Strategic Plan 2000 development

January 4, 2000

This document represents initial discussions on our next five-year strategic plan. The latest discussions were held with three groups on December 7 and 8, 1999. The three major groups are 1) Academic group - 22 faculty; 2) Collegial group - 22 chairs and associate deans; and 3) Administrative group - 20 members - Deans group supplemented with representatives from the vice-presidential areas. Each group independently addressed the questions listed below. The next series of meetings are scheduled for January 18 and 19.

For the next five-year strategic plan we need to analyze the current and projected environmental scan. Then, we need to test the current high priority areas in light of probable conditions to see if we should add or delete from our current priorities. The questions discussed are listed below.

1. From your reading of the current strategic plan, what is missing? Is the current strategic plan sufficiently aspirational?
2. What have been the university's major accomplishments during the past five years?
3. Are these accomplishments aligned with our mission/vision?
4. What are the changes in the environment since the 1994 plan was developed?
5. What major changes in the environment will likely occur during the next five years?
6. What major goals should guide Georgia State's development during the next five years?
7. Who are we, and what do we want to portray?
8. What are the educational attributes or characteristics that enable Georgia State to establish a competitive advantage in relation to other institutions?
9. What are Georgia State's particular strengths in instruction, research, and service?
10. Which external constituencies are (or should be) served by Georgia State?
11. What are we doing now that will be better five years from now?
12. What programs or enablers are necessary to meet our projected clientele's needs?
13. What are the major challenges that need to be addressed in order to meet our aspirations?

Initially, we gave only bullet phrase responses. From this rich array of responses, this narrative is being developed.

Introduction

Georgia State University's Strategic Plan is grounded in the vision for the University System of Georgia, described in "Access to Academic Excellence for the New Millennium," that each campus has a clearly focused and valued mission. This statement of Georgia State University's strategic plan sets forth many of the features that help define the character, strength, complexity, interdependencies and distinctiveness of the University, and it defines Georgia State University's goals and priorities. This document has resulted from conversations among the broad campus community about strengths, aspirations, concerns and values for Georgia State University. Pursuit of an interrelated set of core commitments distinguishes Georgia State University from other institutions of higher education in the University System of Georgia. Georgia State University recognizes that a combination of academic excellence and urban relevance is central to its development and has deliberately and carefully chosen to continue to emphasize a number of features, most of which were listed in the 1995 Strategic Plan:

- a learning-centered academic culture that provides educational opportunities for qualified students, non-traditional as well as traditional;
- adherence in principle and practice to liberal education in arts and sciences as well as in the professional disciplines;
- instruction and pedagogy of high quality, conducted by senior as well as junior faculty;
- selection, design, and implementation of high quality graduate programs that contribute substantially to the intellectual and creative activities of the University;
- expectations that faculty as well as students participate actively in scholarly pursuits, especially those that make contributions through research or professional activities to the
intellectual, cultural, and social well-being of Atlanta and regional, national, and international communities;
• intercultural and international perspectives;
• lifelong learning for its students;
• career development of its students.

The first section of the Strategic Plan addresses Georgia State University's institutional identity and provides environmental changes for 1995 - 2005. The reader is referred to the 1995 plan for details of the University's heritage, constituencies, culture and values, and societal contributions. The second section establishes priorities as well as a number of five-year goals. Accomplishments under the 1995 Strategic Plan are interwoven in the second section.

I. INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY

Mission
Georgia State University intends to meet and surpass the expectations of the citizens of the state by providing educational opportunities for both non-traditional and traditional students, complemented by an array of programs commensurate with its mission as the only urban research university in the state. The overarching goal of all members of the university community is to propel Georgia State University to be the nation's premier state-assisted universities located in an urban setting. This goal can be achieved by pursuing the twin initiatives of EXCELLENCE and DISTINCTIVENESS.

Academic EXCELLENCE is central to Georgia State University's development. This will be accomplished by encouraging, developing and sustaining nationally competitive research, scholarship, and creative activity that generate and advance knowledge and artistic expression, and by maintaining and developing nationally competitive instructional programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Excellence involves building upon the strong undergraduate programs for majors and the strong graduate research and professional programs currently in place, identifying areas of exceptional quality and potential, and expanding and improving the faculty, facilities, and support services in these targeted areas. In this way the University will become known as a major research institution that offers advanced undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction of the highest quality in carefully selected areas of central educational importance, strong societal need, and high student interest.

Academic DISTINCTIVENESS will be accomplished by the strategic utilization of resources in areas of programmatic strength, and by taking maximum advantage of the urban setting whereby major attention and resources are devoted to issues confronting contemporary life. The approach includes fostering interaction among diverse people around compelling ideas and questions and blending the best of basic and applied inquiry, scholarly and professional pursuits, scientific activity and artistic expression, and academic excellence and social responsibility. Distinctiveness can be achieved by utilizing the Atlanta metropolitan area as an educational resource, developing applied research efforts in both the liberal arts and professional programs, applying scientific activity and artistic expression to the needs of the metropolitan community, and developing campus-community linkages via outreach programs that coordinate the efforts of the University with those of the community. This attention, however, is not confined to Atlanta and its immediate environs. It also has state, national and international dimensions. Georgia State University should become a center for learning about the vast array of issues found in the living laboratory of a metropolitan environment. It should make this knowledge available to scholars around the world, and, through its policy foci, become a model of how an excellent university can properly participate in the examination of and solution to difficult urban, national, and international problems.

This is the vision for Georgia State University. This is what compels a desire to improve continuously the educational environment of the institution. The result is that the university will be an engaged institution that provides a strong learning environment in which scholarship can flourish. Educational opportunities of the highest quality will be tailored to meet the learning needs of the traditional and non-traditional students composing the diverse student body; notable faculty scholarship and creative activity will be nurtured; and the University will be recognized for the distinct roles it plays in the community, the state and the region, and in national and international arenas.

Environmental changes: 1995-2005
Georgia State University is in the midst of a sea change in the composition of its undergraduate student body. In 1995 the university admitted approximately 1,200 first-time freshmen, half of which were in learning support, and whose average SAT score was 1,000 for regularly admitted students. There were no residence halls and no HOPE scholarships paying tuition and fees for students with a high school average of at least B and who maintain a B average in college. The transformation of the undergraduate student body is being driven by a University System of Georgia articulation of entrance requirements that are highest at the four research universities and are to be fully implemented in fall 2001. For fall 1999, we have enrolled 1,800 first-time freshmen, four of five of whom are supported with the HOPE scholarship, half of whom live in residence halls, none of whom are on learning support, and whose average SAT is approximately 1060. Learning support resources have been redirected to provide better student recruitment and retention programs such as Freshman Learning Communities, an Academic Improvement Program, Emerging Leaders Program, an Honors Program, Student Advisement Center, and Presidential Assistants.

