HIGHLIGHTS

A STRATEGIC ACADEMIC PLAN FOR THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
June 2001

The Dean’s development of a strategic plan for the College of Arts and Science is guided and informed by the Chancellor’s decision to advance Vanderbilt University into the top rank of United States research universities while strengthening our historical commitment to excellence in teaching at all levels. As “the heart of the University” (Chancellor Gee), the College of Arts and Science recognizes and accepts its essential role in achieving this objective, and has shaped its vision accordingly. The summary below of the College’s plan rests upon recommendations brought forward by the Strategic Academic Planning task force of the College of Arts and Science (SAP-CAS), identifies initiatives likely to accelerate institutional ascent, and assumes appropriate funding for their implementation.

1. Conversion of undergraduate housing to a residential college system. Categorically and by far the most effective means of transforming the campus into a principally intellectual community.

2. Establishment of three “Centers”: The Americas; The Creative Arts; Religion and Culture.
   A. Center for the Americas: Uniquely offering comparative, interdisciplinary, thematic, and cross-regional studies of all the Americas, drawing upon faculty expertise in at least four schools, certain to strengthen existing departments and programs, attract funding and students, and sharpen the international profile of the institution.
   B. Center for the Creative Arts: Focuses and appropriately, safely houses multiple artistic endeavors from across the University; provides essential space for creative activity; contributes to the highly desirable intellectual and cultural diversification of the campus; aids recruitment and retention; at long last legitimizes the “Arts” in the “College of Arts and Science”; and incarnates declared institutional respect for “creative expression.”
   C. Center for the Study of Religion and Culture: Exploits the strengths and prestige of the graduate Department of Religion; involves four to five schools, at least six departments, and many faculty in interdisciplinary expansion of research fields and curriculum to include Islam, Jewish studies, and the religions of China and Southeast Asia; takes advantage of regional resources.

3. Establishment of “Programs” in Law and Humanities (and Politics); Media Studies; B.A./B.S.-M.A.T. in foreign languages; Continuing Studies and Part-Time Graduate Studies.
   A. Law and Humanities (and, ultimately, Politics): Uniquely integrates professional school and College academic enterprises and offers the first research university program uniting these disciplines; transforms pre-professional education; defines a field of study; enables cutting-edge research, and attracts front-line faculty, graduate and law students.
   B. Media Studies: synergistically converges strengths of five schools; leverages creative, artistic, and entertainment riches of the community; potentially situates Vanderbilt as leader in film and multimedia production and digital research; provides focus for integration of campus creative activity.
   C. B.A./B.S.-M.A.T. in Foreign Languages: inexpensively addresses the serious shortage of secondary level language instructors; expedites the certification process.
   D. Continuing Studies and Part-Time Graduate Programs: generate revenue; improve community outreach.

4. Immediate and substantial investment in the graduate programs of the Departments of English, Spanish and Portuguese, and Anthropology:
A. *English*: the recently transformed flagship humanities department, with effective leadership, strengths across the board, versatility and widespread programmatic involvement, an estimable and rising reputation, and an ambitious, cogent plan of development.

B. *Spanish and Portuguese*: the premier foreign language program, with good leadership, heavy enrollments, harmonious faculty, strengths in both Peninsular and Latin American studies, supportive associations with all related programs and with the Vanderbilt Press, and high demand for PhD’s in the field.

C. *Anthropology*: A premier department, internationally, in Mesoamerican anthropology; excellent discovery and research record; exceptional junior hires; exceptional placement record; a diverse population; significant programmatic involvement; developing secondary research field (Andean).

5. **Immediate and substantial upgrades and use of IT infrastructure, equipment, systems, and service.** Serious inadequacies and deficiencies in information technology leadership and systems for teaching and research across University Central are patent and must be promptly, comprehensively, and generously addressed.

6. **Exploration of interdisciplinary and transinstitutional initiatives in the Natural Sciences.** In lieu of attempting to move one or more existing Natural Science department into the top echelon: capitalize upon world-class Engineering and Medicine talents intersecting with CAS research programs. Exploits campus geography; builds upon models in Structural Biology and CICN; attracts cutting-edge faculty; upgrades graduate student quality. Candidates: Biomathematics; Biophysical Sciences and Bioengineering; Environmental Risk and Resource Management; and Nanoscale Science and Engineering.

7. **Curtailment of graduate student and non-regular faculty instruction of advanced courses.** Despite a national trend in the other direction, the College must honor the foundational premise that a research-active faculty involves itself in the maintenance of high-quality undergraduate instruction.

8. **Renovation or replacement of the Vanderbilt University Library.** The College’s teaching and research missions and its scholarly reputation are seriously handicapped by its problematic library facilities. A comprehensive, long-term architectural and financial study and plan must be developed to correct this fettering circumstance.

9. **Addition of targeted endowed chairs.** Essentially a new rank, endowed chairs are fundamental to the research reputation and scholarly competitiveness of the institution. Appointments should be made in areas—interdisciplinary or departmental—likely to benefit maximally in terms of momentum, reputation and visibility.

10. **Increased and diversified scholarship aid and improvement in recruitment strategies.** To remain or become competitive for the best, but also to attract the different, scholarship and fellowship aid must be increased, varied in form and duration, and partially reserved for late-bloomers. High-schoolers might be admitted at the end of the junior year; juniors in college might be admitted then to Vanderbilt graduate and professional schools, etc.

11. **Decentralization of responsibility and redistribution of accountability.** Micro-management may be passe: department-based business planning, department-centered decision-making, department-based management of teaching, etc., may need to replace it in order to streamline operations.

12. **Creation of a Standing Committee for Strategic Planning.** The planning process begun here must continue: many received proposals are recommended for further development; new proposals will certainly arise. An agency for formal review and recommendation should be appointed.

