ashburn University has engaged in a deliberative and reflective self-study process over the past two years. The institution was successful in engaging the campus community in the study of current practices and has identified strengths and opportunities to enhance the institution.

Specifically, consistent with its mission, Washburn University:

- Operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students;

- Allocates resources and utilizes processes for evaluation and planning that demonstrate the capacity to fulfill the university's mission, improve the quality of education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities;

- Provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates the university is fulfilling its educational mission;

- Promotes a life of learning for the university's faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission; and

- As called for in its mission, the university identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Guided by the best practices identified by the Higher Learning Commission's criteria, the university will utilize existing strengths to accomplish the goal of addressing challenges and opportunities. The evidence presented throughout this self-study assures the campus community, the public, and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools that Washburn University meets the criteria for accreditation. The following summary is organized around the university's strategic priorities of resource development and stewardship, enrollment management, academics, learning environment, and student life. In this section, the institution's ability to make progress on the significant opportunities identified through the self-study, a "Be the Change" list, is supported by its existing noteworthy strengths.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND STEWARDSHIP

STRATEGIC GOAL: Conduct business according to current best practices for sound fiscal management.

Strengths

External audits are conducted annually and help ensure for both internal and external constituents the integrity of the institution in regard to financial and operational matters. These audits consistently demonstrate business is conducted according to current best practices for sound fiscal management. [Core component 1c]

Washburn University invests in and supports the development of all employees. [Core components 2b, 4d]

Since the last accreditation visit, Washburn's administrative structure and governance has advanced and communication with all constituents has been enhanced with the addition of the position of vice president for student life and the formation of a Faculty Senate and a Staff Council. [Core component 1d]

Opportunities

Washburn could refine existing communication mechanisms for explaining the budget process and the rationale for budget decisions and how those decisions reflect campus priorities. [Core component 2d]
CONCLUSION

STRATEGIC GOAL: Continue to develop the role of technology and monitor the legal, ethical, and economic environment as it relates to university operations.

**Strengths**
Banner has greatly increased the institution’s ability to gather reliable and accurate enrollment, financial, and student information which is used extensively in strategic and operational decision-making. [Core component 2c]

**Opportunities**
While the major system activities in the Banner integrated software system are working well, the institution is committed to developing a better understanding of the data, making it accessible, and monitoring the legal, ethical, and economic environment as it relates to university operations. [Core component 2b]

The collaboration regarding technology on campus to ensure campus-wide understanding and support for the university technology plan could be enhanced. [Core components 2b, 3d]

Washburn has the potential to utilize existing communication mechanisms to ensure students, faculty, and staff have access to appropriate technology and understand the implications of technology decisions. [Core components 2b, 2c]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Enhance and diversify sources of revenue.

**Strengths**
Washburn University has an informal collaborative but robust action-oriented planning process which has guided decision making for the past 10 years and has been sufficiently flexible for the institution to react and reshape its strategic initiatives in response to identified opportunities. [Core component 2a]

The planning process has been realistically grounded in the university’s resource capacity. Washburn is currently involved in the next phase of its strategic planning process. [Core components 2b, 2c]

Washburn’s unique position as the last remaining municipal university in the nation has led to a distinctive funding model and governance structure for a public institution. The university’s financial condition is sound, resisting both peaks and valleys in economic conditions. [Core component 2a]

**Opportunities**
The institution has an opportunity to enhance and diversify its sources of revenue. [Core component 2b]

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIC GOAL: Review current enrollment policies and assess the consequences of changes in the political, social, and economic environments within the community.

**Strengths**
Washburn University’s mission reflects its long-standing tradition of serving all students who desire a college education, and its core values and strategic goals emphasize student learning and a commitment to involvement in the community. [Core component 1b]

Washburn’s governance structure supports timely and efficient responses to demonstrated and unanticipated community needs since the Washburn Board of Regents has total autonomy in approving new undergraduate programs. [Core component 2a]

**Opportunities**
Washburn University’s location provides the institution with a unique opportunity to provide higher education to the large Hispanic population within the region. Many of these potential students could be first-generation college students and would benefit from additional support to achieve academic...
success. Additional resources may be needed to provide these services. [Core component 2a]

The institution needs to understand the changing demographics and market and implement an appropriate recruitment plan. [Core component 2a]

The university will continue the process to ensure a smooth and effective merger of Kaw Area Technical School under the governance of the Washburn Board of Regents. [Core component 2d]

ACADEMICS

STRATEGIC GOAL: Provide support for the transformational experiences: scholarly or creative activity, community service, leadership, and international education.

Strengths
The Washburn Transformational Experience baccalaureate graduation requirement has established an opportunity for the university to be distinctive as it meets its mission and will require commitment from administrative, academic, and cocurricular entities on campus. [Core components 1c, 4a]

Opportunities
Making the WTE a hallmark of a Washburn baccalaureate education and will continue to be the focus. Ongoing assessment will be required throughout the next stages of program implementation. [Core components 2c, 3d]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Assess goals and purposes of general education, and develop a purposeful, powerful, and principled general education core that becomes a signature of a Washburn degree.

Strengths
Washburn is committed to revising the general education program and developing an effective assessment strategy to ensure a purposeful general education experience for Washburn students. [Core component 4b]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Continue ongoing, meaningful assessment of student learning.

Strengths
Washburn University has institutionalized assessment through the creation of an assessment coordinator, an assessment committee, and departmental assessment liaisons. [Core component 3a]

Each academic department has developed a mission statement, student learning outcomes, and an assessment plan for every academic program which guides the assessment of majors. [Core component 3a]

Opportunities
The implementation and assessment of the WTE and the review of general education are two of the university’s most important assessment initiatives. The university has been accepted into the OASIS academy to assist the institution in moving these assessment initiatives forward. [Core component 3a]

Washburn has the opportunity to better understand the needs of undergraduate students and develop effective programs with a focus on retention. [Core components 3a, 3b, 3c]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Encourage faculty professional development, continue support of the faculty development program, and recognize faculty achievement.