Competition is rampant and taking on new forms. With higher freshman entrance requirements for regular admission of at least 20 Carnegie Units in academic courses and a minimum Freshman Index (SAT + 500*HSGPA) of 2500, Georgia State will need to be competitive for the best high school graduates in the state. In addition, there is potentially increased competition for non-traditional students as the University System develops eCore, the Core curriculum delivered through on-line courses. This initiative is part of GLOBE - Georgia Learning On-line for Business and Education. Simultaneously, there will be increased competition for Masters level students, especially in business and education, as more providers enter the Atlanta market through the electronic media. It will be important to devise strategies to attract students to our high quality programs especially when competing with cheaper alternatives.

Standards-based education in K-12 schools represents a powerful option for school reform due to erosion of the Carnegie Unit and the common curriculum as well as significant variation in current grading practices. Numerous local school districts are adopting standards and, as a result, many students will soon be entering college expecting a standards-based approach to their courses and curricula. In addition, there is growing resistance nationally to the use of SAT in admission decisions. The traditional system of course credits and grade-point-averages do not guarantee that transfer students bring sufficient understanding of a subject. Nor do faculty and administrators understand how to address the volatility in the student population, a dynamic intensified by the new competition for online and distributed learning. It will be important to devise strategies to attract students to our high quality programs especially when competing with cheaper alternatives.

Georgia State is adjusting to the conversion from a quarter calendar to a semester one that occurred in fall 1998. This conversion caused a significant reduction in the number of student credit hours generated. In particular, students signed up for one fewer credit on average. Part-time students, who are approximately 45% of the student body, have particular difficulty in scheduling more than two courses per semester. Full-time students are gradually adjusting to taking five semester courses in place of three quarter courses. Faculty members are also slowly adjusting to the pace of the semester system and recognizing that a three-hour semester course for 15 weeks requires less of a student than a five-hour quarter course for 10 weeks. This conversion requires a review of the three-hour course as the university norm.

There has been a shift in faculty composition, especially in those responsible for core courses. With a rapid increase in the number of freshmen students, the number of part-time instructors (PTIs) increased dramatically from FY 97 to FY 99. This trend was reversed in FY 00 when a large number of PTI positions were converted to non-tenure track (NTT) positions - visiting instructors and visiting lecturers. This conversion is an interim step until we achieve stable enrollments. Then, we will convert some of the NTT positions to tenure track positions. Another possibility that will require planning is a potential modification of retirement rules that presently have significant penalties for retirement before 30 years of service (a loss of 7% for each year short of 30 years.)

Funding trends have been very positive over the past five years, especially for faculty and staff salaries that have had average raises of 28% in this time period. The total budget of the university has risen from $235.8 million in FY 96 to $383.0 million in FY 00; the General Operations budget has increased from $188.7 million to $267.2 million, a 41.6% increase, in the same time period. These increases occurred while the university coped with state-mandated redirection. In addition, for FY 99 and FY 00, there have been revenue shortfalls in tuition as a result of fewer credit hours
being produced under the semester calendar system. Flat state and tuition revenue budgets for the next five years are anticipated with no more than cost of living increases. Before full recovery from conversion from a quarter calendar to a semester calendar, there will be a challenge to maintain enrollments and credit hours (and hence tuition dollars) after the higher 2001 admission requirements are implemented.

Grant and contract support for scholarship at Georgia State has been increasing and a goal is to continue its increase at 15% per year. Faculty members are increasingly comfortable with the recognition of Georgia State as a research institution. The University System recognized Georgia State as one of its four research universities in 1996 and the goal of qualifying for Carnegie Research II classification was surpassed in FY 1997. With the proposed changes in Carnegie Classifications scheduled for 2000, Georgia State will be one of the top tier institutions in the Research/Doctoral I category.

A comprehensive campaign with a goal of $75 million is underway with a scheduled completion date of December 2000. As of December 1999, over $70 million has been received or pledged. Private giving is increasingly important for public assisted universities. An objective of the campaign is to double annual contributions to the university from the pre-campaign level of $6 million. In addition, increased and sustained contact with alumni should lead to better recognition of the many strong university programs and continued generous support. Private support has become necessary to secure state funding for buildings. For example, the state contributed approximately $29 million towards a $45 million Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center. In order to secure Regents support for a new $68 million Teaching Laboratory building, it will be necessary to raise at least $23 million in private support. Private support is also crucial for scholarships and fellowships to attract and retain excellent undergraduate and graduate students. Similarly, to recruit and retain high quality faculty, it is increasingly important to have endowed professorships and chairs.

Before the Olympic games of summer 1996, Georgia State University was a totally commuting campus. After housing Olympic athletes, the University Village opened in fall 1996 with rooms to accommodate 2,000 students. The Olympic games also stimulated redevelopment of downtown Atlanta. Georgia State will benefit from continuing partnership with various groups as the city becomes transformed into a 7X24 vibrant community. The new Student Center opened in March 1998 and a Recreation Center will be completed in summer 2001. Nations Bank donated the Commerce Building in December 1997 and four of the floors are being renovated to accommodate Information Systems & Technology. A new classroom building, the Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center, is scheduled to open in spring 2002. The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies should be located in the Wachovia building by late 2001. By the end of the next five years, a planned Research laboratory building should be completed and a Teaching laboratory building should be in the final planning stages. The Alpharetta Center will be opened in late spring 2000, primarily to replace the leased space for the North Metro Center at Dunwoody. The Board of Regents approved a Master Plan for the campus in January 1999. Among other items, it envisions a Main Street motif and additional student housing, especially for married and graduate students.

Higher education is facing a number of Megatrends including an emerging global economy that will give rise to a global community characterized by increased communications across national borders in education as well as in business, law, sciences, the arts, and entertainment. There has been an enormous global increase in foreign investment in Georgia. One in seven jobs in the U.S. involve international trade and business. Georgia State is the only public comprehensive research institution in the center of perhaps the most dynamic city in the U.S. In addition to a significantly increased international dimension to Atlanta, Georgia has recently been in second place in the U.S. with respect to hiring high tech workers and has moved into the top ten of all states in total high tech employees. Also, there was a recent forecast about Atlanta adding more jobs than any other U.S. city over the next 25 years.

