Tara Sherwin, political science and English majors respectively, who will receive master's degrees in May from Indiana University. They are outstanding representatives of TCU.

Chancellor Boschini is a distinguished graduate of Indiana and I've had the good fortune of working with him occasionally over the years. When he invited me to join you today, he stipulated but one condition: I cannot tell any stories about him. I agreed, with one proviso: He must reciprocate! Chancellor Boschini, good news, our reputations will remain intact yet another day!

Since I can't tell any stories about the exceptional person you inaugurate today as your Chancellor, I'll go back ten centuries to another extraordinary person, the famous poet from the China Jin Dynasty, Tao Yuanming. In one of his works, the "Peach Blossom Shangri-La," he described a utopian setting where people pursue their dreams, insulated from the harsh realities of the outside world.

The college years can be a kind of Shangri-la, a time and place when the outside world -- rightly or wrongly -- matters little. I'm stretching the analogy, of course, but not by much, at least not in my more nostalgic moments -- class reunions and Homecoming and the like. And the more time that passes, the more pleasant those memories become, despite the lack of money in those days, cramped living quarters, and the questionable origins of cafeteria food.

Even if recollections of our undergraduate days fall short of a Shangri-la, most of us look back on those days with fondness.

More to the point, though, college **should** be a very special time, especially at **this** institution, which has such a rich tradition of honoring undergraduates.

This sets up a perennial challenge -- to create a setting wherein every TCU student can thrive and realize their dreams. All of us no matter what our role -- Chancellor, faculty member, trustee, student, librarian, student life professional, support staff member – all of us have a stake in and responsibility for this.

We know what powerful learning environments look like. Decades of research and thousands of studies on college student development point to two unequivocal conclusions about what matters in college.

First, learning is not a spectator sport. The key factor is what students put into the experience -- the quality of effort they invest in educationally purposeful activities.

Second, educationally effective institutions intentionally fashion policies and practices to channel student energy toward productive activities.

Both of these conclusions about the impact of college emphasize what students **do** and what institutions **do**, not where students come from or even what they bring to college, or a university's resources.

This simple but profound point raises some nettlesome questions about institutional priorities and values, one of which is, "For what shall we be known?" For what shall Texas Christian University be known?

Shall we be known for an impressive physical plant, replete with imposing buildings and beautiful green spaces?

Or is it better to be known for how students use these resources?

Shall TCU be known for superior athletic teams that compete at the highest levels?

Or is better to be known for what athletes gain from their experiences, how they comport themselves on and off the field, and what they contribute to the overall quality of campus life?

Shall we be known for attracting the brightest, most talented students?

Or is it better to be known for what our students learn here? How they change intellectually, socially and emotionally? What they value after four years with us? And how they represent themselves and the TCU academic community, on and off the campus, during and after college?

The answers to these questions aren't necessarily mutually exclusive. But they do force us to clarify, weigh, and distinguish among priorities. Taken together,

our choices say some important things about what this institution values, and what can make this University distinctive and set it apart from others.

Equally important, asking and answering these kinds of questions is a hallmark of great universities.

I know something about great universities, especially those that provide a high quality undergraduate experience. Over the past two decades I've extensively examined more than three dozen. Some of them you've heard a lot about – the University of Michigan and Stanford University, for example. Others are not -- -- at least not yet -- -- household names: University of Maine at Farmington, tiny Wofford College in South Carolina, and your neighbor to the southwest, Texas El Paso.

These very different institutions and other exemplary colleges do marvelous things with and for their students. In my remaining moments I'll mention four characteristics they have common and invite you to think about TCU in this context.

First, great universities are dense with expectations. Expect more and we will get more, the saying goes. This is because people rarely rise above what is expected of them. This goes for student performance, and for ourselves and our colleagues. So, part of our work is to encourage students and one another to set higher aspirations – not just in terms of academic achievement and career goals, but what we stand for as principled human beings in a world where resources are unfairly distributed.

