



Charting New Ground

Strategic Assessment 2010-2012

A Message from the President

The following **Strategic Assessment 2010-2012 Report** documents sustained progress at WKU since House Bill 1 was introduced in 1998. This landmark reform legislation charted the course for higher education in Kentucky and framed the strategic planning process designed to transform Western Kentucky University. Over the last 13 years, the faculty, staff, students, and alumni have taken dead aim on WKU's vision to become a leading American university with international reach.

This report documents significant growth in enrollment, degree productivity, academic quality, and efficiency. These performance variables, and others, underscore how WKU has become a significant educational value in Kentucky and continues to achieve more even with uncertain state support. In 1998, state appropriations accounted for 40 percent of the total WKU budget. Today, state appropriations account for 19 percent of WKU's budget. Other revenue streams including tuition, private support, sponsored research, and strong auxiliary business practices now contribute much larger shares of the University's budget. Efficiency has improved as state funding per FTE has declined, while enrollment and degree productivity have increased. WKU's efficiency is perhaps best measured by data from Kentucky's Legislative Research Commission (LRC) which documents that WKU has the lowest cost per degree of the eight universities in Kentucky.

The data presented offer a statistical snapshot of WKU's performance during the 2010-2012 biennium—a two-year period in which WKU is completing a \$200 million capital campaign, wrapping up some key campus construction projects, repositioning its senior executive

leadership team (with five new vice-presidential appointments in the last year) and generally positioning the institution for another decade of growth going forward.

Over most of the last 13 years, WKU has followed a very specific, statistically driven, corporate strategic planning model which measures every aspect of its performance. In FY 2011-12, the University will embark on a renewed strategic planning process designed to guide the University's next phase of growth from 2012 through 2017 and beyond. That plan, like those of the past decade, will focus on a series of empirically measurable performance indicators and will be consistent with the 2011-2015 Strategic Agenda just introduced by the Council on Postsecondary Education. WKU understands the performance variables of degree productivity and efficiency which will guide the appropriations process for higher education in the future. Consequently, WKU intends to earn a higher degree of state funding per FTE and a proportionate share of the state higher education budget commensurate with its statistical performance.

I join the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of WKU in welcoming thoughts, observations, questions, and suggestions from members of the Kentucky General Assembly, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the corporate community, and the broader public! We continue to seek ways in which WKU can further its mission to drive the Commonwealth's economy and improve the quality of life for citizens within its reach, while bringing greater accountability and a higher level of educational quality and value to a WKU degree.



Mapping the Landscape

2000

2005

2010

Students:

Total Enrollment

15,516

18,645

20,903

Undergraduate Enrollment

13,272

15,978

17,827

Graduate Enrollment

2,244

2,667

3,076

Completions:

Baccalaureate Degrees

1,753

2,166

2,676

Master's Degrees

514

797

858

Six-Year Graduation Rate

41.7%

45.5%

48.7%

Faculty:

Full-time Faculty

565

694

747

Part-time Faculty

407

412

428

Research Expenditures:

Federal

\$3.3 million *(2001)*

\$4.9 million

\$8.2 million *(2007)*

Total

\$20.9 million

\$27.6 million

\$22.1 million



Strategic Goal 1.

Enhance academic quality and the WKU Experience for all students.

WKU's Quality Enhancement Plan, *Engaging Students for Success in a Global Society*, frames much of the institution's academic mission. It reaffirms WKU's long-standing commitment to engaging students in learning experiences that both prepare them for professional success as well as advance understanding of their responsibilities as global citizens. By enhancing students' opportunities to

- (1) **apply** their knowledge and training in meaningful ways,
- (2) **reflect** more deeply on the diversity of peoples, ideas and cultures that enrich our communities, and
- (3) **participate** in experiences that have tangible impacts on the lives of others,

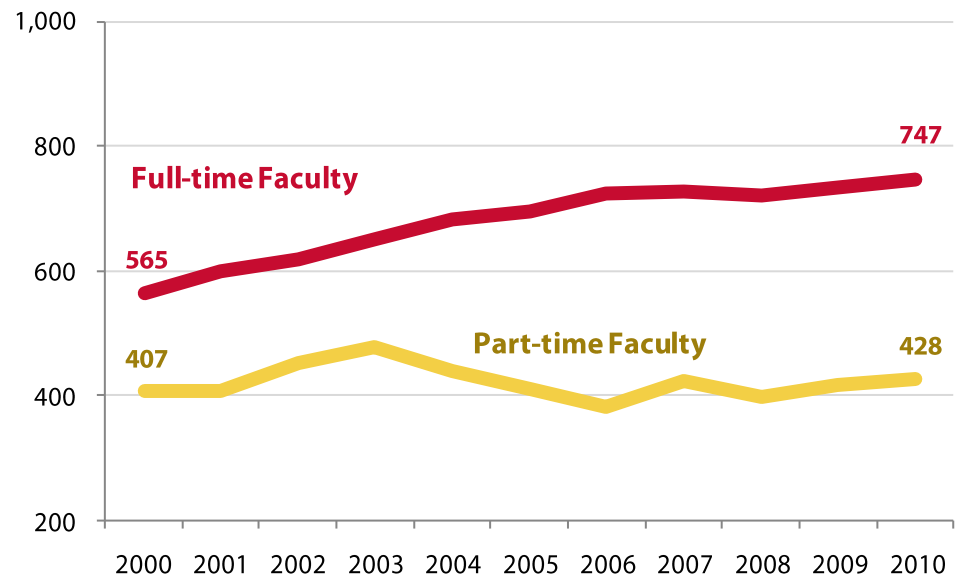
WKU will fulfill its stated mission of preparing students to be "productive, engaged, and socially responsible citizen-leaders in a global society."

Strategy 1. Invest in Faculty and Staff

The top priority for achieving and sustaining academic quality is to recruit and retain quality faculty and staff. Since 2000, the number of full-time faculty has increased by 32% while part-time faculty numbers have remained constant.

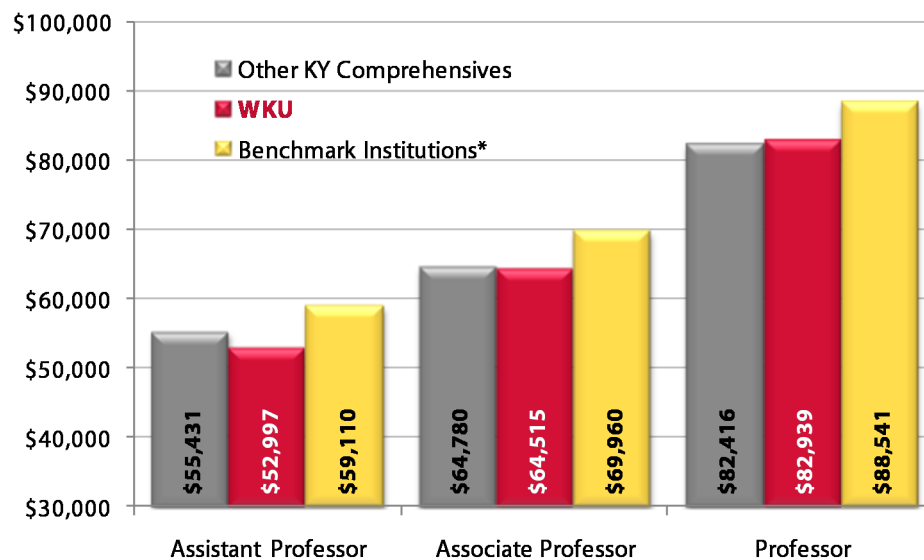


**Number of Faculty by Full/Part Time Status
2000-2010**



Number of Faculty

Faculty Salary Comparison 2009



* Western Kentucky University benchmarks itself against institutions identified by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education to gauge progress toward its strategic goals. These 19 institutions include Ball State University, California State University-Chico, California State University-Fresno, University of Central Missouri, Eastern Illinois University, Eastern Michigan University, Florida Atlantic University-Boca Raton, Indiana State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Montclair State University, Northern Arizona University, Oakland University, Missouri State University, Stephen F. Austin State University, Towson University, University Of Northern Iowa, Western Illinois University, Wichita State University, and Youngstown State University.