This precis of the College’s academic plan minimally represents the sum of proposals, recommendations, endorsements, and suggestions developed by SAP-CAS over the past seven months. Details are recorded in the forthcoming report. For a complete picture of the transformed institution there envisioned, the report should be read in full.
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A Strategic Academic Plan
for the
College of Arts and Science
Vanderbilt University

June 9, 2001

I. STATE OF THE COLLEGE

The 2000-01 strategic planning enterprise has concluded that the state of the College of Arts and Science is visibly stronger than ever before in its long and distinguished history of excellent achievement in teaching and in scholarly research. But reflection upon the proposals constituting this report also leads us to believe that the greater strength of the College lies in its potential. The planning process has galvanized the faculty to stretch, imaginatively, in the production of a host of stunningly innovative and far-reaching proposals, many of revolutionary and transformative proportions. The following report gratefully recognizes and admires the energies pressing for programmatic incarnation, analyzes proposals within all germane contexts, and recommends for enabling investment those with the highest realistic potential for advancing the mission and raising the profile of Vanderbilt University. The vision here elaborated honors Vanderbilt’s undergraduate teaching commitment by recommending enhancements of our pedagogy, and proposes substantial improvements in the College’s implementation and support of its objectives in graduate instruction and scholarly productivity. It acknowledges that spacious overhaul must yield to focused investment. But we also believe that wisely targeted capital can effect the institutional leap into greater distinction the desire for which has motivated and inspired our efforts.

II. SUMMARY OF SAP-CAS ACTIVITIES

Dean John H. Venable announced the beginning of Phase II of the strategic academic planning process in a letter to department chairs and program directors on 4 December 2000. He appointed John Wikswo to chair the Senior Steering Council of the new Strategic Academic Planning effort of the College of Arts and Science (SAP-CAS). Also appointed to the Senior Steering Council were Jerome Christensen, Marshall Eakin, Paul Elledge (ex officio), Gregg Horowitz, Ned Porter, John Siegfried, and Susan Wiltshire.

In a letter to the Council dated 5 December 2000 (Appendix A1), Dean Venable provided the Council with its specific charges to consult with the faculty, solicit ideas, and review proposals for strategic initiatives. Its most important charge was to draft a Strategic Academic Plan for the College of Arts and Science.
On 18 December 2000, Professor Wikswo wrote to the College faculty asking for their help in preparing a comprehensive strategic academic plan for the College of Arts and Science. On 18 December Dean Venable and Dean-designate Richard McCarty wrote the faculty encouraging them to make the planning process a collective, collaborative, and consultative effort. They also announced the formation of six caucuses to address the specific charges of the Dean to the Council.

The caucuses began their preliminary work in late December and met regularly in January and February. As indicated in the SAP-CAS Committee Structure in Appendix A1, Caucus 1 was divided into three sub-caucuses: A. Law, Literature, and Politics; B. The Culture of the Americas; C. Center for the Creative Arts. Caucus 4 spawned sub-caucuses for teaching, technology, and the Library. Eventually, the Council would create a seventh caucus to report on financial aid, and solicit a report on continuing education and part-time educational programs.

The Steering Council created a public SAP-CAS webpage to keep the faculty informed at each step of the process. The Council created, posted, and solicited comments on a set of premises (Appendix A3) and criteria (Appendix A4) that would guide its review of proposals and reports. The Council reviewed the individual reports of the various caucuses and then posted them as well. The webpage offered the faculty of the College of Arts and Science and others an opportunity to see the progress of the process, and to submit any comments or criticisms. All caucus and Council minutes were made available to SAP-CAS members. Beginning in January, John Wikswo met regularly with the Arts and Science Faculty Council and the College of Arts and Science to keep them informed of SAP-CAS progress, to answer questions, and to solicit suggestions.

Most of the caucus reports were completed by early March. A substantial number of proposals that did not fall under the purview of the other caucuses were then forwarded to Caucus 1 for review.

The Council spent much of March, April, and May reviewing the caucus reports and all proposals. The deliberations and decisions of the Council on each caucus and proposal were regularly posted. The Council spent the latter part of May writing this report.

A total of forty Arts and Science faculty members (more than ten percent of the College faculty) and two faculty from other schools were involved in the various caucuses and sub-caucuses; sixteen of these individuals had multiple duties on SAP-CAS. Numerous faculty members and department chairs outside of SAP-CAS submitted detailed reports and proposals that have a combined thickness of thirteen inches. We estimate that the caucuses and their sub-caucuses met more than seventy times for over one-hundred hours. The Dean hosted four luncheons (December 15, 2000 and January 19, February 8, and April 16, 2001) during which the Caucus Chairs gave progress reports. The Senior Steering Council met at least 29 times for an estimated 80 hours to produce this report, and worked extensively by email. The SAP-CAS chair generated, received, replied to, or forwarded more than 3,600 emails; even with a three-fold redundancy in this accounting, a high level of consultation and communication was maintained. We estimate that if at least three-quarters of the expected participants attended the total of 104 meetings, then this project involved almost 1,100 person-hours of meeting time, not to count substantial individual
efforts invested in preparing and reviewing proposals and in the writing, reading, and editing of various reports. Over 6 Mbytes of documents were posted on the public and committee web pages (almost 9 if you include this report when it is posted), and there were more than 2,500 hits from 573 unique IP addresses (if IP addresses are not static then one person could have multiple IP addresses in that count; approximately 190 of the unique IP addresses hit more than one document).