Second, great universities that set the performance bar high also provide the support students need when they need it to meet these challenges. University of Michigan students are among the most talented, high achievers in the country. And they are a diverse lot as well. But Michigan is not about educational Darwinism. It understands that it can be an intimidating place, even for high achievers. One dean we talked with there described the learning environment as an academic “boot camp.” To balance these high expectations, Michigan provides scores of uniformly high quality enrichment and support programs, including small, discipline-based seminars for all first-year students, more than a dozen living-learning communities such as the Women in Science and Engineering Residential program, and its version of a POSSE program -- Pathways to Student Success and Excellence for economically disadvantaged students.

So, great universities not only set high expectations, they provide support for those who need it.

Third, great universities are never quite satisfied with their performance. They know they can be even better, and are continually looking for where and how to

improve. They ache with a positive restlessness. “Are we doing the right things?” “How do we know?” “What else should we doing?”

Finally, great universities recognize that there is no substitute for human contact. At excellent universities, students and faculty members frequently engage one another in authentic, meaningful ways, both inside and outside the classroom. Listen to the words of Columbia University President Lee Bollinger:

“The very health of a university ... is connected to how it cares for its students, and perhaps especially its undergraduate students because of their special vulnerability to being neglected... Even the character and quality of [our] research ... will depend upon the degree to which we feel a desire to nurture, educationally, students into the life of the mind.”

Taken together, these four institutional properties suggest that our best work may be stretching students’ aspirations, instilling in them a sense of personal and civic responsibility, and launching them on a trajectory of achievement and life long learning. Allow me a brief autobiographical detour to illustrate what I mean.

Early in the senior year of my collegiate Shangri La, I had a brief hallway conversation with my senior paper adviser, John Bale. After a question about my progress, he asked me if I was thinking about the GRE. I didn’t know what the GRE was. Maybe, I wondered, did he mean to say, “GTO” -- which was a ‘hot’ General Motors muscle car in that era?!?

And then he asked, “Where was I going to do my MAT?” -- another unfamiliar acronym!

Well, it turns out that the GRE was the exam needed to get into graduate school. And the MAT was a master of arts in teaching, a relatively new degree designed for people who intended to teach in high school or, perhaps, the college level. Up until that moment I had not heard of either of these. Moreover, I did not think of myself as someone who even *ought* to be thinking about such matters. For a truck driver’s son, college was enough of a reach. Or was it?!?

About ten years ago, at an event at my alma mater, I recounted this was to me memorable exchange to Professor Bale. “Do you recall it?” I asked expectantly.

Of course, he didn’t.

I realized a few moments later that he had had such conversations with hundreds of students.

I share this to make two points.

First, our words -- -- even those we think to be insignificant -- can have a profound impact when they open up previously unconsidered possibilities. At the same time, our words can also dampen -- even crush -- one's prospects, so it's always better to err toward the former.

Second, this University -- Texas Christian University -- to be a **great** university -- must not limit itself to taking stock of only that which it can easily and immediately influence and measure. We must think of our students' four years with us as a potentially transforming period in a life-course journey, a time to introduce intellectual, social, and cultural possibilities and test students' moral compass. And we must be patient. For some of our students, it may take decades before what they experience here comes to full bloom.

Texas Christian University I believe is poised on the edge of greatness. Selecting Victor Boschini as your chancellor sends a strong message near and far that you are ready to take the next step forward.

But a chancellor -- even this Chancellor -- can do only so much: point the way, cajole, lead by example, obtain the needed resources, and attract strong people with similar high, noble aspirations. You've seen enough of Victor Boschini in action to know he will do all of this with more energy and resolve than we have a right to expect. Even so, this chancellor -- any chancellor -- needs all of us, pushing and pulling in the same direction in order to realize TCU's aspirations and help our students' realize their dreams.

Texas Christian University is at the very least a **very good** university poised on the edge of greatness.

But for what shall TCU be known?
I shall be watching from afar and rooting for you as you answer this important question.

George Kuh
Indiana University Bloomington
Fort Worth, Texas
March 31, 2004

Appendix 5.

Engaging our students—a report to the Faculty Senate, spring 2002 that summarizes the NESSE report.

Appendix 6

Possible NESSE Question Items to be Utilized in Evaluation of TCU Undergraduate Experience.