It is important that compensation for WKU faculty and staff allow the University to remain competitive in the higher education marketplace. The priorities for compensation, in ranked order, will be

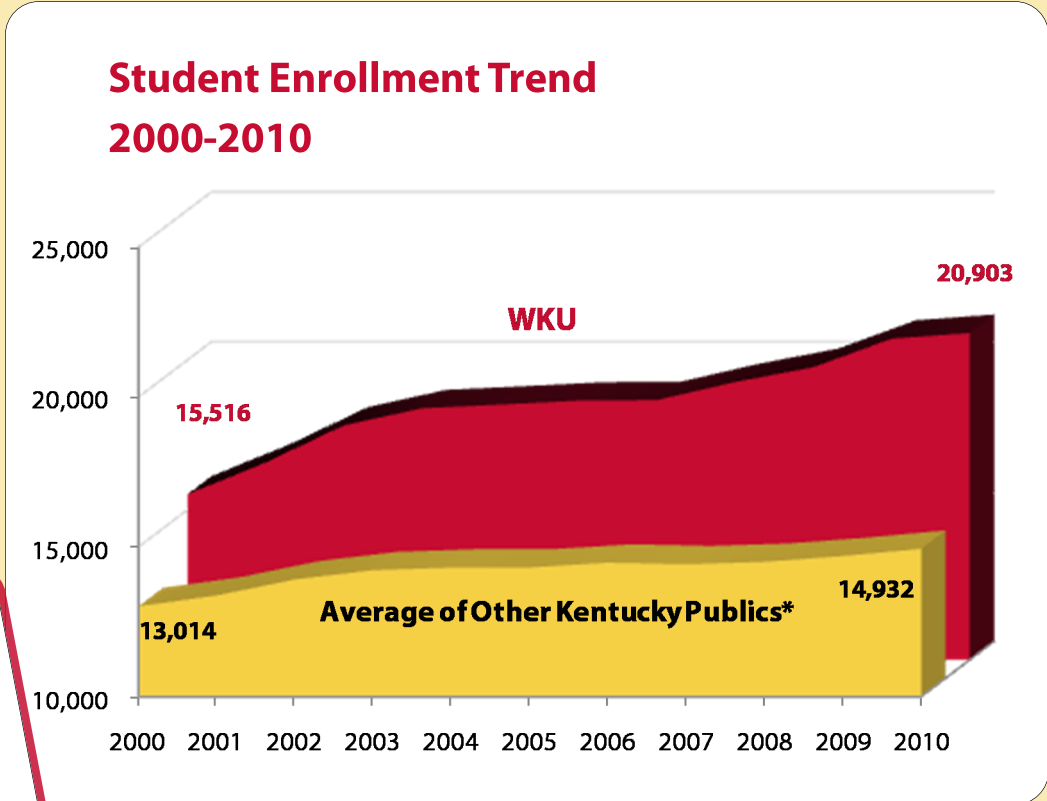
- (1) base salaries,
- (2) benefits,
- (3) market adjustment pools, and
- (4) compression funding.

Faculty Salaries

Strategy 2. Enrich the Student Population

WKU will seek controlled growth while simultaneously raising the quality of the student body. Controlled growth is largely a measure of increased retention of existing students. In recent years, more than half of our enrollment growth has come from increases in retention of baccalaureate and associate degree seekers. Enrollment now exceeds the 2011/12 target of 20,000.

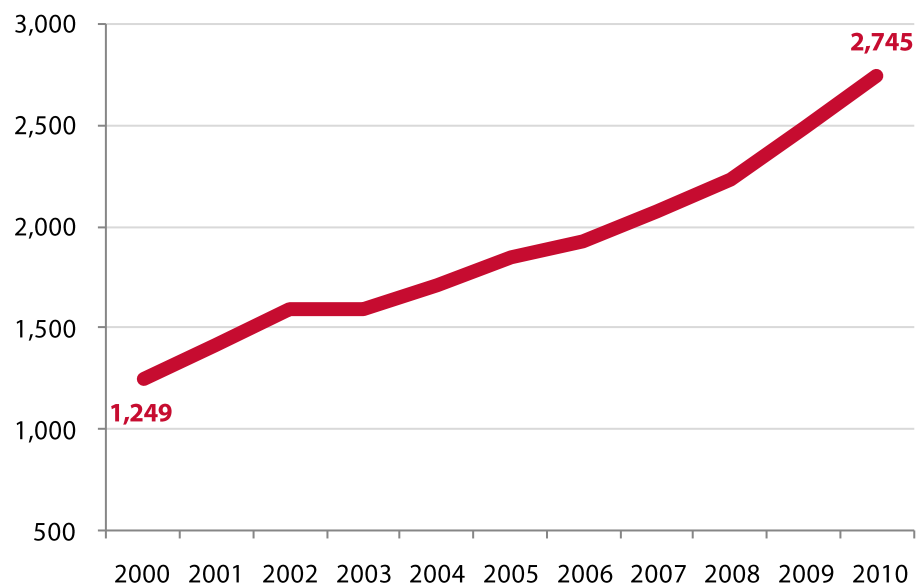
WKU is...
the fastest growing university in Kentucky with enrollment growth of 44% since the Higher Education Reform Act of 1998.



* The Kentucky Public Average was obtained from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. Information presented for 2010 is based on estimated enrollment.

Enrollment Growth

Underrepresented Minority* Enrollment Trend 2000-2010



* Data regarding underrepresented minorities from 2000 to 2009 include students with one of the following race classifications: American Indian/Alaskan, Black, or Hispanic. In 2010, race code categories were modified in accordance with federal and state requirements. The classifications Black or African American, Hispanic, Native American/Alaska Native, as well as students who classified themselves as having two or more races in which one or more race(s) fell into these categories were included.

WKU will strengthen its resolve to recruit qualified students of all ethnicities. These students bring richness and diversity to our campus culture.



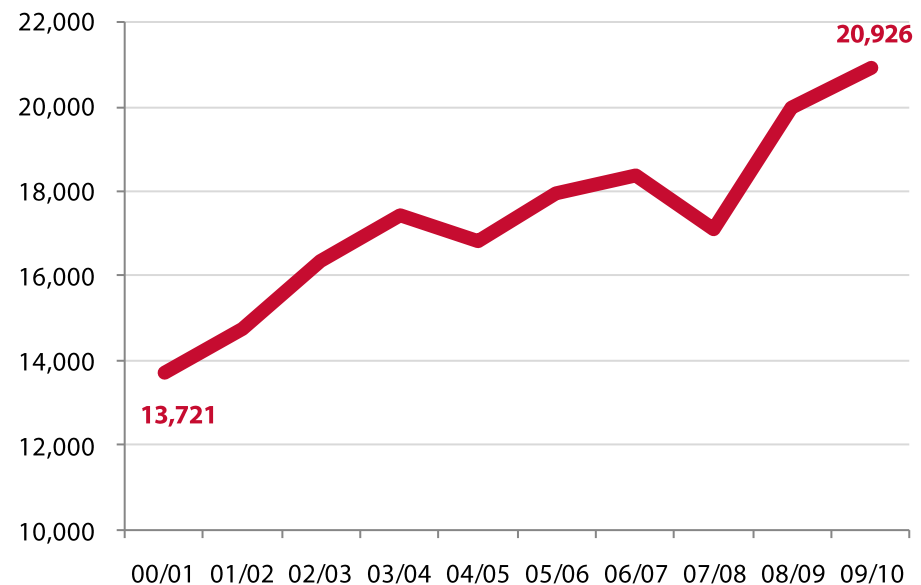
Diversity

Strategy 3. Maximize Student Success

To improve academic quality, WKU will raise its admissions standards over the next five years. Our growing applicant pool shows we can accomplish this objective while contributing to the Commonwealth's goal of educating more Kentuckians.

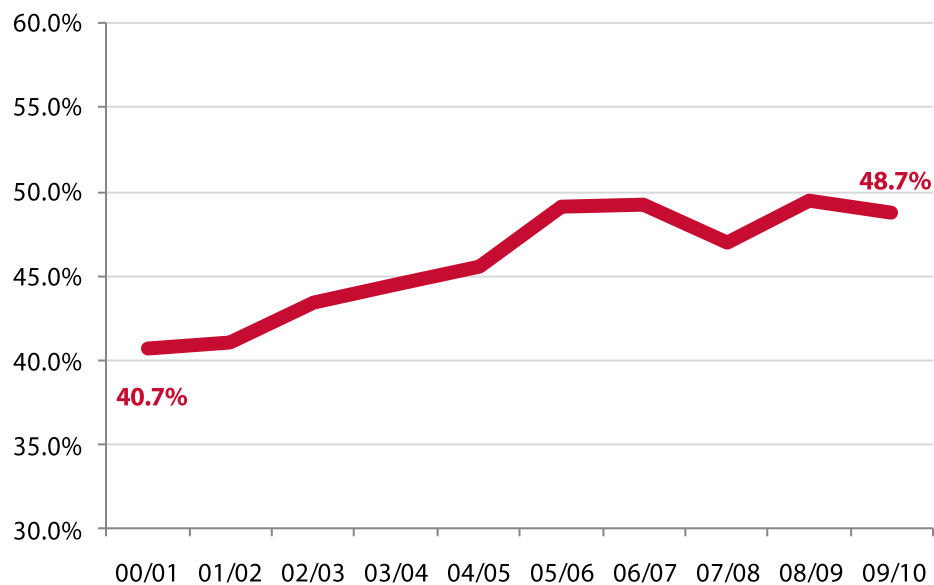
At the same time, WKU will strive to ensure the preparedness and success of those we admit. WKU is committed to working with our Green River Regional Educational Cooperative partners to increase college readiness of students in the region and meet the targets established in Senate Bill 1.