Technology will penetrate even deeper into our daily lives. Information increasingly will become the capital of economic activity. The ability to locate, receive, analyze, and transmit information in oral, written, and numeric form will be crucial. The rate of change will accelerate. Those who have learned how to learn are best equipped to capitalize on such an environment. The Internet is unlike other technology advances, and is even more important than the introduction of personal computers. As Business Week stated in their special issue (Oct. 4, 1999) on The Internet Age: "The power to navigate the world at the click of a mouse is a force that is transforming our lives
like none before.” In the next five years most of our students will have high-speed access to the Internet and we need to explicitly factor that into our strategic planning. Soon we will be enrolling the first generation of students to take the Internet for granted. These students will never have known a world without computers. This situation offers both a great competitive threat and a great potential asset.

A backbone information network, initiated in FY 97, will be completed in FY 01. This network affords high-speed access to global information resources as well as rapid local communication. The network also delivers the statewide Virtual Library resources and services, GALILEO and GIL, which have substantially increased the quality and quantity of information resources available to GSU students and faculty. Another significant challenge is to provide a sufficient number of classrooms that are equipped with computer access for faculty and students. An even greater challenge is to provide personnel to support technology maintenance and training. In the mid-twentieth century, railroads considered themselves to be in the railroad business, though they were in fact only one of several contenders for the nation’s transportation business. Similarly, universities such as Georgia State must recognize that they are competing in a market for baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate degrees with for-profit providers of postsecondary education. These institutions are competing not so much on the basis of price as on convenience, service, and even the quality of teaching. One of the great challenges of the next five years will be the appropriateness of and extent to which we are willing and able to provide any time, anywhere quality education with a much greater emphasis on reliable support services for students and faculty. Faculty who can utilize instructional technology will be increasingly important. However, it may be more important to differentiate our programs from those of our competitors by using a combination of face-to-face and on-line learning.

Another Megatrends is increasing demand for accountability on higher education. This is manifested nationally with many states moving to performance-based budgeting. Regional accreditation agencies and major disciplinary accreditation organizations such as AACSB and NCATE are placing significant emphasis on student learning outcomes and use of data gathered to improve processes and outcomes. Post tenure review has been required in over 35 state systems, including the University System of Georgia. Academic program review will be required of all institutions in Georgia by fall 2000. Georgia State initiated academic program review in 1993, pre- and post-tenure reviews (cumulative review of tenured faculty) in spring 1995, and administrative and support unit assessment in 1998. Increased attention is being given to assessment of learning outcomes for both general education and the majors. It is in our interest to ensure that rigor and coherence characterize our students’ learning experience not just in the major but also in our general education program.

II. GOALS AND PRIORITIES

A vision is to provide an academic environment conducive to effective and inspired teaching, learning, and scholarship and to be recognized as the national leading state-assisted research university located in an urban setting. This entails having significant state, national, and international roles as well as serving the residents of the metropolitan Atlanta region.

In the twenty-first century, Georgia State University’s curricular and co-curricular activities must prepare students who are critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, and responsible citizens who make ethical choices. Students must be able to present their thoughts well both orally and in writing, develop leadership skills, and work well in teams. They should be scientifically, technologically, culturally, and information literate. Georgia State University must also ensure that students are able to analyze and evaluate important trends in disciplines, comprehend how the world is changing, understand the interconnectedness of knowledge, recognize that there is a blurring of boundaries among disciplines and among nations, and cope with the dynamics of change. A vision for students includes exposure to multiple viewpoints and the free exchange of ideas, an appreciation for diversity among peoples of the nation and around the globe, preparation to utilize information technology, an ability to judge the quality of information, and experience with collaborative learning on campus and in the community. A diverse environment such as that encountered at Georgia State produces a well rounded, better educated, responsible global citizen.

In striving to reach goals in the area of instruction, progress must also be continued in establishing and maintaining outstanding research programs. Selected research efforts -- those that are already competitive nationally and internationally or that demonstrate promise of
becoming so -- will be targeted and supported so that they can maintain their success and reach even higher levels of excellence. The necessity of promoting research derives from the fact that a university becomes great only when it contributes significantly to the advancement of knowledge and when it becomes a source of advanced knowledge that can be used widely for the betterment of life. Moreover, research is an integral part of advanced graduate programs. Further, undergraduate education is enhanced when students have research experiences. Georgia State University's impressive set of professional programs will continue to provide high quality training for professionals in the Atlanta area and the region. Furthermore, in appropriate instances, advanced educational programs will draw students from all parts of the nation and abroad. In all cases the programs will assemble faculties that are capable of providing advanced expertise to outside constituencies, thereby directly promoting the advancement of society. Georgia State is listed in the top 25 largest graduate programs nationally. We must strive to enhance our best graduate programs while enhancing our undergraduate programs and services. To provide an excellent academic experience for its student body, to produce important scholarship, and to serve societal needs, the University has set two strategic initiatives for the next five years:

A. Excellence: Heighten the intellectual environment for scholarship and learning.
B. Distinctiveness: Increase the University's contributions to the regional, national, and global communities.

In order to accomplish the visions, departments, programs, and faculty must remain mindful that being a responsible community member extends beyond disciplinary interests to the interconnected goals of:

- liberal education in all undergraduate programs;
- scholarly activity for all faculty;
- advanced research programs and accomplished professional programs;
- intercultural and international perspectives;
- connections across disciplines and content areas;
- connections between graduate and undergraduate studies;
- opportunities for collaborative research and scholarly interaction among faculty and between faculty and students;
- the exploration and use of new learning methods and technologies;
- assessment of courses, programs and services for the purpose of their continuous improvement;
- collaboration across institutions and between the campus and the community.

Achievement of these interconnected goals will contribute significantly to student learning and an engaged university. A dynamic balance is sought among teaching and learning, research and scholarship, university and community service, and undergraduate and graduate programs.

A. EXCELLENCE: Heighten the intellectual environment for scholarship and learning

A great university requires great students, great faculty, and great facilities. Strong academic and co-curricular programs attract students. Supportive staff and administrative services with reliable physical and technological infrastructures help retain students and faculty. Strong external communications inform alumni, potential students, and other constituents of our accomplishments. The first strategic initiative focuses on the above and the infrastructure that supports teaching, learning, scholarship, and outreach or engagement. This initiative is intended to identify ways in which the intellectual environment for the entire university community can be heightened.

Student recruitment and retention
Georgia State recruits students from all fifty states and over one hundred countries around the world. These include high school graduates, transfer students from two- and four-year programs, working and "returning" students, and graduate and professional students. While the university
attracts students worldwide, the downtown campus, the North Metro Center at Dunwoody (moving to the Alpharetta Center in Spring 2000), and the Gwinnett Center provide access to quality education in particular for residents of the entire metropolitan area.