Hallmarks of the TCU Experience Evaluation Measures & Criteria

<u>Hallmark</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
1. Relationships	1. College Student Report	1. Scores on College Student Report
A. Faculty	A. 1. Item 1.m 2. Item 1.n 3. Item 1.o 4. Item 1.p 5. Item 1.q 6. Item 1.s 7. Item 8.b	A. 1. 75% of respondents will report communicating with their instructor by e-mail as often or very often. 2. 75% of respondents will report discussing grades or assignments with their instructor as often or very often 3. 75% of respondents will report talking about career plans with a faculty member as often or very often 4. 75% of respondents will report discussing ideas from readings or classes with their instructor outside of class as often or very often 5. 75% of respondents will report receiving prompt feedback from their instructor as often or very often 6. 75% of respondents will report working with faculty on activities other than coursework as often or very often 7. 75% of respondents will rate their relationship with faculty as 5 or higher
B. Staff	B. Item 8.c	B. 75% of respondents will rate their relationship with administrative personnel as 5 or higher

C. Student	C. Item 8.a	C. 75% of respondents will rate their relationship with other students as 5 or higher
2. Academic Rigor	2. College Student Report	2. Scores on College Student Report
A. Challenge	A. 1. Item 1.c	A. 1. 75% of respondents will report preparing two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in as often or very often
	2. Item 1.f	2. 75% of respondents will report coming to class without completing assignments as sometimes or never

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	3. Item 1.r	3. 75% of respondents will report working harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's expectations as often or very often
	4. Item 2.a	4. 75% of respondents will report memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from courses and reading as quite a bit or very much
	5. Item 2.b	5. 75% of respondents will report analyzing basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory as quite a bit or very much
	6. Item 2.c	6. 75% of respondents will report synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations as quite a bit or very much
	7. Item 2.d	7. 75% of respondents will report making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods as quite a bit or very much
	8. Item 2.e	8. 75% of respondents will report applying

<u>Hallmark</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
	9. Item 3	theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situation as quite a bit or very much 9. 75% of respondents will report the extent to which exams challenged them to do their best work as 5 or higher
	10. Item 4.a	10. 75% of respondents will report the number of assigned texts and readings as at least 11
	11. Item 4.b	11. 75% of respondents will report the number of books read on own as at least 5
	12. Item 4.c	12. 75% of respondents will report the number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more that they have completed as at least 5
	13. Item 4.d	13. 75% of respondents will report the number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages that they have completed as at least 11
	14. Item 4.e	14. 25% of respondents will report the number of written papers or reports fewer than 5 pages that they have completed as at least 11
	15. Item 5.a	15. 75% of respondents will report the number of problem sets in their homework that take more than an hour to complete as at least 5
	16. Item 5.b	16. 75% of respondents will report the number of problem sets in their homework that take less than an hour to complete as no more than 5
	17. Item 9.a	17. 75% of respondents will report the number of hours spent preparing for class in a typical 7-day week as at least 16
	18. Item 10.a	18. 75% of respondents will report that the institution emphasizes spending significant time studying and on academic work as quite

		19. Item 11.e	a bit or very much 19. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their ability to think critically and analytically as quite a bit or very much
B. Innovation	B.	1. Item 1.a	1. 75% of respondents will report asking questions in class or contributing to class discussions as often or very often
		2. Item 1.b	2. 75% of respondents will report making a class presentation as often or very often
		3. Item 1.d	3. 75% of respondents will report working on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources as often or very often
		4. Item 1.g	4. 75% of respondents will report working with other students on projects during class as often or very often
		5. Item 1.i	5. 75% of respondents will report putting together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions as often or very often
		6. Item 1.l	6. 75% of respondents will report using an electronic medium to discuss or complete an assignment as often or very often

Hallmark

Measure

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7.	Item 7.g	7. 75% of respondents will report participating in an independent study or self-designed major as done or plan to do
8.	Item 7.h	8. 75% of respondents will report participating in a culminating senior experience as done or