**Total Applicant Pool
Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10**

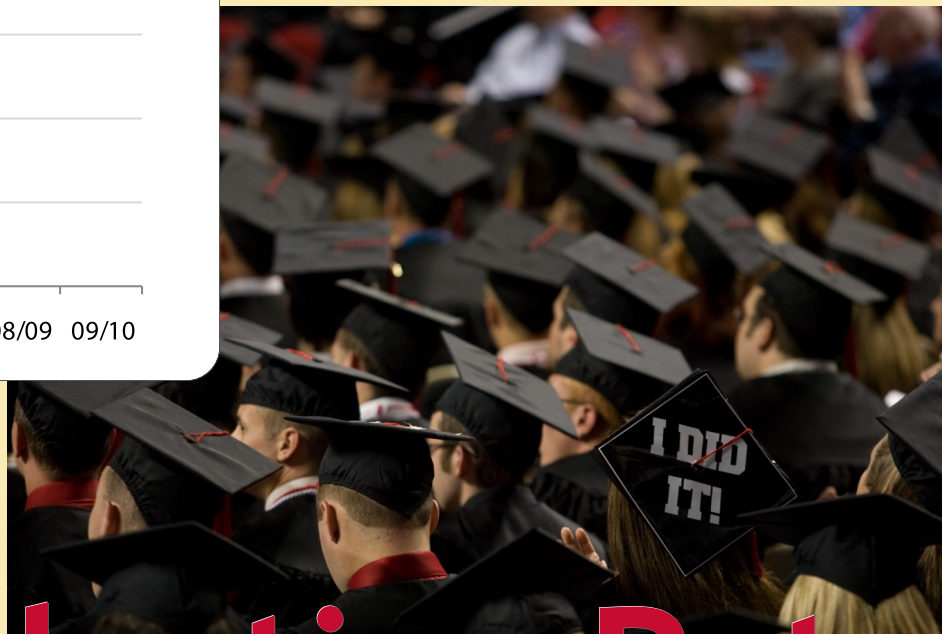


College Entry

Six-Year First-Time Full-Time Baccalaureate Graduation Rate 2000/01-2009/10



Better retention of current students and degree completion are key metrics of academic quality at WKU. We are actively engaged in strategies to retain and graduate those whom we admit.

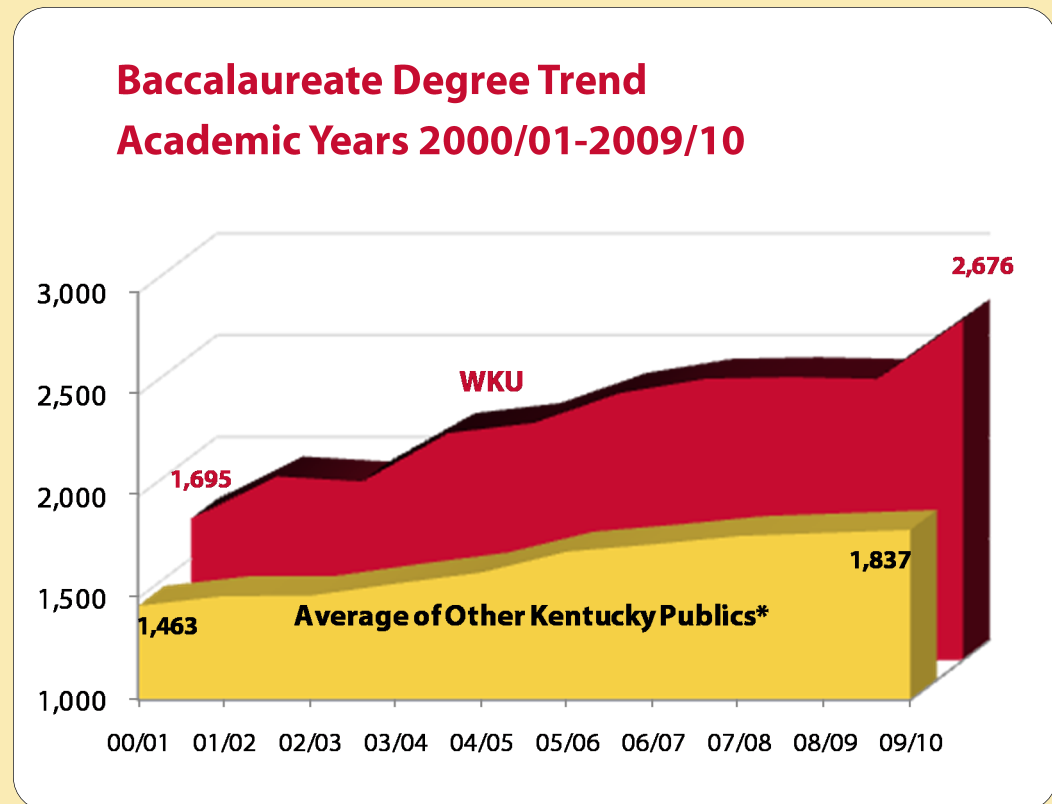


Graduation Rate

Strategy 3. Maximize Student Success *(continued)*

Degree completion has become a primary driver in the Kentucky higher education funding formula. WKU applauds this increased emphasis on student success and will emphasize the number of degrees produced as a key indicator of academic quality and institutional success. WKU has already exceeded our 2011/12 target of 2,478 baccalaureate degrees.

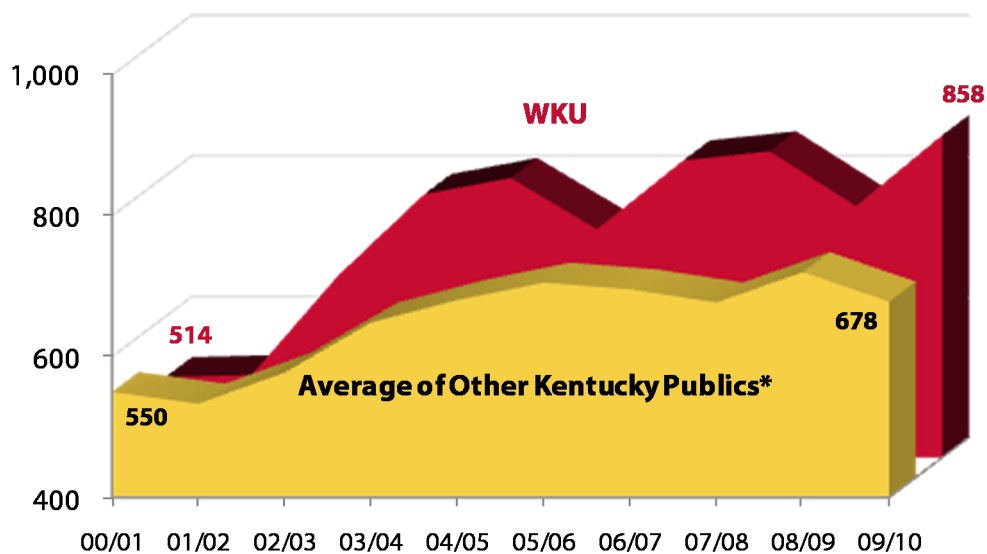
WKU is...
increasing the number of bachelor's degrees awarded. Degree production has increased 58% since AY 2000/01.



* The Kentucky Public Average was obtained from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.

Baccalaureate Degrees

Master's & Specialist Degree Trend Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10



* The Kentucky Public Average was obtained from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education.

“Graduate education is much more than a ‘private good’ that benefits the degree recipients themselves; it is very much a ‘public good’ that benefits the society into which our graduates bring their knowledge and expertise.”