In Fall 1999, there are 23,500 students (including 1,200 international students with visas) with approximately 30% being in graduate and professional programs. By 2005, there will be 27,000 students with approximately the same ratio in graduate and professional programs. Georgia State will continue to serve both traditional and non-traditional students. At present, approximately 55% of the students attend full-time. The University offers a welcoming academic environment to traditional students as well as working and returning students - 53 percent work full-time and 25 percent work part-time. This composition produces a mature, serious student body with considerable diversity and a high proportion of graduate students. Approximately 6,300 African-American students are currently enrolled at Georgia State University, more than at any other College or University in Georgia. There is a significant metropolitan character to the student body - approximately 85% of the students in the University Village come from the 13-county metro area surrounding Atlanta. Further, the University offers diverse programs that give students a wide range of choices, with courses scheduled in a manner that is convenient to the various student constituents. Thus, Georgia State University accommodates students at all stages of life and makes life-long learning possible.

A set of circumstances now exists that will enable the university to attract a high quality undergraduate student body. While there are and will be more traditional freshmen than in 1995, the university maintains a strong commitment to part-time and non-traditional students. Availability of student residence halls has increasingly made Georgia State an institution of first choice for freshman students. Private developers are being encouraged to build additional student housing, particularly for married students, graduate students and international students. The Physical Master Plan calls for additional varied types of student housing near campus to accommodate 2000 students beyond the 2000 beds available in the Village. Demographics predict an increasing number of high school graduates over the next 10 years - Georgia is projected to have the third highest increase in high school graduates nationally (~24% to 2010.) With an increased emphasis in K-12 on college preparatory programs, there should be more and better prepared students seeking a high quality education. Recruitment efforts have been enhanced significantly over the past five years as Georgia State transitioned from an essentially open admissions' institution to a limited admission, research institution as mandated by the University System new admission requirements that will be fully implemented in 2001. In addition to an increased attention on new freshman students, the Admissions office has focused on transfer students that still compose half of our entering class. At present, only half of new students attend Incept - part of the problem is a small number of available days for Incept due to constraints imposed by the legacy Student Information System programs. A goal is to ensure that all new students come to an Incept that has a stronger academic focus that includes advising and registration. Placement tests in at least English, mathematics, and second languages will be developed as part of Incept.

One of our goals is to increase our national reputation as reflected, for example, by moving to the second quartile in the *U.S. News & World Report* annual rankings. Student selectivity accounts for 15% of an institution’s rating in the *U.S. News & World Report*. This category includes variables of the fraction of freshman applicants that are admitted, the fraction of accepted applicants that enroll, the percentage of incoming freshmen in the top 10 percent of their high school class, and the average SAT score of entering freshmen. Two other student categories are retention rate (20%) and graduation performance (5%). Variables include the percentage of classes with 19 or fewer students, the percentage of classes with 50 or more students, the six-year graduation rate, the freshman retention rate, and the graduation rate relative to a predicted graduation rate measure. Financial resources make up 10% of the rating score. This category includes average education expenses per student.

New students are being aided in their transition to Georgia State through a new centralized Student Advisement Center that assists all freshmen, transfer, and undecided students. This centralized facility is available to all students until they have completed areas A - F of the University System Core curriculum. The Student Advisement Center will be an initial central point of contact for all entering students. Once a student has earned 42 credit hours and has declared a major, advising will be performed in the colleges, with junior and seniors primarily being advised in the departments. A more welcoming environment is being provided through programs such as
the Freshman Learning Communities, Emerging Leaders Program, and the Honors Program. Freshman Learning Communities were successfully piloted for 300 students in fall 1999 - a goal is to include at least half of the freshman class in such communities. In addition, a similar concept may be tried for transfer students - a Transfer Learning Community. Students are being attracted through Presidential Assistantships where students are guaranteed opportunities as paid student assistants in areas related to their majors. Improvement in facilities will be an additional attractant for high quality students. A Recreational Center is scheduled for completion in summer 2001. The Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center is expected to be available for classes in Spring 2002. Recruitment goals are 2000 freshmen, 2000 transfer students, and 1800 graduate and professional students for fall 2000. In addition, another 1800 students will be recruited mid-year. For fall 2005, recruitment goals are 2500 freshmen, 3000 transfer students, and 2500 graduate and professional students. For a campus that serves a large number of part-time students, credit hours generated is an important metric. A goal is to increase the average number of hours enrolled by a student to 10.8 per semester. Prior to semester conversion, students were averaging 11.2 credits per semester. Experience for the three terms under the semester system shows averages of 9.9, 10.0, and 10.2. Improved retention rates is a significant goal for the university. Programs that attracted students to the university should also play a role in retention especially those that provide a vibrant learning community such as the Freshman Learning Communities, Emerging Leaders Program, and the Honors Program. An Academic Intervention Program is in place to assist students that are having academic difficulty. This program requires students to enroll in study skills courses and, in some cases, to meet regularly with staff from the Counseling Center. Also, there is a maximum of 12 credit hours placed on enrollment in specially guided courses for the semester. Additional assistance for students is available through the Student Success Center in the Counseling Center, African American Student Services & Programs, Writing Center, Language Acquisition & Resource Center, Math Assistance Complex & Academic Foundation Learning Center, and many of the core departments provide tutorial support - the Counseling Center has produced a brochure that lists the various tutoring services available. There needs to be better coordination and awareness of the overall services that are available to increase student success.

National studies indicate that student involvement in the university community is a good indicator of potential success in college. The Student Life division is involved in the development of good citizenship via community service and volunteer work, and generally serves as a dynamic laboratory in which students can apply or complement talents they also develop in classrooms. Student development and leadership enhancement occurs through participation in the 250 organizations and intramural recreational activities. Successful sports teams, especially men's and women's basketball, will help develop a sense of community and college spirit among students, staff and faculty. Ways to reflect systematically on the exercise of leadership are being developed through programs such as the Emerging Leaders Program. The academic enterprise will be further strengthened by efforts of both Student Life division and academic departments in building on the rich opportunities for community service by providing students with more occasions to reflect critically on their experiences in service. Moreover, opportunities for service-learning programs that engage students in service that meets unmet community needs while enhancing their academic study, civic skills, and sense of social responsibility will be developed and supported by the university. There are a number of voluntary community service opportunities at Georgia State that are coordinated through the Office of Community Services. Location in downtown Atlanta gives students many possibilities for internships, cooperative education assignments, and other collaborative arrangements with business, fine and performing arts, industry, government, and service agencies while in college. The University participates in a number of outreach and enrichment programs, including several to increase minority participation in the sciences. Career service units provide career counseling and career development, teach job search skills and provide occupational information and work experience to students. The growth of a more traditional undergraduate student body provides the opportunity for the university to increase study-abroad programs. These can be developed in traditional and non-traditional ways. For students who do not need to work, the traditional semester- or year-abroad program opportunities can be expanded. For working students, two- to three-week programs can be developed to link an experience abroad with continued coursework here in Atlanta. For
graduate programs, the study-abroad element of the Executive MBA program can be introduced to broaden the experiences in a number of master- and PhD-level programs. The Presidential Assistantship Program provides an opportunity for undergraduate to work with faculty on research projects. This program is distinctive at Georgia State, giving undergraduates the opportunity of working with senior research faculty and exploring career options. The Rialto Theater, the Downtown High Museum, and the growth of downtown residential living offer university students and faculty opportunities in music, theater, and the arts. The addition of gallery space near the Rialto, the use of the theater for a performance program, the continued programming of music in a variety of venues all will help Georgia State enhance the cultural vitality of central Atlanta.