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SENIOR STEERING COUNCIL

In the course of its review of individual proposals, caucus reports, and as a result of extensive discussions on how best to strengthen the College of Arts and Science, the Senior Steering Council has developed a number of specific recommendations. These appear below as a list, with rationales following:

**Table 1**

The Recommendations of the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council

1. We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Americas.
2. We recommend the establishment of a program in Law and Humanities.
3. We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Creative Arts that includes a new program in Media Studies and enhanced facilities for Studio Art and Theater. The College of Arts and Science should concurrently appoint an academic Director for the Center for the Creative Arts with the responsibility of developing a full program, guiding the design and construction of the building, and expanding the scope of the Center to include academically appropriate opportunities in writing, dance, music, and other creative activities.
4. We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Study of Religion and Culture.
5. Three departments in the Humanities and Social Sciences that can be elevated into the top ranks by an appropriate strategic investment are, in descending order, English, Spanish & Portuguese, and Anthropology. History and Philosophy, without a relative ranking, have sufficient strengths and a role so central to the University's mission that they too should be included in any development of a near-term strategy to strengthen the graduate endeavor at Vanderbilt.
6. The Senior Steering Council encourages attempts to build upon existing strengths in the Natural Sciences by establishing interdisciplinary programs like the currently operating centers for Structural Biology and for Integrative and Cognitive Neuroscience. Candidates include new initiatives in Biomathematics,
Table 1, Con’t
The Recommendations of the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council


7. We recommend that the College of Arts and Science or the Provost’s office examine possible mechanisms and funding for intensive efforts to identify and recruit outstanding graduate students, either at the departmental or divisional level.

8. In addition to funding for interdisciplinary endeavors, the College and University must provide funds to recruit and support graduate students in the Natural Science departments to preserve and strengthen the core areas within these departments.

9. We recommend that the College of Arts and Science reexamine its policy of charging research grants for part or all of the costs of tuition for graduate research assistants. The College should encourage funded investigators to support graduate research assistants.

10. We recommend that the College and the University make a major financial commitment to increase Vanderbilt’s information capabilities in support of research, teaching, and administration. This effort should include not only hardware but also an enhanced staff infrastructure. In light of the proposed Media Center and the existing facilities and services at Peabody, we also recommend a careful, campus-wide evaluation of the multimedia needs of the faculty and students for both teaching and research and an examination of how these needs might best be satisfied.

11. We recommend that the College of Arts and Science expedite the acquisition, maintenance, and use of shared instrumentation and other technical facilities and services.

12. We strongly discourage the use of graduate students in the teaching of upper-division courses.

13. We oppose attempts to delegate any substantial portion of the teaching mission of the College to faculty who are neither tenured nor tenure-track. To “professionalize” non-tenure track lecturers would create a parallel professional track of secondary citizens, which would in turn generate a new set of problems similar to those encountered historically between clinical and research faculties in medical centers.

14. We do not recommend an increase in the number of postdoctoral scholars employed in teaching roles.

15. We support the concept of a five-year B.A./B.S.-M.A.T. program in the foreign languages, particularly since it could be implemented with little financial investment. We encourage the College of Arts and Science and Peabody College to continue to refine a proposal for accomplishing this aim by submission through standard curricular channels. A cost analysis of the budget would be required to determine the financial impact of tuition scholarships in the fifth year.
Table 1, Con’t
The Recommendations of the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council

16. We endorse the employment of an experienced architectural consultant to study our library and consider the costs and benefits of renovation as against construction of a new building.

17. We support the identification of the library as a major priority in the coming Capital Campaign.

18. Although the submitted proposal for Bioscience, Technology and Humanities is not sufficiently developed for recommendation, interested parties may wish to refine the ideas represented in it for possible consideration by future committees involved in College strategic planning.

19. We recommend that faculty interested in the theme of “development and democratization” prepare a formal proposal on the topic and submit it for possible consideration by future committees involved in College strategic planning.

20. The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council recognizes that the College needs new study, classroom, and office space. While we do not view this as a strategic issue, satisfaction of these needs is absolutely critical to the ability of the College to provide the services expected of it and should be recognized as a target for benefaction.

21. We recommend that a vigorous effort be mounted to secure funding for additional endowed chairs.

22. To increase the endowment assigned to the College of Arts and Science, we heartily endorse aggressive capital accumulation on its behalf.

23. We endorse aggressive efforts to increase the number of first- and second-year service-free graduate fellowships and the number, size, type, and duration of academic year and summer fellowships.

24. We endorse efforts to increase the intellectual, ethnic, and economic diversity of our notably pre-professional undergraduate student body.

25. Within the University and College administration, we encourage an appropriate decentralization of responsibility and decision-making with a corresponding increase in and distribution of accountability.

26. We recommend that the College ask the Provost to establish a task force of senior faculty to study the impact of interdisciplinary programs on the curriculum and class scheduling, the promotion and tenure process, and financial management in the various schools.

27. We agree that new faculty should have special consideration in their first-year teaching assignments and for developing a long-range plan for effective teaching, as well as for jump-starting scholarship and grant-writing programs, and that departments should manage this responsibility within the framework of instructional necessities.

28. We encourage the Dean and the Provost to complete their review of proposed departmental plans for implementation of College regulations on tenure and promotion.

29. The administration should be made aware of concerns that the role and procedures of the promotion and tenure review committee (PTRC) are
Table 1, Con’t
The Recommendations of the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council

ill-defined, with the result that the PTRC is now viewed by some as a kind of "star chamber." The Senior Steering Council believes that appropriate procedures and constraints should be developed and placed on the PTRC to remedy both the reality and the (mis)perceptions of its role, and that these measures should be announced.

30. There is a high and widespread level of dissatisfaction with the policies and performance of the Division of Human Resources at Vanderbilt. Some of the issues raised in this paragraph go beyond considerations of administrative competence, and indicate the need for a systematic review and repair of the division and other units implicated in these items. Furthermore, Vanderbilt must recognize the costs of competing in both the local and national markets for administrative, clerical and research staff. Points worthy of detailed study and prompt action include: the trade-off between centralized College versus distributed departmental administrative services; the hiring and retention of staff members capable of running conferences, managing Web pages, handling mid-level computing tasks, helping with proposals and similar tasks requiring more than routine secretarial training; the problem of competitiveness in staff salaries and benefits, particularly in information technology; and long-range funding for research staff who support technical infrastructure.