—Gordon Emslie
Provost

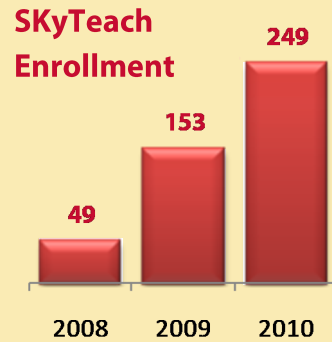


Master's Degrees

Strategy 4. Strengthen Engaged Teaching & Learning

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) disciplines are critical to Kentucky's economic vitality.

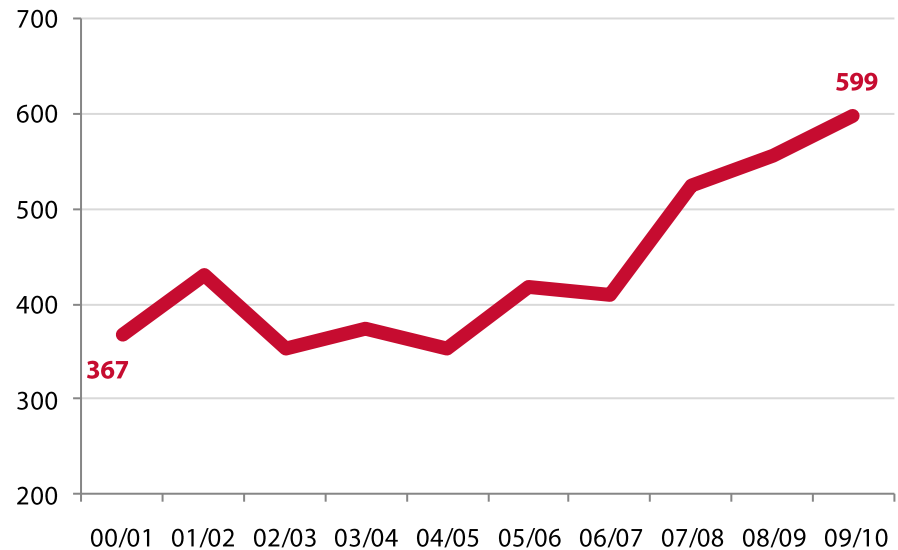
WKU will continue to strengthen its emerging SKyTeach Program designed to increase the quantity and quality of math and science teachers through a specialized curriculum, teaching opportunities, and financial assistance.



SKyTeach enrollment has grown five-fold since its inception in 2008 and has already surpassed its 2011/12 target enrollment.

WKU is...
first among Kentucky
comprehensives
in producing
baccalaureate STEM
degrees.

STEM Baccalaureate Degrees Awarded Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10



STEM Degrees

Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky 2008-2010

Did You Know?

The Gatton Academy has had 33 National Merit Scholars since its inception in 2008.

The Gatton Academy was named to *Newsweek's* list of 20 Public Elite High Schools.

The average ACT of Gatton Academy Seniors in 2010 was 31.

Over 70% of Gatton Academy graduates stay in the Commonwealth to pursue their baccalaureate degree. Of those, almost half continue studies with WKU.



WKU is...
the new international headquarters of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC).

WKU is a leader in enriching the lives of academically gifted youth in Kentucky. Celebrating its 30th year, the Center for Gifted Studies at WKU has reached nearly 28,000 young Kentuckians through summer and Saturday programming.

The Gatton Academy opened in 2008 and affords high school juniors and seniors gifted in math and science the opportunity to earn their high school diploma while earning college credit.

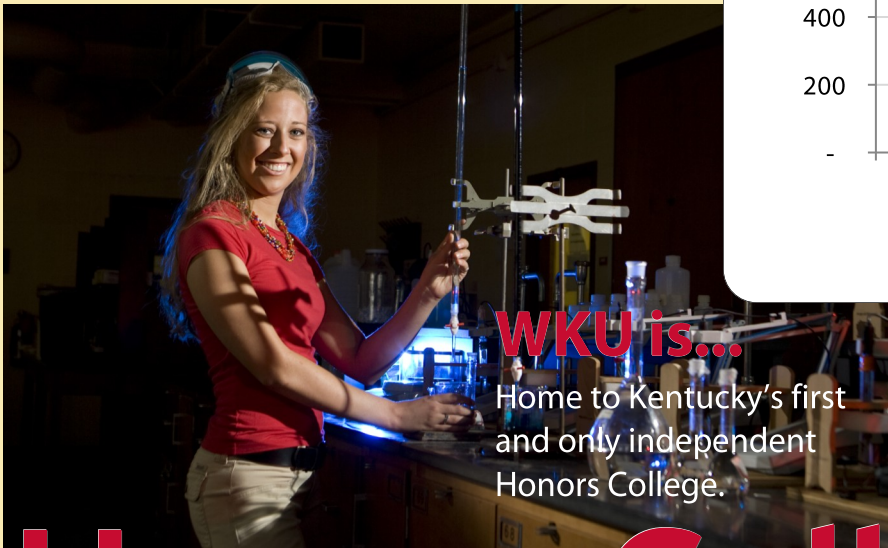
“When we have the opportunity to seize the world stage in a priority discipline we pursue it, and we pursue it with passion.”

—Gary A. Ransdell
President

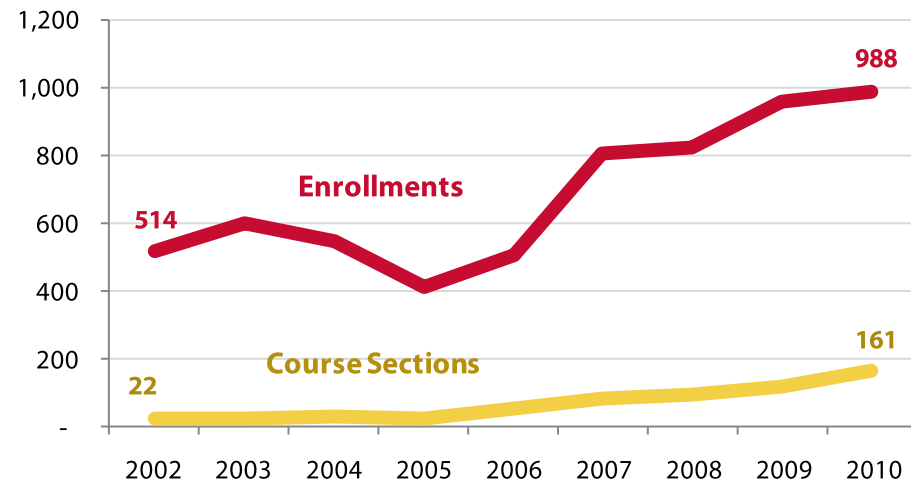
Advanced Studies

Strategy 5. Expand the Honors College

The goal of WKU's Honors College is to set the pace for academic quality in Kentucky. Quality is enhanced across the campus when an increasing number of outstanding students qualify for, are accepted into, enroll in and complete a degree from the Honors College. WKU is on track to reach its target of 1,200 students in the Honors College by 2011/12.



Honors College Enrollment & Sections Offered 2002-2010*



* Prior to 2002, a tracking mechanism had not been established to distinguish active Honors students from inactive participants.

Honors College

Honors College Profile

First Time Freshman Academic Profile

Freshmen in Top 25% of High School Class	92%
Average ACT	29
Average HS GPA	3.8
Acceptance Rate	62%

Persistence and Graduation

Freshman One-Year Retention Rate	94%
Six-Year Baccalaureate Graduation Rate	79%

Class Size

Percent of Classes Under 20	53%
Percent of Classes Over 50	0%

Academic quality measures in the Honors College will rival or exceed those found in Kentucky's most prestigious private colleges. The Honors College will be charged with implementing a 16-hour core curriculum and an Honors Baccalaureate degree by 2011/12.

WKU has...

increased the number of Honors participants nearly two-fold since 2002, with almost a thousand Honors Participants in 2010.