A goal is to increase the value of graduate assistantships in order to be more competitive for strong students. In addition, the provision of graduate housing on campus downtown would enhance recruitment and add to the liveliness of the downtown. Increased reliability and approachability in services to students is a major goal. At present, there are too many situations where students have difficulties with the admissions process, financial aid, student accounts, being able to register for a complete schedule of courses, academic assistance, or just being treated courteously. At the heart of the problem lies an antiquated and increasingly unreliable student information system coupled with poor coordination among different offices. A major goal is to replace the legacy system of programs with a client server-based Banner system by fall 2002. However, concomitantly, we need to redesign the processes used to serve students. We need a seamless process from initial contact with potential students through matriculation, to graduation, and into alumni status. We must improve significantly the training and respect given to our front-line staff who interact daily with students. Similarly, we need to improve utilization of our classroom space and to provide a schedule that serves the needs of our varied student body.

Programs
Georgia State University will continue to strengthen its academic and administrative and student support service programs in concert with accepted recommendations of its Program Review process. This process will include the University Senate in a review of academic and administrative departments, schools, Centers, Institutes and student support programs. The University has used Academic Program Review to identify resource needs of high quality programs and, since 1995, has targeted funds from University System initiatives and internal redirection to advance program quality in reviewed departments. Investments in improving the quality of academic programs have paid off. For example, in 1999, US News and World Report ranked the Robinson College of Business undergraduate and graduate programs among the top tier of universities, including the 2nd ranked undergraduate program in insurance, the 21st in management, and the 6th ranked part-time MBA program. The effort to improve the quality of support service to faculty and students has been a critical focus within the university. The establishment of the Administrative & Support Unit Assessment Process has helped improve the quality of support offered by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. Similar efforts are underway now in Human Resources and the Office of the Provost. A small representative committee whose members come from the principal areas of the University has developed this process as a pilot. Its work is now being folded into the review processes of the University Senate.

Academic programs are at the heart of a university and are the attractant for faculty and students. To maintain vibrancy and currency of programs, academic program review was initiated in 1994 and is being continuously improved. Its successful implementation is due in large part to its strong linkage with strategic planning and budget allocations. Departments are encouraged to be actively and regularly involved with curriculum management of their undergraduate and graduate programs. There is a strong commitment to development of writing, communication, and information literacy across the curriculum. There is an emphasis on liberal education in undergraduate programs in both Arts & Sciences and the professional colleges. The need for increased interdisciplinary interactions and increased globalization is recognized as a competitive requirement in the future. As part of a balanced academic program review process, external reviewers provide an important evaluation of scholarship contributions to the discipline as well as evaluation of interactions among faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Faculty-driven assessment of student learning is being emphasized, especially in the prevailing environment of increasing accountability and attempts to measure value added to the student.
Colleges and universities, in particular state-supported institutions, are under increasing pressure from policy makers to be more accountable for student learning. In addition, the number of possible paths to a baccalaureate degree is growing. Not only do students transfer freely among community colleges, state colleges, and research universities, but also the development of “virtual” on-line universities implies that courses must have value and meaning beyond individual campuses. A goal is to assess student learning outcomes in general education and all the majors and to use the data to continuously improve the learning environment and enhance effectiveness of our educational programs. This assessment will include examination of the curricula to ensure that they are reflective of the intercultural and international realities of global citizenship in the twenty-first century. With an increase in the number of distance learning courses, especially with the advent of web-based courses, particular attention will be given to development of processes that ensure that these types of courses are no less intellectually rigorous and at least of the same quality as traditional face-to-face courses. Rapid increase of distance learning programs heightens the need for reliable and valid performance measures. We need a clearly understood set of outcomes, especially student knowledge, skills, and competency levels. Identification of learning objectives for student performance will aid development of assessment tools that may be used for on-campus or on-line courses.

Standards and assessments that are publicly available are one way to provide quality control in a diverse environment. Standards are a vehicle for accomplishing the transition from teaching to learning that all postsecondary education is talking about, from an emphasis on knowledge conferred upon students to the priority of students’ use of their learning. Standards imply mastery or proficiency, not minimal knowledge or skill. To be effective, standards should be high, achievable, and credible to students, faculty, the lay public and potential employers. Some Arts & Sciences and Education faculty members at Georgia State are already contributing significantly to various aspects of standards-based education. The projects include a pilot program for alternative admission from high school to work, technical institute, or college. In lieu of SAT scores and high school grade point averages, assessments will be developed to measure what students know and are able to do in six disciplinary areas. These assessments may be designed to incorporate the Georgia High School Graduation Test as well as common performance tasks and student work portfolios. In another project, an objective is to develop a proficiency-based system for exit from disciplinary areas (e.g. science) of the University System of Georgia’s Core Curriculum and to enable transfer from one institution to another. In a third project, an emphasis is on what a major (e.g. biology) should know and be able to do in a particular discipline after two years and four years of college. Common goals are to shape courses for better understanding and to present curricula in an understandable and integrated way, helping students to make coherent course selections. A fourth project is designed to ensure that future teachers and other educators will be able to bring all their pupils to high standards. Pre-service educators must understand and meet content and pedagogy standards that have been carefully aligned with P-12 standards.

The leadership role that Georgia State is playing statewide and nationally on standards-based education and educator preparation will be enhanced by increased involvement by faculty. With establishment of a Professional Education Faculty (PEF) in 1993, Georgia State was an early pioneer in creating joint responsibility between Arts & Science and Education faculty for educator preparation. Teachers and administrators from the P-12 sector have now been added to the PEF. Development of a local P-16 council has created a climate of increased cooperation across the various education sectors.

The Metropolitan Atlanta P-16 Community Council is comprised of five school districts, three technical institutes, two two-year colleges, five four-year colleges, and over twenty education and business support organizations and foundations. Most of the elements are in place to position Georgia State as a national leader in urban education, an area of profound importance to this region, the state, and the nation.