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| | | 9. Item 11.a | 9. plan to do
75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their acquiring a broad general education as quite a bit or very much |
| | | 10. Item 11.c | 10. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their writing clearly and effectively as quite a bit or very much |
| | | 11. Item 11.d | 11. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their speaking clearly and effectively as quite a bit or very much |
| 3. Co-curricular | 3. College Student Report | | 3. Scores on College Student Report |
| | 1. Item 1.h | | 1. 75% of respondents will report working with classmates outside of class to prepare for class assignments as often or very often |
| | 2. Item 1.j | | 2. 75% of respondents will reports tutoring or teaching other students as often or very often |
| | 3. Item 1.k | | 3. 75% of respondents will report participating in a community-based project as part of a regular course as often or very often |
| | 4. Item 1.t | | 4. 75% of respondents will report discussing ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class as often or very often |
| | 5. Item 6.a | | 5. 75% of respondents will report attending an art exhibit, gallery, play, dance, or other theater performance as often or very often |
| | 6. Item 6.b | | 6. 75% of respondents will report exercising or participating in physical fitness activities as |

often or very often

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	7. Item 7.c	7. 75% of respondents will report participating in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together as done or plan to do
	8. Item 9.d	8. 75% of respondents will report participating in co-curricular activities 1 to 15 hours per week
	9. Item 10.b	9. 75% of respondents will report that the institution provides the support they need to succeed academically as quite a bit or very much
	10. Item 10.f	10. 75% of respondents will report that the institution emphasizes attending campus events and activities as quite a bit or very much
	11. Item 11.h	11. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their learning effectively on their own as quite a bit or very much
4. Diversity	4. College Student Report	4. Scores on College Student Report
	1. Item 1.e	1. 75% of respondents will report including diverse perspectives in class discussions or writing assignments as often or very often
	2. Item 1.u	2. 75% of respondents will report having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity as often or very often

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| 3. | Item 1.v | 3. | 75% of respondents will report having serious conversations with students of a different religion, philosophy, or political belief as often or very often |
| 4. | Item 10.c | 4. | 75% of respondents will report that the institution encourages contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds as quite a bit or very much |
| 5. | Item 11.l | 5. | 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds as quite a bit or very much |

Hallmark

5. Citizenship

Measure

5. College Student Report

1. Item 7.b
2. Item 11.i

Criteria

5. Scores on College Student Report

1. 75% of respondents will report participating in community service or volunteer work as done or plan to do
2. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their voting in local, state, or national elections as quite a bit or very much

6. TCU Mission

6. College Student Report

1. Item 6.c
2. Item 11.n

6. Scores on College Student Report

1. 75% of respondents will report participating in activities to enhance their spirituality as often or very often
2. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their

		3. Item 11.p	3. developing a personal code of values or ethics as quite a bit or very much 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their developing a deepened sense of spirituality as quite a bit or very much
7. Leadership	7. College Student Report	1. Item 11.k	7. Scores on College Student Report
		2. Item 11.m	1. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their understanding of self as quite a bit or very much
		3. Item 11.o	2. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their ability to solve complex real-world problems as quite a bit or very much
			3. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their contributing to the welfare of their community as quite a bit or very much
8. Local & Global Communities	8. College Student Report	1. Item 7.e	8. Scores on College Student Report
		2. Item 7.f	1. 75% of respondents will report participating in foreign language coursework as done or plan to do
			2. 75% of respondents will report participating in study abroad programs as done or plan to do

Hallmark

Measure

Criteria

9. Residentiality

9. College Student Report

1. Item 7.c
2. Item 10.d
3. Item 10.e

9. Scores on College Student Report

1. 75% of respondents will report participating in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together as done or plan to do
2. 75% of respondents will report that the institution helps them cope with non-academic responsibilities as quite a bit or very much
3. 75% of respondents will report that the institution provides the support they need to thrive socially as quite a bit or very much

10. Life-long Learning

10. College Student Report

1. Item 7.a
2. Item 9.b
3. Item 9.c
4. Item 10.g
5. Item 11.b
6. Item 11.g

10. Scores on College Student Report

1. 75% of respondents will report participating in a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment as done or plan to do
2. 75% of respondents will report working for pay on campus 6 to 20 hours per week
3. 75% of respondents will report working for pay off campus 6 to 20 hours per week
4. 75% of respondents will report that the institution encourages using computers in academic work as quite a bit or very much
5. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills as quite a bit or very much
6. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their ability

- 7. Item 11.j
 - 7. to use computing and information technology as quite a bit or very much
 - 7. 75% of respondents will report that their experience at TCU contributed to their ability to learn effectively on their own as quite a bit or very much