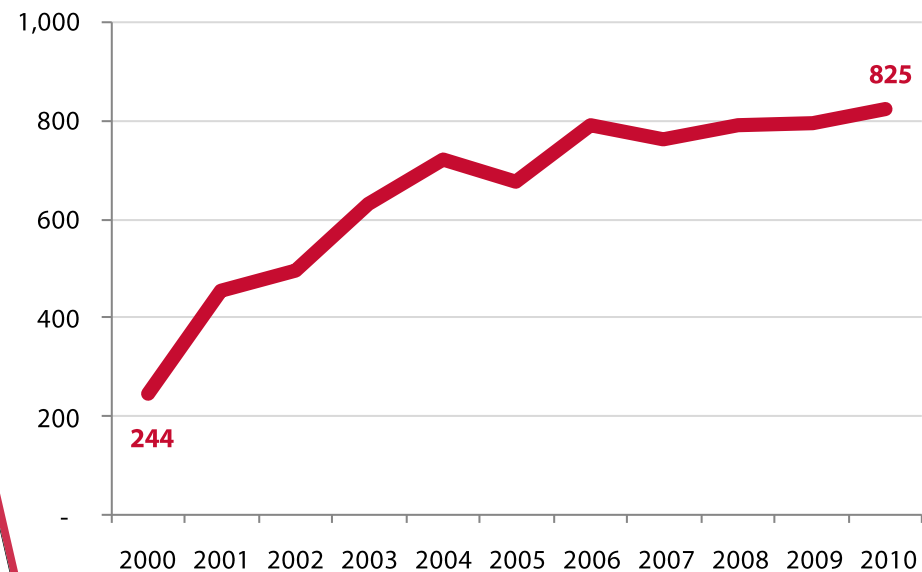
Honors Profile

Strategy 6. Internationalize WKU

Internationalization of the WKU experience is critical to the achievement of the University's vision. WKU will seek ways to increase its international enrollments, enable domestic students to study abroad, engage faculty in research opportunities across the globe, and establish partnerships with universities in other nations.

WKU is...
a global campus,
with over 50
countries
represented among
the student body.

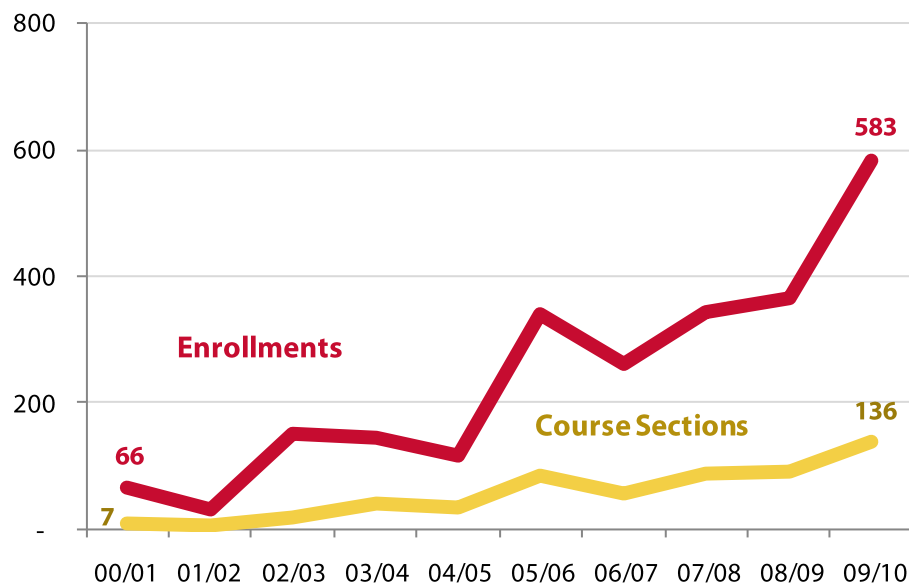
International Student Enrollment*
2000-2010



* For the purpose of this metric, an international student is defined as a student who is not a citizen of the United States.

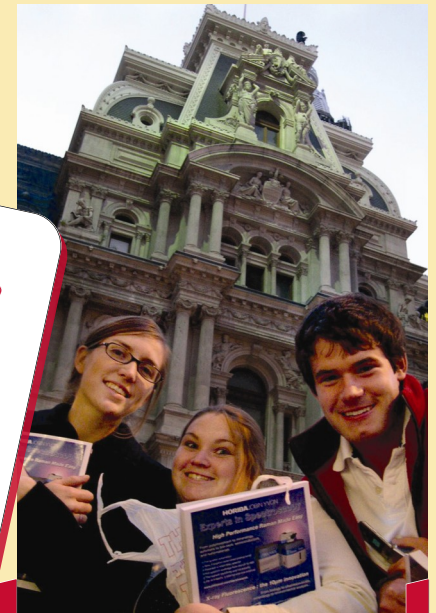
International Students

Study Abroad Enrollment and Sections Offered Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10



WKU needs to embrace curricular integration of its global programming through expanded study abroad offerings and increased focus on globalization. WKU is on track to achieve the 2011/12 target of 600 enrollments in Study Abroad.

WKU has...
over 100 international partnerships and 160 faculty with international teaching or research experience.



Study Abroad

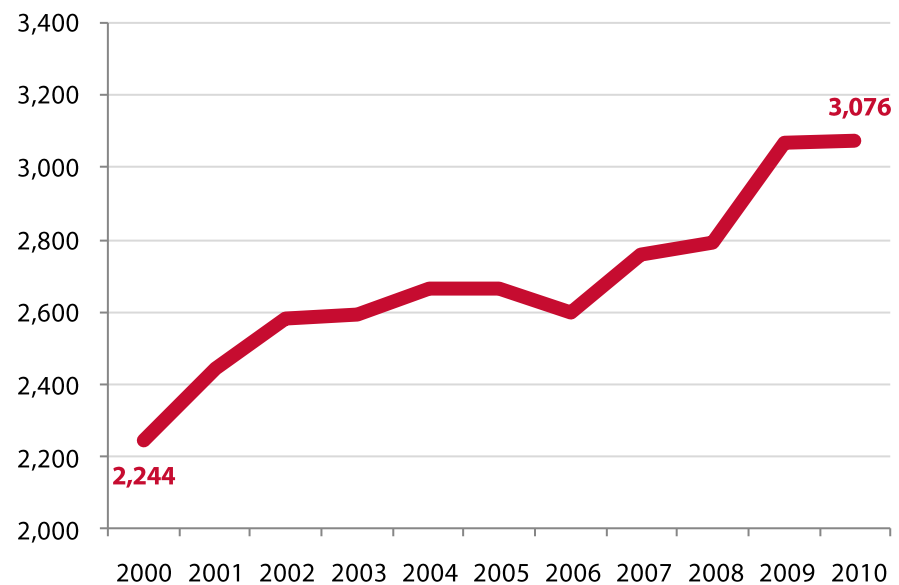
Strategy 7. Expand Graduate Education

Graduate Studies must remain a priority in the improvement of academic quality at WKU. Strong graduate programs enhance institutional quality, enrich the undergraduate experience, and synergize the research, creative and scholarly activities of the faculty and staff.

WKU has...

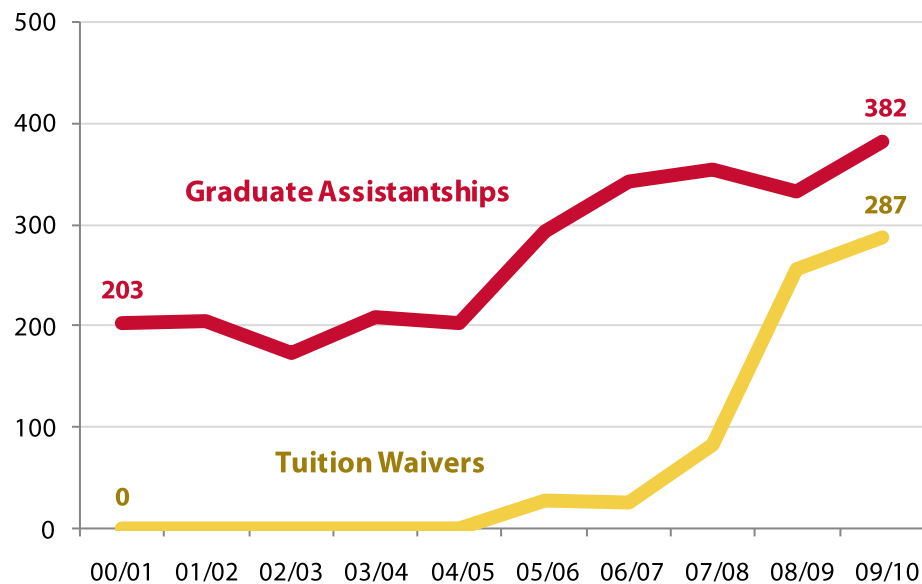
more than 120 students enrolled in the EdD program in Educational Leadership. The first EdD candidates will graduate in May 2011.