Georgia State can capitalize on its location in a vibrant metropolitan international city, near the state capitol, and in the center of the business community, the not-for-profit sector, and many cultural attractions. A goal is to use this positioning by ensuring an urban experience for every undergraduate student. Our teaching and learning can be grounded in our urbanness. Our diverse student body means that there should be a much richer cultural experience than on a typical campus. However, urban should not be viewed as only local. We should explore urban issues around the nation and in international settings. A combination of urban courses, volunteer
or service-learning community projects, and other avenues could be combined to provide an "urban across the curriculum" experience for undergraduate students.

One of the great challenges of the next five years will be how we grapple with issues that surround information technology in the digital age. Information and knowledge are not the same thing. The central mission of the academy is the creation of new knowledge. Information technology is an enabling technology not too dissimilar to the development of the printing press. Information technology allows for new dissemination mechanisms and new ways for students to engage in inquiry-based learning. It opens up new avenues for faculty collaboration to create more robust teaching products that naturally integrate individual research into the curriculum. Network-delivered, computer-mediated, learning experiences will probably dominate post-secondary learning in the decades ahead. Extrapolation of existing approaches will be a failed strategy. In the words of an old Chinese proverb, it is impossible to cross a chasm with a thousand small steps. We need to create a vision of different futures, then plan backward from the future, rather than merely extrapolating forward from the present. Not only do we need to invest in information technology infrastructure, but also in the skills of faculty and staff in developing a "learning infrastructure" of learning tools and interactivity that can be fused with traditional on-campus learning. Our challenge is how to make the right investment to empower our faculty to use these tools to improve the quality of the learning environment. There is some limited evidence that information technology increases the dialogue between professor and student as the artificial barrier of hierarchy becomes less visible. Sharing ideas in a group setting also improves thinking and deepens understanding. Study groups, collaborative learning, group problem solving, and discussion of assignments can be dramatically strengthened through technology-mediated learning. Improvement along these lines will certainly facilitate the building of a learning community in which the stakeholders are those interested in the acquisition of knowledge. However, at present, information technology is used largely as an improved means of delivering course material to large, information-oriented classes.

There is pressure to offer distance learning programs in response to some perceived new markets. Another great challenge of the next five years will be the extent to which we are willing and able to provide any time, any-place quality education. Online courses may be important for students who are increasingly technologically sophisticated. While eCore is being developed as a means to reach mature students who did not enter college after graduation from high school, we need to recognize that children learn differently today. Many children before they enter kindergarten rapidly develop computing skills, soon surpassing their elders; computers are their toys and their learning tools. Online courses are also attractive for lifelong learning and as a mechanism to keep alumni connected. We need to be selective in our development of new technologies in general such as online courses and, more particularly, in hybrid courses that use a combination of online and face-to-face instruction. Training and access to improved facilities and technology support will be an important enabler for electronically mediated learning. Georgia State must recognize that we are competing in a market for baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate degrees with for-profit providers of postsecondary education. Library faculty will play a key role in helping students develop skills in evaluation and validity of online information. Programs that involve online courses must also be supported by a student system that provides online registration, advising, chat rooms, security on tests, and asynchronous discussions. In addition, for a successful experience, students need to be able to take responsibility for their learning and need to have adequate computing skills. A web-based readiness self-assessment survey is available online.

Faculty in some colleges are already providing online courses. A University System of Georgia Reading Consortium housed at Georgia State provides three strands of web-based courses towards a reading endorsement. The Robinson College of Business is developing an electronic MBA program. Since 1995, the College of Law has offered a course on law and the Internet. Other examples...

A movement to more courses and programs available online is accompanied by a demand for flexible, fast, high quality programs. Such programs will not be confined to online but may include hands on experience, research lab, or community based experience. The trend is to more non-degree granting programs or to certificate programs as part of degree granting programs. We need to consider these possibilities in order to leverage our considerable capabilities; to think in terms of sets of modular courses as part of certificate programs. Development of standards will aid in quality control of programs that lead to a credential, diploma, or certificate.
Georgia State has developed a strong international reputation through its two-pronged strategy of thematic initiatives and regional initiatives. In the next five years, we should be recognized (in Atlanta, nationally and internationally) as an institution with a strong global perspective and a center of international excellence in a number of areas in which we are engaged with other countries. These areas include biotechnology training and development, entrepreneurship development and business training, experimental economics, human resource development, instructional technology, peace education and conflict resolution, professional media training, tax and fiscal policy, teacher education, and programs for the disabled.

Thematic initiatives include tax and fiscal policy with proposals being accepted for work in a number of countries, most notably Russia and some former Soviet states. Country initiatives include Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, and South Africa. These three initiatives have the potential to be broadened to West Africa, the Middle East, and southern Africa. A goal is to have Georgia State constantly sought out by international development agencies for expert advice and consultation on matters related to the above. The same agencies will provide the principle funds for the university's international initiatives and programs.

Since 1995, a joint MBA program has been established with Cairo University. The Robinson College of Business is also working with selected universities in Cote d'Ivoire, Azerbaijan, Poland, and South Africa on various business and entrepreneurship programs. Collaborative biotechnology initiatives been established with a number of institutions in Egypt and are being extended to other Middle Eastern countries. Professional media training has been conducted in a number of Middle Eastern countries. Work to establish a graduate school for West Africa in Cote is ongoing, although a coup d'état in late December will cause this initiative to be reassessed. The College of Education is involved with universities in Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, and in a European consortium. The Young School of Policy Studies is very active in southern Africa in experimental economics and programs for the disabled as well as in their tax and fiscal policy initiatives in numerous countries. The College of Law has a significant exchange program with a university in Austria on comparative civil and common law. The College of Health and Human Sciences has involvement with some former Soviet states, Cote d'Ivoire, and Israel. At the undergraduate level, the University utilized semester conversion to internationalize the core curriculum.

Some of our programs are superior in quality to those of competitor institutions. We need to maintain and enhance those programs and to develop additional strengths. We should identify a pinnacle of excellence in each unit. A noticeable improvement can most quickly be achieved by focusing efforts and resources on a limited number of programs that are currently strong but not first rate. Funds for several endowed chairs and transferring resources so as to hire and support several junior faculty in areas closely related to those of the new chaired professorships in the spotlighted areas could bring a large increment in quality as well as substantial external recognition.