31. We recommend that a qualitative and cost-benefit analysis be conducted to determine whether the funds used to support the Career Center might be better invested elsewhere.

32. We recommend that University Central should move quickly to bring our information technology infrastructure into the 21st century. This may require a significant financial investment, accompanied by a change in the University culture at all levels.

33. We recommend that the College move aggressively to acquire a 21st-century software package for course scheduling and registration.

34. We support attempts to convert Vanderbilt into a paperless university with all University-related administrative functions computerized. We recognize, however, that with regard to Human Resource Services (Personnel), a significant decrease in the error rate is required lest mistakes proliferate more widely and rapidly than is already the case.

35. We recommend that College departments be challenged to see that Vanderbilt instructional laboratories and classrooms are equal to if not better than facilities at our peer institutions.

36. We agree that the faculty should be encouraged to increase its use of information technology in teaching and research, but there should also be a stronger and more material University commitment to supporting the academic information infrastructure.

37. We recommend that the College press for upgrades of administrative systems in University Central, particularly with regard to procurement, property accounting, general ledger functions and other research-related administrative operations.
38. We recommend for immediate implementation that a few honors scholarships be reserved for otherwise unsupported top performing freshmen as an aid in the retention of our best students.

39. We recommend the development of a web-based Vanderbilt Research Index that covers faculty expertise, research facilities, and service capabilities.

40. We recommend that the College or the University provide specialized staff support for pursuing grant opportunities in the arts and humanities.

41. The Senior Steering Council encourages an expansion of Vanderbilt's outreach efforts to the Nashville community.

42. We recommend that work continue on the development of the proposed Program in Gender and Sexuality, possibly through the Warren Center Program for 2001-2002.

43. We recommend that the faculty involved in the proposal for the Interdisciplinary Program in International Relations coordinate their efforts with the faculty involved in the proposal for further development of the Center for European Studies.

44. We endorse the idea of a Masters in Public Policy, and strongly recommend that the faculty proposing it pursue possibilities through existing channels with the Graduate School, and explore potential overlaps with the Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought.

45. We recognize the importance of training teachers of English as a Second Language, but believe that the College of Arts and Science should not assume primary responsibility for this activity. We encourage our foreign language departments to support relevant endeavors by Peabody College, as appropriate.

46. We recommend that work continue within the College of Arts and Science on the development of the proposed Vanderbilt Institute for Medicine, Health and Society, and that a dialogue be maintained with related programs under discussion within the School of Medicine.

47. There is potential value in the proposal for a Center for Nashville Studies. We recommend that its authors work with the authors of the proposal for a Vanderbilt Institute for Research in Popular Music to develop a joint proposal on locally grounded cultural studies for presentation to the Academic Venture Capital Fund.

48. We recommend that academically strong students who qualify for need-based aid should receive increased grants so that loans and family/student contributions may be reduced sufficiently to make Vanderbilt accessible to a more economically diverse population.

49. Consistent with our goal of moving Vanderbilt University forward in research and scholarship, we enthusiastically endorse plans for a residential college program that includes all undergraduates and continues for the full four-year period. Such a system will build on existing strengths of Vanderbilt, including the commitment to undergraduate education, our compact residential campus, and the fine housing program already in place. Residential colleges will
enhance opportunities for faculty-student interaction outside the classroom; create a robust and inclusive intellectual atmosphere on campus that will increase Vanderbilt's appeal to the best students; and make good on our responsibility to educate the whole person.

50. We recommend that the College of Arts and Science determine the relative costs and benefits of embarking on an initiative to offer, either independently or as part of a larger University Central effort, opportunities in continuing studies and in part-time graduate programs.

51. We recommend that the Provost's office, the College of Arts and Science, and the Admissions Office work together to evaluate the merits of allowing prospective Vanderbilt freshmen to matriculate at the end of the junior year of high school and complete requirements for the diploma with the first-year Vanderbilt curriculum.

52. We recommend that the College move to appoint or recruit a faculty member to fill the vacant Directorship of the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities and adjust the constitution of the advisory board of the Center to reflect the increased interdisciplinary activity within the College.

53. In light of our expectation of the appointment of a Director of the Warren Center, we recommend deferral of action on the proposal for a Center for Critical Studies until its authors have the opportunity to consult with the new Director.

54. We recommend that the Provost's Office, each of the schools in University Central, and the Medical and Nursing Schools work together to create enhanced opportunities for greater interaction between preprofessional undergraduate education and the professional schools.

55. We recommend that the Provost's office, the College of Arts and Science, the Graduate School, and the professional schools at Vanderbilt work together to ascertain the merits of allowing early admission of our undergraduates into Vanderbilt graduate and professional degree programs.

56. We recommend that the University examine the merits and feasibility of expanding the concept of the Executive Conference Center to form the Vanderbilt Conference, Research and Lifelong Learning Center, which would include the Executive Conference Center, the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies, the Vanderbilt Center for Continuing Graduate Education, an Undergraduate Library and Technology Center, and the Vanderbilt Bookstore.

57. We recommend that the University evaluate the merits and feasibility of creating an Undergraduate Library and Technology Center (ULTC).

58. We recommend that the University evaluate the merits and feasibility of creating the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies (VIAS).

59. We recommend that Vanderbilt investigate the intellectual merits, economic benefits, and logistical requirements for creating continuing education and part-time graduate degree programs to be managed by the Vanderbilt Lifelong Learning Center.
Table 1, Con’t
The Recommendations of the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council

60. The Senior Steering Council endorses the construction, with modifications, of the Executive Conference Center proposed by the Owen School.

61. We recommend that the Dean of the College of Arts & Science create a Standing Committee for Academic Planning.

62. We recommend that the Dean of the College of Arts & Science create a fund, comparable to the College Venture Fund for instructional innovation, that would enable the Standing Committee for Academic Planning to support the strategic development of proposals for innovative and creative programs in research and scholarship.