**Graduate Enrollment Trend
2000-2010**



Graduate Students

Graduate Assistantships & Tuition Waivers Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10



As they face the future, our students' successes depend on excellent, relevant and forward-looking graduate programs. More thoughtful recruitment strategies have been employed and funding for graduate assistantships and tuition scholarships has been enhanced. The 2011/12 target of 300 assistantships has been reached.



Graduate Assistantships





Strategic Goal 2.

Create a sustainable and efficient environment that facilitates the academic mission.

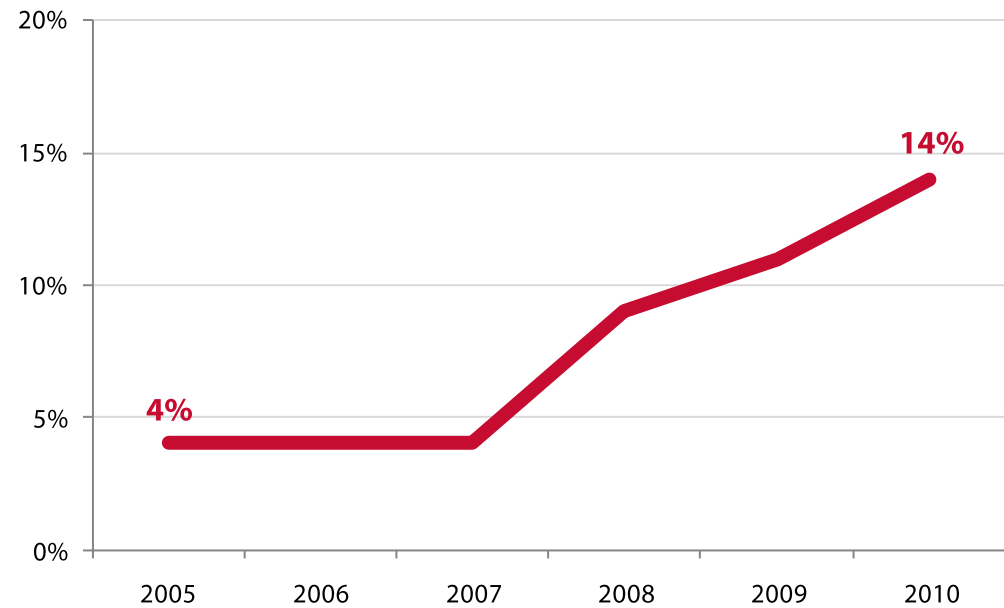
WKU students, faculty, and staff recognize the role that a university must play in serving as a model for environmental stewardship and in conserving our limited natural and fiscal resources. The University Sustainability Committee is leading the way in modeling sustainability in WKU's operations and services and promoting education for sustainability as a university core value.

Strategy 1. Advance Sustainability

WKU will strive to contribute to a healthy environment, grow in ways that are sustainable, and conserve energy and other consumable commodities.



**% of Total Solid Waste Recycled or Diverted
2005-2010***



* Information is not available prior to 2005.

Sustainability

Princeton Review "Green College"

WKU was listed in The Princeton Review's Guide to 286 Green Colleges

Green Facts About WKU:

% food budget spent on local/organic food	10%
Available transportation alternatives <i>(universal access transit pass, restricted parking, bikeshare/rent, guaranteed ride)</i>	✓
School has formal sustainability committee	✓
New construction must be LEED certified or comparable third-party rating system	✓
Environmental studies degree available	✓
Public Green House Gas (GHG) inventory plan	✓
School employs a sustainability officer	✓
% school cleaning products that are green-certified	90%
% school grounds maintained organically	90%

WKU's commitment to sustainability, whether demonstrated in campus operations or in educational programs, will help to ensure that our graduates are prepared to address the complicated environmental, social, and economic issues faced today.

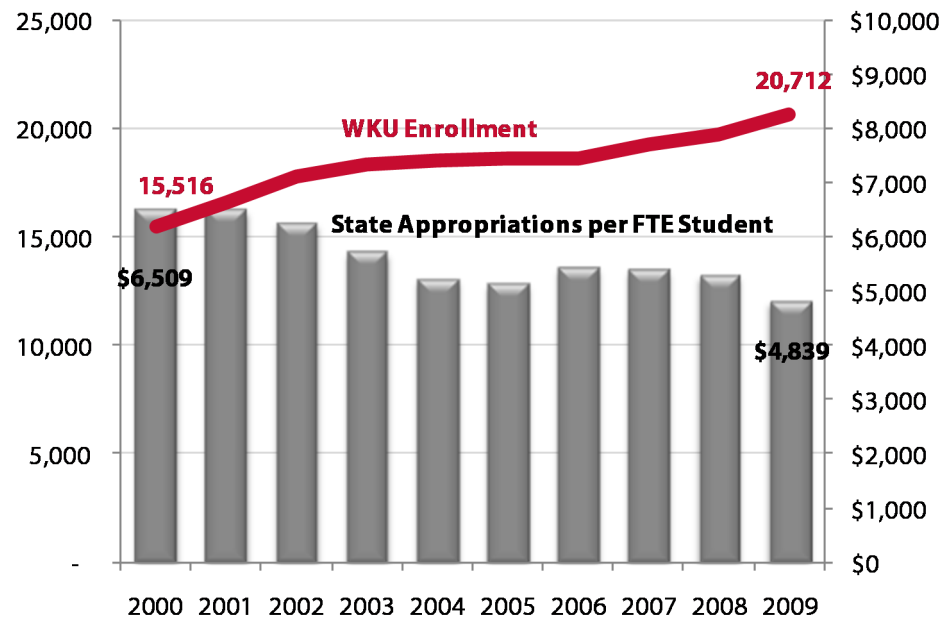


Sustainability

Strategy 2. Operate Efficiently

A priority for WKU is to operate as efficiently as possible. WKU must seek every opportunity to reduce spending and overhead.

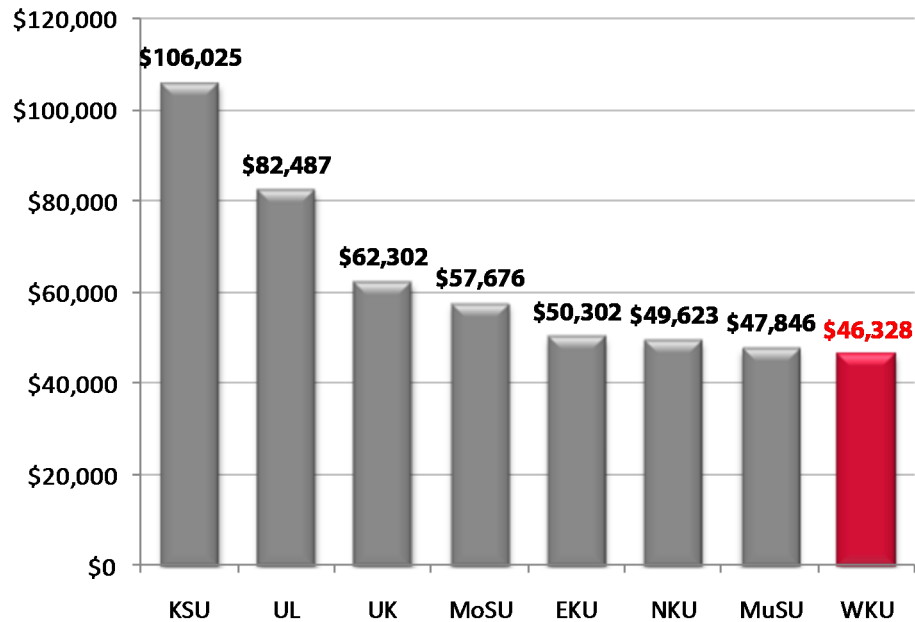
State Appropriations per FTE Compared to WKU Enrollment Fiscal Years 2000-2009*



**Information obtained from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. Appropriations are in constant \$.*

Best Value

Cost Per Degree* Based on 2008 Graduation Rate Data



**Cost per degree is defined by collegemeasures.org as a measure of spending on direct educational costs per degree. Total education and related expenses for all students are divided by the number of degrees awarded in a given year.*