Faculty
Given that the undergraduate student body is mandated to improve (at least in principle) the absolute driver of quality must be the faculty. Also of significant importance is the quality of graduate students we attract. As the perception of quality does not necessarily track the actual level thereof, continuing improvements in, and accomplishments by, the faculty must be touted more effectively than heretofore. Georgia State University's full-time instructional faculty approaches 950, with 89% of them holding the terminal degree in their discipline. The number of full-time faculty has increased by 150 since 1995. Initially rapid expansion of demand for undergraduate courses in the years preceding semester conversion was met by a dramatic increase in the number of part-time instructors. To assure academic program quality, the University dedicated funds to replace the large number of part-time instructors with a smaller number of full-time instructors, who have the support necessary to meet the needs of students in their classes. This decrease in proportional use of part-time instructors not only contributes to better program quality but also should improve our ratings in the U.S. News & World Report, where the faculty resources category are weighted at 20%. This category includes average faculty compensation, the percentage of faculty with the highest degree in the field, the percentage of faculty who are full-time, and the student/faculty ratio.

In FY 99, the faculty graduated 5,119 students with degrees compared with 4,743 in FY 94. External grants and contracts for research, instructional innovation, and public service has increased from approximately $20 million to $44 million over the five-year period. The University
has also achieved a major benchmark set out in the 1995 Strategic Plan, qualifying for ranking as Research II in the Carnegie Classification System, with the attainment of over $15.5 million in qualified research support as well as awarding over 50 doctoral degrees for three consecutive years.

Georgia State University requires that its entire tenured and tenure-track faculty be teacher-scholars. Being a scholar means engaging in original research. The work of the scholar also means stepping back from one’s investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one’s knowledge effectively to students and the professional community. After careful analysis of available models of faculty performance, University standards, clarified by unit guidelines, were established for promotion and tenure, graduate faculty status, and faculty workload. The pre-tenure review process is established to nurture faculty early in their career. The post-tenure review process is being employed as a means of identifying the optimal utilization of faculty skills and achievement of equitable faculty workloads. The College of Arts and Sciences has implemented a merit-equity program to correct salary inequities and a workload policy to build on faculty strengths. Funds have been added for graduate assistants to assist faculty in research and teaching.

Infrastructure - Governance

The University Senate is the legislative body of the University as established in the Statutes and Bylaws. The University Senate and its committees are composed of faculty, staff, administrators, and students. The Senate’s structure and operation enable regular discussion among faculty and administrators on matters of central importance to the University community. The body also promotes collegiality across colleges and fosters a sense of collective commitment to the institution among faculty, staff, administrators, and students. Much of the progress on objectives of the 1995 Strategic Plan has resulted from the collegial environment provided through the venue of various senates committees and subcommittees where, in particular, faculty and administrators work together to advance the university.

Infrastructure - Staff

Georgia State University’s staff are a diverse and multi-cultural body of approximately 1800. There is a strong sense of commitment to the university in the staff, with approximately 250 either alumni or currently enrolled in classes. The full-time staff fulfill a critical role in support of the academic environment, administration and facilities. They afford the University a high-quality foundation upon which the scholarly agendas of the academic community may be built. Their commitment is also demonstrated significantly through annual giving to the university that has increased dramatically in the past several years. Over 75% of staff and faculty contributed in FY 99.

Members elected to a Staff Advisory Council represent the staff of Georgia State University who also serve on various Senate and university committees. The Council represents the staff on issues both directly and indirectly related to salary equity, personnel benefits, tuition remission and various personnel policies/procedures. In addition to their involvement in the university community, the staff are strongly tied to the Atlanta community in both volunteer and leadership roles in civic organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, The Atlanta Project and United Way.

In order to provide a positive climate and personal and professional growth of staff, resources will be devoted to a customer-service orientation program. Continuous quality improvement principles will be introduced to underscore a strong student-centered and customer-focused orientation that, in turn, will lead to increased employee satisfaction. These principles include respect for ideas and people, use of facts to guide management decisions, satisfying those people served, and inclusion of appropriate faculty, staff, and students on cross functional teams to streamline processes. The University should continue to set aside funds to correct salary inequities among staff. The corrections must be based on market and merit evaluations.

In addition to salary equity concerns, the Staff Advisory Council seeks to work with the administration on other issues affecting staff benefits and development. One such benefit that has recently been provided by the University System is tuition remission for employees of the university. Encouraging the development of the staff through support of their educational pursuits helps to enhance the scholarship of a crucial segment of the university community. The Staff Advisory Council will also continue to form ties with sister institutions in the formation of a statewide staff council.

Infrastructure - Administrative Services
A Data Warehouse project has been initiated to provide on-line the minimal set of data useful for administrative decision making and reporting. Similarly, an integrated system for student records that has improved data management and data access will be accomplished. Individual administrative systems, including student records, financial data and others, which have been developed over a long period of time, need to be enhanced or replaced with an integrated relational database system. Such a system should strive to eliminate costly redundant data files, and place user-friendly report writing and analytical tools in the hands of administrative users.

Needs more... especially finance and administration services

Infrastructure - Facilities
The improvement of campus facilities in the past five years has been spearheaded by the work to create a Physical Master Plan. Space remains a critical need despite the campus the acquisition of new buildings, including the residence halls, the Rialto Theater, the Haas Howell Building, the Standard Building, the Commerce Building, and build-out space in the Science Building. The university has been successful in gaining University System support for the acquisition of a site and the construction of a new classroom building. Also, State of Georgia support for a building for the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies has been obtained and student activities fund support is being used for the construction of a new recreation center. The University campus has expanded westward in the downtown from its core of buildings that were built in 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s around Kell Hall, but the lack of building and campus identifications made the University indistinguishable among the buildings of downtown Atlanta. A program of signature signs and banners has helped to establish a presence to the campus, which will be further enhanced by the Main Street Plan for streetscape developments along Decatur Street. An increase in the quantity and quality of space is needed, especially more teaching and research laboratory space to accommodate additional growth in student enrollment and faculty and student research. A new teaching laboratory building is a top priority for capital acquisitions requests to the Board of Regents. A research laboratory building is being planned to be funded primarily by indirect cost recovery dollars. Downtown properties that can serve to improve academic and administrative departmental facilities, faculty and staff offices, and specialized instructional and research facilities will be acquired selectively.

Infrastructure - Technology
Georgia State University is committed to becoming and remaining current in the application of computing and information technologies. All students should have ready access to computing resources and an opportunity to develop information management skills for lifelong learning. The educated citizen of the future will need to know how to access global databases. Administrators will need easy electronic access to data on which to base decisions for continuous improvement of the University's activities. Faculty and staff will need the support of human resources, equipment and classroom facilities in the transfer and application of technology to new learning environments. Out-of-class electronic connections between faculty and students will be encouraged. A Senate Committee on information systems and technology has been formed to advise the provost on these matters. A strategic plan has been developed and will be updated regularly since information technology is an area that is changing rapidly and needs to be reviewed more frequently than every five years.