63. We recommend that the College move vigorously to identify an appropriate academic officer whose primary responsibility would be to provide enhanced advisory, technical and programmatic support for the identification of sources of funding, the development and refinement of research and curricular proposals, and the launching and coordination of new academic endeavors.

64. We recommend that the faculty continue to regard teaching as a professional responsibility equal in importance to research.

65. The Senior Steering Council supports the formation of a Trans-institutional Academic Priorities Committee with the hope that it will encourage and support transformative initiatives that build upon existing strengths and that identify new areas for investment.

66. We urge the Trans-institutional Academic Priorities Committee to consider opportunities for the development of additional initiatives and institutes that span the Medical School-Natural Science interface.

67. We recommend that the absolutely central issues of the possible reduction in the number of graduate degree-granting programs and the enhanced importance of the relations among graduate programs be taken up either by the proposed Standing Committee for Academic Planning or by a special Committee on Graduate Programs, advisory to the Dean of the College.

A. INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

In recognition of both national scholarly trends and the intellectual and economic advantages of sharing resources across multiple departments and schools, the Provost’s Strategic Academic Planning Group (SAPG) has recommended that strategic planning at Vanderbilt emphasize the strengthening of existing interdisciplinary endeavors and the creation of new ones. In Section III.B.2, the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council recognizes the interdisciplinary initiatives already endorsed by SAPG; in this section, we recommend the creation of three new “Centers” (The Americas, Creative Arts, and Religion and Culture) and two new “Programs” (Law and Humanities, and Media Studies). In Sections III.C and III.F, we recommend programs that include a B.A./B.S.-M.A.T. in foreign languages, Continuing Studies, and Part-Time Graduate Studies.
1. Center for the Americas

Vanderbilt University should seize the initiative and create a center for the study of the Americas that brings together a large number of faculty in a wide variety of disciplines at both the graduate and undergraduate levels studying all the regions of the hemisphere. No center like this exists. Vanderbilt is uniquely situated to emerge at the forefront of comparative studies of the Americas. With already strong programs in American and Southern Studies, Latin American and Iberian Studies, Comparative Literature, and African American Studies, we are in a position to develop a truly comparative center for the study of all of the Americas. Over the past two decades, studies in the humanities and social sciences have begun to break down the traditional boundaries of studies of the different regions of the Americas. Clearly, future research on all regions of the Americas will increasingly emphasize comparative thematic and cross-regional studies. This is, and will continue to be, one of the most innovative and dynamic areas in academic research. Although primarily based in the College of Arts and Science, the Center would bring together faculty and programs across several schools of the university, notably in Peabody, Owen, Blair, and Divinity.

As described in Appendix E, the Center will serve as a means to attract funds, provide support, and facilitate the connections among faculty and students (graduate and undergraduate) in the many departments and interdisciplinary programs that would form the core of the center. The creation of a Center for the Americas would: (1) place Vanderbilt University at the forefront of one of the most exciting and dynamic fields of study at the beginning of the twenty-first century; (2) help faculty produce innovative and cutting-edge research on a variety of themes; (3) strengthen graduate and undergraduate programs by reinforcing existing departments and interdisciplinary programs while creating new interdisciplinary research, courses, and programs; (4) and strengthen other regional and ethnic studies programs such as European Studies and East Asian Studies through the promotion of international studies and the study of the diverse peoples and cultures of the Americas.

We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Americas.

2. Law and Humanities

Despite the increased sophistication and influence of interdisciplinary work among scholars of the law and scholars in English, Philosophy, and History, no leading university has established a formal program that would support sustained and systematic work in law and the humanities. By building on imaginative joint initiatives already underway between faculty from the Law School and the College of Arts and Science, the University has an historically rare opportunity to respond imaginatively to the Chancellor’s charge to integrate the professional schools and the College. By defining and inaugurating study in a new field, Vanderbilt would be identified with cutting edge work in law and humanities. Such a program would aid both the Law School and the participating humanities departments in attracting and retaining superb faculty, graduate students, and law students. By establishing a framework for the introduction of liberalized courses in law into the undergraduate curriculum, Vanderbilt would attract highly
talented individuals and become a leader in the transformation of pre-professional education. The proposed Vanderbilt Law and Humanities Program is described in more detail in Appendix F.

We recommend the establishment of a program in Law and Humanities.

3. Center for the Creative Arts

The Senior Steering Council recommends the establishment of an integrated Vanderbilt Center for the Creative Arts on the Arts and Science College campus. As described in Appendix G, at the outset the Center will house three principal components: Studio Art (drawing, painting, print-making, sculpture, ceramics, photography, design, video art, computer art, and multimedia); a Black Box Theater (for the instruction of acting, directing, movement, voice, dance, and multimedia performance); and a Media Studies program (with undergraduate and graduate degree opportunities in Film Studies and Digital Media). The Center thus will draw together and focus in one prominent location multiple artistic endeavors, including writing in many genres, acting, theatrical direction, film-making, digital composition, electronic music, all studio arts, imaging, graphic design, on-line journalism, photography, scene- and lighting-design, dance, and others that may emerge with advanced technology, student interest and faculty expertise.

Only rarely is a university presented with the opportunity to correct several longstanding deficiencies, improve its competitive position among its peer institutions, and open up the transformative prospect of an enhanced future, all in one decisive blow. The proposed Vanderbilt Center for the Creative Arts offers just such an historic opportunity, and the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council urges that SAPG boldly endorse it for strategic investment by the University.