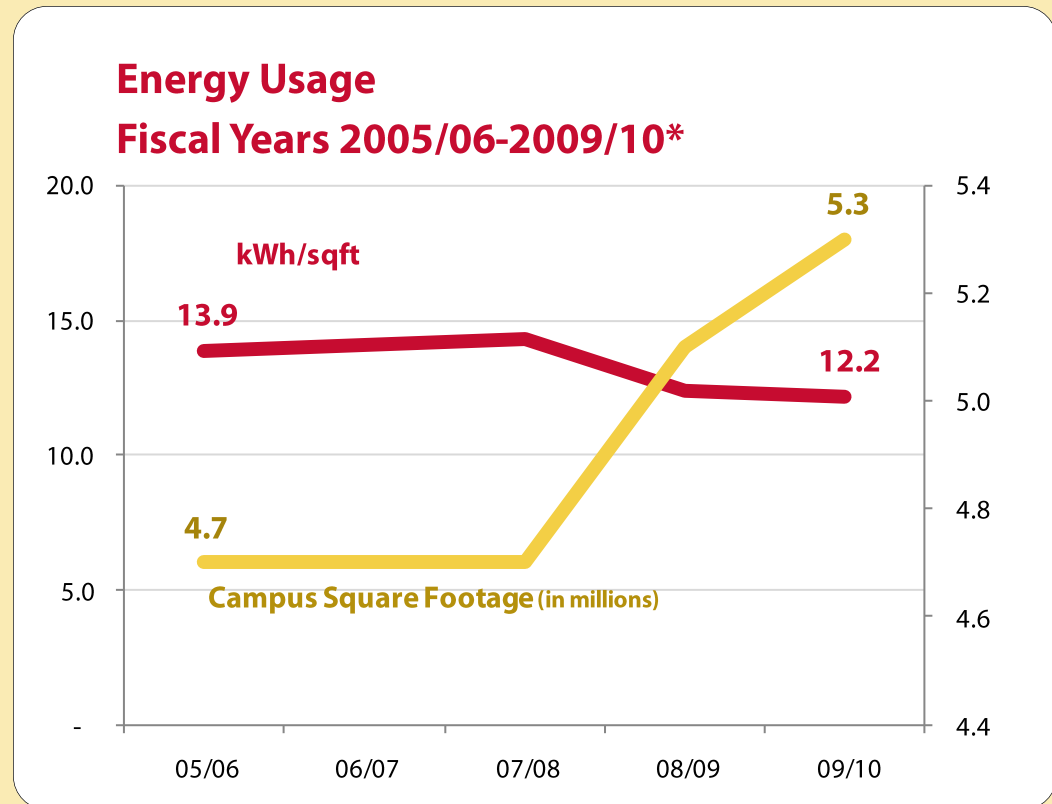
WKU has grown its enrollment more than any other Kentucky campus and is educating those students with less state funding. Investments of \$1.8 million and \$1.2 million, respectively, over the last two years have been made in additional faculty positions and added class sections to accommodate enrollment growth over that time. Enrollment growth has also enabled WKU to address some of its mandated budget reductions without cutting critical services to students, faculty, and staff.

Best Value

Strategy 2. Operate Efficiently *(continued)*

A fundamental goal is to conserve enough energy to at least offset the rising cost of utilities and to convert from a coal-fueled campus to predominate use of natural gas.

WKU is...
using the same amount of energy as in 2005, while supporting 12% more campus square footage.

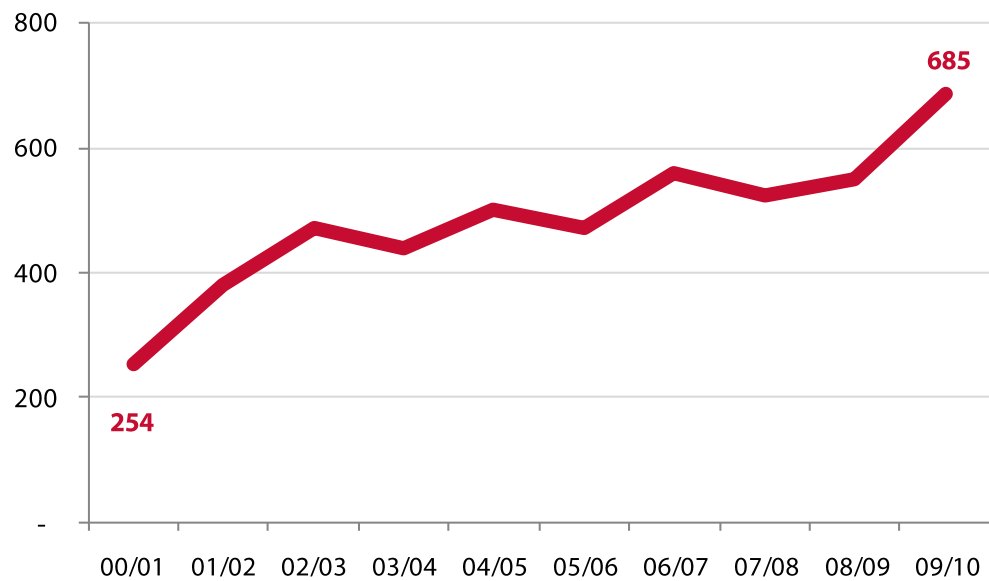


* Information is not available prior to 2005.

Energy Usage

Strategy 3. Create an Efficient Organizational Structure

**KCTCS First-Time Transfers
Academic Years 2000/01-2009/10**



Growth in distance learning and our regional campuses are critical to fulfilling WKU's mission to promote the economic vitality and relevancy of communities in our service area. Similarly, ensuring seamless transfer of students and credits from KCTCS is essential to meeting the needs of students across the region.

WKU has...
nearly doubled the number of students served by its regional campuses, with over 5,000 students served in 2010.

Seamless Access



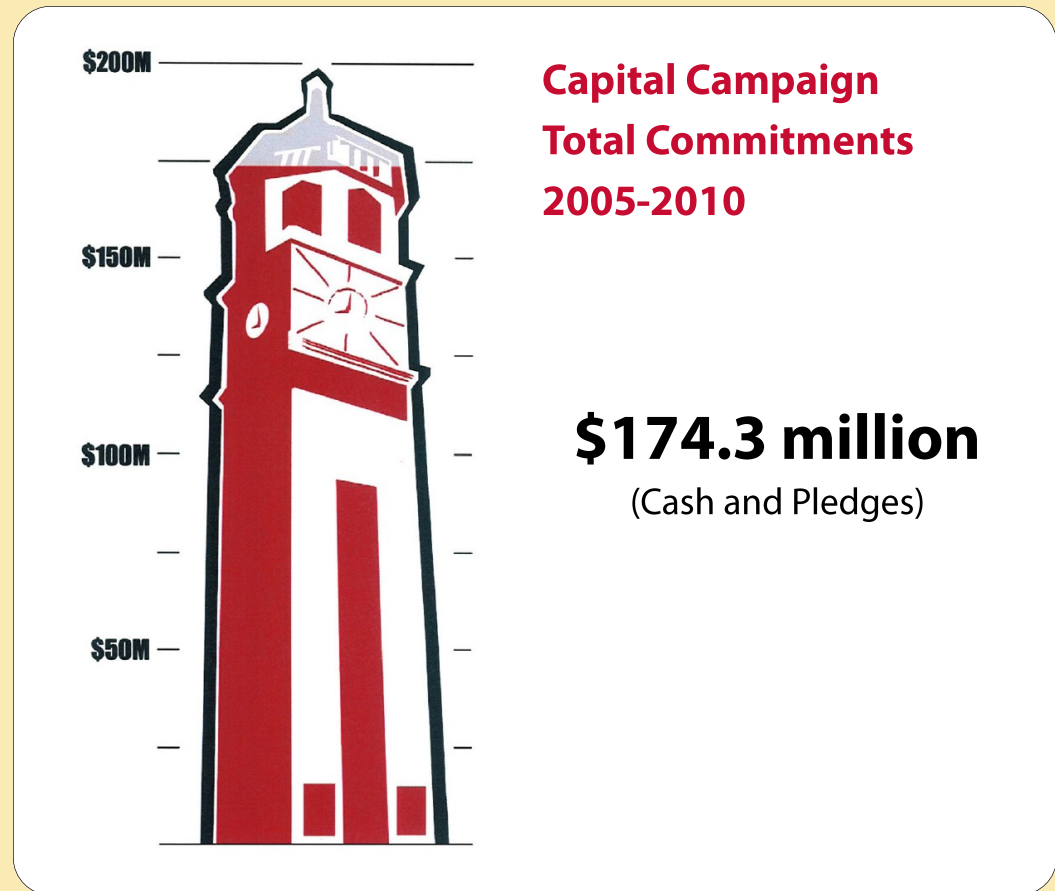
Strategic Goal 3.

Improve the institutional capacity for teaching and learning.