Strengths
Washburn’s investment in faculty development has resulted in faculty who are committed and productive scholars. They are supported in their teaching and scholarship through internal funding initiatives, and scholarship and honors are recognized through several university publications. [Core component 4a]
CONCLUSION

STRATEGIC GOAL: Refine academic programs to meet future social, cultural, and economic needs.

**Strengths**
Washburn University has made great strides in advancing support for a learning environment which supports cultural diversity and global awareness. The university also supports several international travel opportunities through a variety of venues but primarily through study abroad scholarships (for students) and travel grants (for student WTEs and faculty).  

**Opportunities**
Although progress has been made in increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff at Washburn University, diversity hires continue to be a challenge given the decreased numbers of qualified individuals seeking positions in many fields. The university will continue to monitor the ethnic diversity of the faculty and staff and be mindful during recruiting efforts.

Washburn University is investigating strategies for attracting additional international students to campus, including targeted recruiting and additional international exchange programs.

STRATEGIC GOAL: Advance quality and continue to elevate expectations for student achievement.

**Strengths**
Washburn’s vision of academic excellence includes small classes taught by high-quality faculty members. Quality teaching is rewarded through tenure, promotion, merit raises, and teaching awards.

**Opportunities**
The institution will focus on effective faculty recruitment and retention strategies to ensure the high quality of faculty is maintained.

STRATEGIC GOAL: Coordinate with the community in addressing work force development needs.

**Strengths**
Washburn responds to the community by developing academic programs which address identified needs for workforce development in economic, social, and health related organizations.

STRATEGIC GOAL: Enhance community service programs, including service learning outreach and the Small Business Development Center.

**Strengths**
Washburn has a very strong culture of community service as evidenced by the creation of the Center for Community Service and Civic Engagement and by the hundreds of students, faculty, and staff who participate in the Center’s programs each year.

STRATEGIC GOAL: Meet community needs for educating citizens.

**Strengths**
KTWU public television station is licensed to Washburn University and offers educational programming to people of all ages and interests, assisting the university in serving as a resource to the community.

Washburn’s mission of helping individuals reach their full academic potential is evident in its long-standing efforts to meet the needs of students with disabilities as well as students who are nontraditional, place-bound, or at-risk by offering accessible on-campus educational experiences and through evening, weekend, short-term, and online courses.
The university offers the community a large number of cultural, educational, and athletic opportunities, and its modern facilities are utilized for a wide range of functions. [Core component 5d]

Washburn University has a long history of supporting the economic development of the community by providing continuing education as well as consulting and workshops. [Core component 5d]

Opportunities
As part of the university’s ongoing efforts for continuous improvement in the realm of communication, a task force has been appointed to review the website to ensure this mechanism of communication is effective and easy to use. [Core component 5b]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Evaluate and implement advanced degrees, including joint programs with law.

Strengths
Where external accreditation is an option, Washburn graduate programs have pursued and achieved this accreditation. [Core component 3a]

Opportunities
Ongoing efforts to refine the institutional structure for administration of graduate programs will continue. [Core component 4b]

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC GOAL: Continue to support and enhance the library to ensure an appropriate twenty-first century learning environment.

Strengths
The university has significantly enhanced the technology available for faculty, student, and administrative needs through general purpose classroom mediation, improved electronic resources in the libraries, and extensive assistance in learning new technologies. [Core component 4c]

Opportunities
The university is aware of the continuing need for expanded support of the library and has increased the library’s general fund budget for additional electronic databases and journals to address this need. Positive results have occurred with this infusion of funds. The new dean of libraries will have an opportunity to suggest future funding needs and to guide the development of the library to ensure an appropriate twenty-first century learning environment. [Core component 2c]

STRATEGIC GOAL: Continue to investigate and support innovative curricular and cocurricular programs to ensure a learning-centered campus environment.

Strengths
The program review process provides both curricular and cocurricular units the opportunity to reflect on how they contribute to the mission, core values, and strategic initiatives of Washburn University. The recommendations may be used for planning and budgeting by area heads. [Core component 2c]

Washburn University encourages and supports innovative ideas. Three-year competitive innovation grants and innovative employee development projects have enabled the university to strengthen and enhance the campus and community environment. [Core component 2a]

The university supports a variety of initiatives which enhance student learning and effective teaching including: internal grants; learning support services; renovated and mediated classrooms; and technology acquisition, support, and training. [Core component 3d]

Although there has been an effort to create a more traditional campus environment, Washburn remains committed to provide education to all
CONCLUSION

STUDENT LIFE

STRATEGIC GOAL: Provide appropriate cocurricular programs.

Strengths

The hiring of a vice president for student life after a 10-year hiatus led to the reinvigoration of cocurricular life on campus, increased collaboration with academic units, and creation of a campus which is attractive and welcoming to traditional students.

Opportunities

Washburn University will continue to focus on students and the commitment to the community.

THE NEXT DECADE

The identified "Be the Change" list of opportunities will be evaluated through established institutional processes to determine responses consistent with the university’s strategic planning. In addition, through the process of the self-study, the university identified challenges which have been or will be addressed through appropriate university processes. This will ensure Washburn University continues to be a future-oriented, learning-focused, connected, and distinctive organization. The university has documented strengths, challenges, and opportunities which will guide the work of the institution over the next decade. This work will be a collaborative effort, and constituents will be involved in establishing an appropriate plan.