Because existing facilities in the Cohen building are in a state of sad and dangerous disrepair, the College of Arts and Science has already recognized a pressing need to provide safe and appropriate space for the Studio Art program. It will not serve the needs of the entire University, however, merely to build a safer version of Cohen. Studio Art courses are among the most oversubscribed offerings in the College. Indeed, the only students who regularly succeed in getting into their chosen studio courses are Fine Arts majors. In order to serve the 40% of those students from across the University who want to enroll in studio courses but can find no open places, ample space for additional teaching must be created. Redressing the shortfall in studio art options will surely assist in diminishing Vanderbilt’s well-known high rate of undergraduate attrition. Over and above that, however, strengthening our offerings in studio art and making the program a more visible element of Vanderbilt’s public profile will also contribute to the desperately needed intellectual and cultural diversification of our entire University student body. At the stages of recruitment, matriculation, and retention, Vanderbilt today finds itself with an outsized proportion of students interested in history but not art, chemistry but not art, engineering but not art, and so on. Given the state of the arts here this situation ought not to surprise us, but it can usefully remind us nonetheless that the development of a suitable Studio Art facility capable of addressing the immediate problem of the pitiful state of Vanderbilt’s existing facilities can also, if strategically supported by the University, begin the process of integrating a greater diversity of intellectual interests with the traditional strengths of the College of Arts and Science as well as those of its sister schools.
In this vein it is worth emphasizing that the College does not have a monopoly on student and faculty participation in the creative arts. Students from Peabody, Blair, and Engineering regularly enroll in courses in Theater, Media Studies, and Fine Arts, and earn double-majors in these programs that already involve faculty from outside the College. Graduate and professional students, and even faculty, also have the opportunity to participate in formal, academic activities in the creative arts. However, at present the College cannot meet the University’s demand for existing courses and facilities in the creative arts, not to mention the needs posed by the expansion of the creative arts into new media and venues. As mentioned above, the existing Studio Arts facilities are drastically overcrowded, but other arts offerings are similarly squeezed. The Theater program suffers from lack of performance space; the Vanderbilt University Theater, funded in part through the Student Activity Fee, would benefit directly from the Black Box Theater and the enhanced opportunity for interdisciplinary activities involving Fine Arts, Media Studies, and Music. It is crucial to recognize that the Center for the Creative Arts will provide both shared facilities for the creative arts and enhanced opportunities for instruction that will attract participation from across the entire University. The possibilities it will open for cross-disciplinary and trans-institutional arts initiatives will make Vanderbilt unique among Research I institutions in integrating creative arts activities into the academic and professional life of the University.

Nowhere are the transformative prospects of the Center for the Creative Arts more potent and promising than in the proposed Media Studies program. Numerous faculty across the University are publishing and teaching in the area of media studies; graduate students are taking seminars, publishing articles, attending conferences – all this despite inadequate facilities and no reliable budgetary support. The lack of any sustained University support for digital media research and teaching is glaring, especially because the University, situated as it is in one of the most vibrant and creative artistic/entertainment communities in America, is poised to take a position of leadership in film and multimedia production and as the premier regional forum for courses and symposia that involve the interdisciplinary study of digital culture. The potential for a synergistic convergence in media studies between the College and Peabody, Owen, Law, and Engineering is dramatic and, we suspect, will move Vanderbilt to the head of a rapidly changing field of research and creativity.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the important new field of media studies is not isolated from other artistic endeavors. Rather, it is emerging at the intersection between computer-based research and creativity and other media of artistic creation. Indeed, it is precisely because the confluence of new media work and traditional artistic expressions is inexorable that the physical and programmatic integration of Studio Arts and Theater with the Media Center is indispensable. In the recommendation for the Center for the Creative Arts, the Senior Steering Council has gathered impressive evidence of the seminal interactions among various departments within the College of Arts and Science as well as among these departments and units from others of Vanderbilt’s colleges and schools. It is not an exaggeration to say that any support for the renewal of the creative arts at Vanderbilt that fails to focus on promoting the integration of the various arts in a single, devoted physical plant will fall short of its mark. For the same reason, a Vanderbilt Center for the Creative Arts must be administered by an Academic Director whose charge would be to run the Center as a spawning ground for fresh creative activity. The Director’s task would be explicitly to stimulate the intellectual and institutional convergence of all interested schools and
colleges and, in addition, to bring into the fold all those creative activities that, even if not anticipated by name in the Senior Steering Council’s report, will further the Center’s purpose of making Vanderbilt a respectable regional and national center for the arts in the coming era of integrated creative activity. At a minimum, we would expect the Director to incite and orchestrate efforts to bring under the Center’s umbrella all forms of writing, the legal and business aspects of the creative arts, dance, digital imagining, medical illustration, art therapy, and the integration of music performance with theater and digital media.

In summary, just as Blair provides a focus for the study, composition, and performance of music, Peabody for classical and computer pedagogy, the Medical Center for health, so, too, the Center for the Creative Arts will stimulate and support creative art activity to the benefit of the entire University.

We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Creative Arts that includes a new program in Media Studies and enhanced facilities for Studio Art and Theater. The College of Arts and Science should concurrently appoint an academic Director for the Center for the Creative Arts with the responsibility of developing a full program, guiding the design and construction of the building, and expanding the scope of the Center to include academically appropriate opportunities in writing, dance, music, and other creative activities.

4. Center for the Study of Religion and Culture

The proposed Center for the Study of Religion and Culture (Appendix H) presents a remarkable opportunity to take Vanderbilt’s present strengths to the very highest level in national rankings. Except for one program in the Medical Center, the Graduate Department of Religion is Vanderbilt’s only program in the top ten. Five of the six universities above us in the rankings already have centers for the study of religion and culture. Ours would be unique, however, in its breadth, with participation presently from four schools and colleges of the University and imminently a fifth. Ten or so faculty members from a half dozen departments of the College of Arts and Science are already involved in this collaborative venture. The leadership is in place, the faculty participation is wide, and the Center is poised to fill egregious absences in Vanderbilt’s present curricular offerings, especially in Islam, Jewish Studies, and the religions of China and South Asia. As one faculty member puts it, “Vanderbilt cannot be a world-class institution and ignore three-fourths of the world.”