WKU's academic quality is undergirded by its capacity to provide essential facilities and donor support critical to the teaching and learning mission. Through an aggressive capital campaign and ongoing physical transformation of the WKU campuses, the University is ensuring that it remains in a strong position to fulfill its mission and meet the needs of students, faculty, staff and the region in the 21st century.

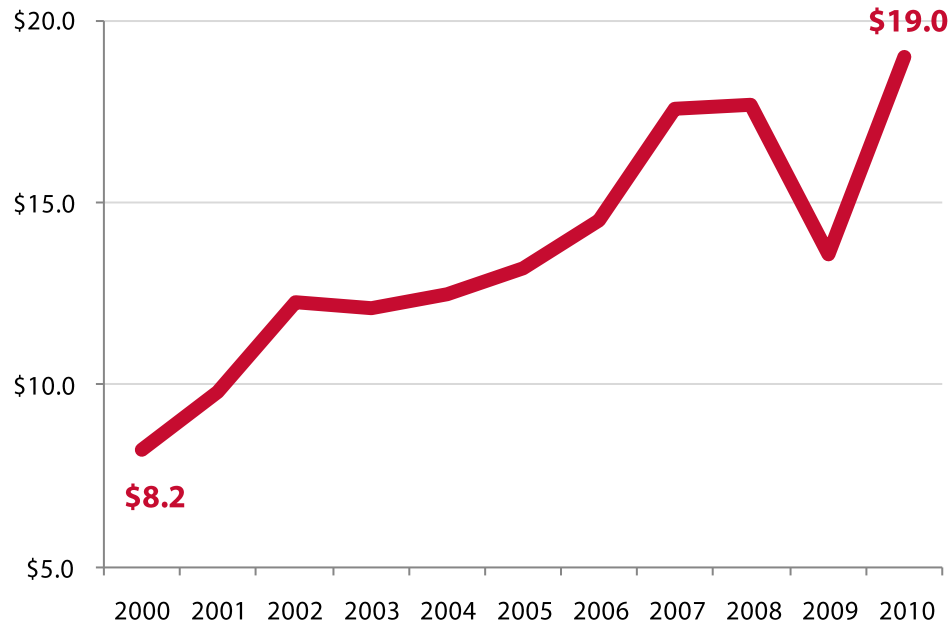
Strategy 1. Generate Enduring Support for Institutional Priorities

WKU will complete its \$200 million capital campaign, "A New Century of Spirit," in 2012. Much of the goal has been achieved, with \$174.3 million in new gifts of pledges in hand. Most of these gifts will be for endowed faculty positions and scholarships, essential elements which strengthen academic quality.



Institutional Capacity

**Annual Private Gift Support
2000-2010 (in millions)**

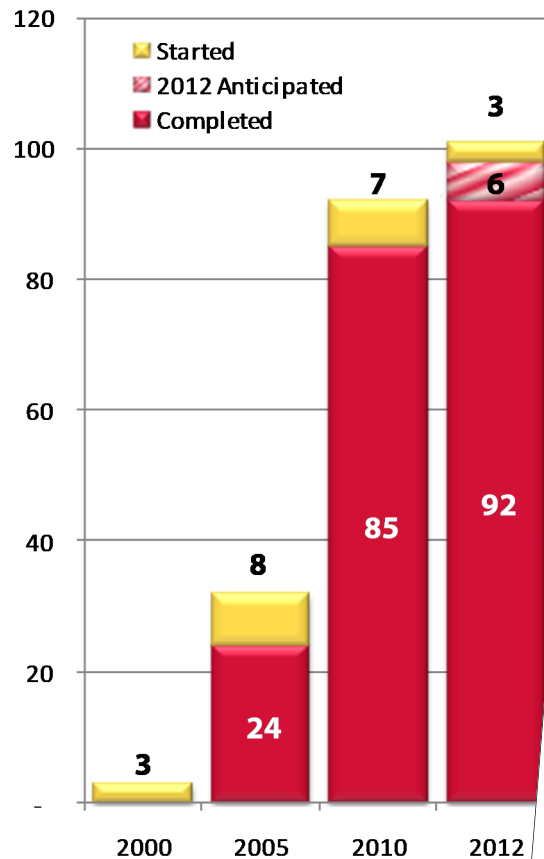


Institutional Capacity

Strategy 2. Continue Campus Transformation

Capital Construction Projects

The table at right represents the number of capital projects completed over time. By 2012, it is anticipated that 101 projects will be complete or in the works, with an additional 17 projects planned.



WKU has...
invested a half billion federal, state, auxiliary and private dollars in capital construction since 1997.



Capital Construction



Business Plan

Objectives, Strategies, and Performance Metrics

This business plan takes stock of WKU's current strategic position as we enter the 2010-12 biennium, and provides both guidance and flexibility to the institution in an uncertain economic environment. Over the next year, the University will engage in a comprehensive planning process that will yield an aggressive and specific five year strategic plan for 2012-2017. This strategic plan will identify specific strategies, performance metrics and targets to guide WKU's future and its role in supporting the educational and economic priorities of the Commonwealth.

Strategic Goal 1. Enhance academic quality and the WKU Experience for all students.

Objectives	Strategies	Performance Metrics
1. Invest in faculty and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase base salaries. b. Ensure competitiveness in benefits. c. Address market and compression issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of full-time faculty Salary level relative to benchmarks
2. Enrich the student population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Grow enrollments in a controlled manner. b. Raise the quality of the incoming student class. c. Pursue a comprehensive approach to student diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total enrollment ACT of incoming students
3. Maximize student success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improve college readiness of high school students served by WKU. b. Increase retention and degree completion. c. Enhance the university scholarship portfolio. d. Further scholar development. e. Strengthen University Libraries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readiness of college entrants from AGR Attainment gaps of underrepresented, low income and developmental students Six-year graduation rate Degrees and credentials
4. Strengthen engaged teaching and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expand opportunities for undergraduate research/creative activity. b. Reinforce a global context for teaching and learning. c. Enhance student community and civic engagement. d. Prioritize writing in the disciplines. e. Pursue interdisciplinary activities and programs. f. Strengthen the SKyTeach program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEM+H degrees New teacher excellence
5. Grow the Honors College.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase Honors College student participation. b. Raise the academic profile of the Honors College. c. Implement new Honors curricula and degrees. d. Create and fill Honors College faculty positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honors College enrollment ACT of Honors College students Honors faculty positions
6. Internationalize the WKU campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase international enrollments. b. Encourage and enable domestic students to study abroad. c. Establish a broad network of relevant international partnerships. d. Bring international faculty to WKU. e. Engage faculty in international research and teaching experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International student enrollment Number of partnerships Number of faculty with international teaching or research experience
7. Expand graduate education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enhance the portfolio of graduate offerings. b. Increase graduate enrollments. c. Enhance funding capacity in graduate education. d. Pursue graduate professional degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate enrollment Graduate degrees and credentials Number of professional doctorate programs
8. Grow the research and scholarship dimension.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expand the volume of scholarly activity. b. Increase external support for research and scholarly activity. c. Appropriately recognize and reward research and scholarly activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External R&D expenditures

Strategic Goal 2. Create a sustainable and efficient environment that facilitates the academic mission.

Objectives	Strategies	Performance Metrics
1. Advance principles of Education for Sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conserve energy and other consumable commodities. b. Model stewardship and sustainability in campus operations. c. Embed sustainability themes in learning opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual campus energy use in kWh/sq ft. Percentage of total solid waste recycled
2. Operate efficiently to preserve critical services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reduce spending and overhead in targeted ways. b. Serve as good stewards of state resources. c. Maximize the academic impact of tuition revenues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of credits taken through distance learning Credits to baccalaureate degree Degrees per \$million E&R expenditures
3. Create an efficient organizational structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reinforce the structure and role of University College. b. Expand the capacity of regional campuses. c. Establish the Commonwealth School within University College. d. Continue to develop outreach programs and services. e. Support seamless transition from KCTCS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of credits earned at regional campuses Degree programs at regional campuses Transfers from KCTCS

Strategic Goal 3. Improve the institutional capacity for teaching and learning.

Objectives	Strategies	Performance Metrics
1. Generate enduring support for institutional priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Successfully complete the New Century of Spirit capital campaign. b. Increase the number of endowed faculty positions. c. Increase the number of endowed scholarships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total campaign dollars raised Number of endowed professorships Number of endowed scholarships
2. Continue the physical transformation of WKU campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Complete capital projects currently underway. b. Address deferred maintenance needs. c. Obtain maintenance and operations funding for new buildings. d. Seek revenue streams for new projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects designed for LEED certification Capital projects completed in past year



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