Completion of the basic fiber optic backbone and the accompanying vertical risers and horizontal in-building connections for networking campus academic and administrative buildings will be accomplished within the next year. This will provide easier electronic access for faculty, staff, and students to the University's library and information resources. The university libraries staff will continue to provide leadership both locally and statewide in the Chancellor's project to link Georgia’s libraries electronically. Georgia State University will continue to support the libraries’ technological advances.

External Communications
Activities in the areas of alumni support and fundraising and in public relations will continue to be enhanced. Alumni involvement at all levels of university activities will be increased. This includes participation of alumni as guest lecturers in classes and in panel discussions where relevant, as well as in fundraising activities. Good stewardship of gift funds, the identification of strategic opportunities for programmatic investment and a redoubled effort to present the University's genuine needs in compelling fashion has allowed Georgia State University to mount a successful capital campaign that will have surpassed its goal of $75 million by December 2000. As of December 1999, over $70 million has been received or pledged. It is anticipated that a second
comprehensive campaign will be initiated before 2005. In the interim, a special target will include matching funds necessary to build a Teaching Laboratory Building. In addition to increased annual donations by alumni, it is important to increase the percentage of alumni who give since the alumni giving rate represents 5% of the rating score in the *U.S. News & World Report*. A clear and realistic image of Georgia State University's distinctive strengths as a teaching, research and urban university needs to be projected. This is particularly important for national ratings where, for example, in the *U.S. News & World Report*, 25% of the rating is for academic reputation as measured by a survey of college presidents. An effective internal and external communications plan needs to be developed. Identification of the campus has been improved significantly in the past several years through unified identification in signage on various locations.

**B. DISTINCTIVENESS: Increase the University’s contributions to the regional, national, and global communities.**

In this section of the Strategic Plan attention is devoted to ways in which the University’s contributions to the regional, national, and global communities can be increased. This initiative builds upon the recognition that Georgia State University already makes significant contributions to the city and the metropolitan area of which it is a part and to some national and international issues. For the University to move to a higher profile among academic institutions, it must continue to play increasingly significant regional, national, and international roles as well as continue to make important local contributions. The vision of the future incorporates the concept that academic leadership and distinctiveness will be defined simultaneously by continued development of excellent programs in traditional disciplines and by targeted interdisciplinary programs. Thus, the allocation of resources and the organizational structure chosen must reflect a dual focus. Although not representing the full extent of our academic enterprise and strengths, we have identified five areas of distinctiveness that cut across some traditional organizational lines within the university and advance a multidisciplinary approach to future complex problems and needs.

As a partial consequence of successful competition in the Georgia Research Alliance, a broad area of academic excellence has emerged at Georgia State University in science, including the preparation of undergraduate students for graduate and professional schools, particularly in areas related to biological science. Utilization of the University's scientific talent and resources towards meeting economic and scientific development goals remains a matter of continuing interest. A five-year goal is to continue to strengthen the areas of biotechnology and drug design, brain research through the neuroscience initiative, computational neurobiology, and environmental science. In addition to encompassing a broad area of interdisciplinary activity, there is considerable ongoing collaboration with other state institutions, some regional universities and several Middle Eastern countries. An economic development dimension is being strengthened through infusion of students studying entrepreneurship helping with business plans for fledgling biotechnology start-up companies.

An area of considerable potential for further development of sustained collaborative efforts is in the policy arena. Research policy areas include economics, the environment, education, health, crime, poverty, transportation and law. Simultaneously, graduate students will be trained for careers in policy analysis and implementation. By being broad-based in academic disciplines, we will be recognized as a premier resource for analyses of problems facing the citizens of Georgia and will become the pre-eminent think-tank in the South on policy issues. One purpose is to contribute to the base of knowledge about policy and thus produce information that is useful for making policy decisions. Georgia State is not only a community, state, and regional resource for consultation and training in policy issues, but also a significant contributor in the international arena especially in tax policy and disability initiatives.

Georgia State has emerged as a leader in state and national P-16 initiatives. Systemic renewal of education can be advanced through a strong working partnership among business, community, and the various education sectors - a P-16 context. The Georgia P-16 Initiative is a statewide, voluntary strategy to solve problems of low aspirations and under preparedness of students in Georgia's public education systems from pre-school through post-secondary education. Georgia State University will commit greater effort and resources to working with public schools to ensure an excellent education for all students, to create a larger pool of college-prepared high school graduates, and to ease the transition of youth from high school to college. While seeking to work with many school districts, Georgia State University recognizes that the local urban school
systems offer opportunities for addressing some of the more significant challenges that must be met throughout this nation. Faculty from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education work together with educators from local school systems as a Professional Education Faculty. They are responsible for piloting successful new models for advancing the achievement and well being of all children in the schools in partnership with their communities. These initiatives will also produce future teachers who can work collaboratively to see that all children learn. In addition, collaboration with other state institutions in contributing to systemic initiatives already exists and will be further enhanced, as will collaborations with urban communities in other countries.

Another partial consequence of successful competition in the Georgia Research Alliance and the Yamacraw initiative is emergence of strength in electronic commerce, computing and information technology, and digital arts, visualization and communications. The Yamacraw Mission focuses on four target areas in education and research, including content processing. Georgia State's Yamacraw focus is on digital image processing, digital signal processing, pattern recognition, and data compression.

Effective learning occurs when intellectual, social, emotional, and physical learning experiences are integrated and when people work together in a community toward common goals in a learning community. In this environment, learning depends upon interactions among learners and the integration of subject matter into all aspects of the student's experience. Relationships between formal institutional learning in the classroom and everyday learning experiences are bound even closer. One type of learning community is when cohorts of students stay together throughout the semester and pursue courses in thematic clusters. We will expand our freshman learning communities and introduce transfer learning communities. Another kind of learning community intrinsically links students with a group of faculty members and promotes joint research, study, or creative work that they accomplish together in studios or laboratories. We will enhance opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in scholarly projects.

Georgia State University is proud of its increasingly diverse student body and faculty and staff = we have become a microcosm of the global community. Georgia State University embodies the ideals of an intercultural and international exchange. Efforts will continue to make the curriculum more inclusive of diverse peoples and perspectives. The University's enrollment management plan and faculty recruitment and development efforts will include goals to increase diversity on campus and to capitalize on the strengths of its diverse community. The more diverse the student population, the more diversity there will be in their learning styles, in the knowledge and experience they bring to the process, and in what will be most effective in strengthening in all students a commitment to lifelong learning. This calls for even greater pedagogic skill than would have been required when the student body was more homogeneous. Programs in the Center for Teaching and Learning will enable faculty to analyze and apply diverse theories regarding ways of knowing and learning. Georgia State University will focus on framing pedagogy towards learning and intercultural understanding with cognitive research that will provide new insights into how people learn and how culture influences learning styles.