We recommend the establishment of a Center for the Study of Religion and Culture.

B. Targeted Investments in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences

The Senior Steering Council of SAP-CAS interprets our charge to identify three to five graduate programs worthy of enhanced investments in the context of a University commitment to increased professionalization of graduate study across the College of Arts and Science. Such a commitment is not only welcome but also vital. Although we wholeheartedly endorse the proposals for interdisciplinary centers and programs we have sent forward (each of
them with a request for graduate lines), it should be clear that no matter how fresh and inviting such programs appear, eventually the doctoral degrees Vanderbilt confers will be only as good as the departments that grant them. Interdisciplinary innovation cannot prosper without disciplinary strength.

A stringent economy operates in this matter. We do not have and cannot expect the resources to invest in every worthy Ph.D. program immediately. And we believe that half measures will not do. Although it should be taken for granted that Vanderbilt must remain competitive with its peer institutions in its offers of grants and fellowships, it is equally clear that no graduate program here is competitive enough with the top ten in its field to assume that mere increments in graduate stipends will make a significant and lasting difference. Therefore we have to identify — and, ideally, select — programs that will not only dramatically benefit from substantial investment, but whose success will count significantly in the greater world.

Even if Vanderbilt had the money to make substantial investments in a dozen programs it might be unwise to commit all the money until several departments had proved that the investments have the desired effect. To accept such a procedure is to identify another criterion of investment: that the success of an individual program will lead to the success of other programs, either by emulation (what one department has done another department can do) or by spillover (the success of one department would enhance the attractiveness of another department to graduate students and faculty). It is important to recognize that although a department may not have a realistic chance to make the top twenty, it may, with prudent investment, become the very best department of its kind and in doing so buoy up its sister departments.

We have identified three departments whose graduate programs are especially worthy of immediate substantial investment: English, Spanish and Portuguese, and Anthropology. We also have singled out two more—History and Philosophy—that we believe worthy of additional funding in the medium term. These five not only excel as traditional disciplines, but they also cohere as a cluster of departments that have cooperated in the past and that, if some of the proposals in the strategic plan are implemented, will even more closely collaborate in the future. Dramatic improvement in any one of those departments will benefit the others. And by the same token, none of those departments can achieve greatness at Vanderbilt without the application of money and ingenuity to the development of the others.

In making our selection of departments worthy of special investment, we have omitted some very good departments which, on the basis of national ratings, might also seem to qualify for additional investment. We agree that they do. But we also affirm that because a particular economy is operating, investment must proceed in phases; and the principle of the greatest possible utility should be applied at each phase. We understand that resources are not unlimited and that hard choices will have to be made. Some departments will receive additional resources; others will not. Some departments will receive additional funding immediately; others will benefit later.

We urge the Administration to make timely, wise and firm decisions regarding which graduate programs deserve to be financially maintained, and which deserve additional funds. In short, we must focus our attention and resources on a few select departments and programs.
In this vein, we would fail to meet the spirit of our charge to identify the most investment-worthy graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences if we did not urge the new Dean and the Provost to consider the impact our decisions may have on Ph.D. programs that are no longer viable. Our commitment to the professionalization of the Ph.D. requires us to make these hard choices. We discuss this matter in more detail in Section IV.D.

1. Humanities and Social Sciences

The charge to SAP-CAS required us “[t]o identify three to five strong graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences, as prescribed by the SAPG, and additional graduate programs in the natural science division, for emphasis and investment, adhering to the following guidelines: such programs should have critical mass; they should have attracted and suitably placed superior students; and they should have on-going financial support.”

Caucus 2 (Professors Bahry, Bell, Siegfried, Gay, and Staros [Chair]) provided to the Senior Steering Council an unsorted list of departments and graduate programs that it believed to be worthy of further consideration. In the Humanities and Social Sciences, these departments were Anthropology, Economics, English, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Spanish & Portuguese. Once the Caucus 2 report had been received, the Senior Steering Council reviewed both the list and the procedures and criteria to be used for the selection. Department and program chairs were invited to respond to the Caucus 2 report and its recommendations. The Senior Steering Council decided that any Senior Steering Council member would recuse himself or herself from the discussions and the vote regarding any department or program with whom he or she was affiliated. Finally, we reviewed the criteria that had been established by SAP-CAS, eliminated inappropriate criteria, and amplified the remaining criteria to allow us to obtain a clearer understanding of the strengths of each department or program. For voting, we combined these criteria into five categories: strength of the faculty, strength of the graduate student population, gain versus investment, internal ripple, and external impact.

Based upon our detailed analysis, the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council has identified three departments that can be elevated into the top ranks by an appropriate strategic investment, and two departments that need to be included in a near-term development strategy:

*Three departments in the Humanities and Social Sciences that can be elevated into the top ranks by an appropriate strategic investment are, in descending order, English, Spanish & Portuguese, and Anthropology. History and Philosophy, without a relative ranking, have sufficient strengths and a role so central to the University’s mission that they too should be included in any development of a near-term strategy to strengthen the graduate endeavor at Vanderbilt.*

The proposal from the Graduate Program in Religion was considered an interdisciplinary proposal and has already been recommended by the SAP-CAS Steering Council for support as the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture. The Department of Psychology will be considered with the programs in the Natural Sciences. With regret, we do not recommend Economics, Political
Science, and Sociology for immediate additional investment, in that they did not adequately meet our criteria.

The rationales for recommended departments follows:

1.1. English

The Department of English has maintained a leading position in the College of Arts and Science while transforming and modernizing itself. The Department has established strengths in literature from the Renaissance to twentieth-century British literature, in Southern literature, and in the theory of gender and sexuality. The department is exceptionally versatile, already contributing its expertise to Film Studies, Women’s Studies, American and Southern Studies, and African American Studies. It promises to be an important contributor to the new programs we are recommending in the Center for the Americas, Law and Humanities, and Media Studies within the Center for Creative Arts. The department has a history of strong leadership, and a cogent plan for development. Based upon both its size and reputation, the graduate program of the English Department is likely to reach the top twenty in the next five years, and this process could be accelerated by an appropriate, timely investment.

1.2. Spanish & Portuguese

The Department of Spanish & Portuguese has noticeable strengths, their faculty have been harmonious, and no major weaknesses appeared in any of the measures we considered. This is the premier foreign language program at Vanderbilt. We believe it is important that Vanderbilt have at least one strong foreign language department and, based upon national trends, Spanish is of great national consequence. Unlike many other Spanish and Portuguese departments, the Vanderbilt department has strengths in both Peninsular and Latin American studies. Because it has strong intellectual connections with other graduate departments and interdisciplinary programs, an investment in this department would strengthen other areas targeted by SAP-CAS for future investment. It contributes to programs and activities in Latin American and Iberian Studies, Comparative Literature, and Latino literature, and demonstrates a willingness to support other foreign language departments and programs. It will also contribute to the reputation of the Center for the Americas. Latin American and Peninsular criticism and history are areas strongly represented by the Vanderbilt University Press. Because the department has a positive momentum from good hires, strong demand at the undergraduate level, and a strong market for Ph.D.s, it has much more room for development than the other language departments in the College.

1.3. Anthropology

The Department of Anthropology has earned a unique position. In the field of Mesoamerican anthropology it is already one of the premier departments in the Americas. Only slightly smaller than the top-ranked departments, the Vanderbilt department has the largest number of specialists in Mesoamerican anthropology and archeology, as well as an excellent record in terms of field research. They are developing a second strong cluster of expertise in Andean
anthropology and archeology, which would benefit from additional support. Such plans would expand the breadth and strength of connections to other areas of study at Vanderbilt, particularly the Center for the Americas. Its placement record for Ph.D.s at highly ranked departments is possibly better than any other department in the College of Arts and Science at Vanderbilt; many of its best Ph.D.s return to Latin America, thereby increasing Vanderbilt’s reputation in the region. The department contributes to international diversity by attracting outstanding students and faculty from Latin America.

Our charge was “to identify three to five departments in the humanities and social sciences … for emphasis and investment.” We have identified three departments, as discussed above, and now turn to the larger problem of building a comprehensively coherent graduate program at Vanderbilt. The Senior Steering Council and Caucus Two are convinced that more than three departments should be targeted in the near term. We pose the strategic question: Which departments would benefit the most from an immediate, additional investment? Within our original charge of three-to-five departments, we identify History and Philosophy as departments worthy of investment in the near term. Many departments must receive additional, targeted investments for Vanderbilt to present a strong graduate program in the humanities and social sciences, but in a resource-limited environment, some will necessarily occur sooner than others. In the interim, existing College and University resources should be used to support and strengthen those departments. The rationale for supporting History and Philosophy in the near term is as follows:

1.4. History

The Department of History has an unprecedented opportunity to transform a good department into an excellent one. It has expertise, and concomitant recognition, in American, European, and Latin American history. The strengths of the department and the presence of seven open positions in American History (some as a result of early retirements) provide the department with an opportunity to recruit outstanding faculty and sprint to a leading position in American History. The department will play a pivotal role in the proposed Center for the Americas, the Law and Humanities program, and the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture. As with the Department of English, the intra-Vanderbilt connections with History provide a multiplicative effect for strategic investments.

1.5. Philosophy

The Department of Philosophy has made a strategic commitment to a pluralistic approach in research and graduate teaching rather than concentrating on the mainstream analytic approach that dominates in the top-ranked, narrowly focused departments. This approach places the Philosophy Department within a clearly defined group of successful and competitive departments: Northwestern, University of Texas at Austin, Pennsylvania State, SUNY Stony Brook, and Emory. Among these departments the Vanderbilt Philosophy Department already sets the standard for the placement of graduate students in both research institutions and teaching colleges. The department seeks additional resources to further develop itself along its present lines in a market that it believes will be increasingly favorable to the research approach it fosters.
2. Natural Sciences

The charge asked SAP-CAS “[t]o identify three to five strong graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences, as prescribed by the SAPG, and additional graduate programs in the natural science division, for emphasis and investment, adhering to the following guidelines: such programs should have critical mass; they should have attracted and suitably placed superior students; and they should have on-going financial support.”

The Senior Steering Council began with the analysis of departments provided by Caucus 2. The strength of the Department of Psychology in integrative and cognitive neuroscience and the particular development strategy adopted by the department led the Council to include Psychology with the other departments in the Division of Natural Sciences.

We believe that a substantial investment would be required to move any single Vanderbilt Natural Science Department into the top echelon of departments in the country. Rather than employing such a department-based development strategy, the Steering Council recommends that ongoing interdisciplinary initiatives be fully supported and that new opportunities for interdisciplinary programs be explored within the College of Arts and Science and jointly with the Schools of Medicine and Engineering.

Interdisciplinary research offers opportunities for establishing strong programs in the sciences that can compete nationally and internationally. Vanderbilt has unique advantages that permit a strategy for program building in this way. Vanderbilt's Schools of Medicine and Engineering offer outstanding talents in fields that intersect directly with research programs in the College of Arts and Science. These talents can help to build strength at a number of disciplinary intersections. The proximity of laboratories in the College of Arts and Science to those in our sister schools is another asset that can be used to advantage. Shared instrumentation and facilities as well as joint seminars and colloquia are encouraged by the geography of the campus.

Vanderbilt has recognized the opportunity for interdisciplinary programs with a substantial commitment of central funding to the Center for Structural Biology (CSB) and the Center for Integrative and Cognitive Neuroscience (CICN). The CICN includes members from several College departments as well as from the School of Medicine and Peabody. The CSB, a trans-institutional initiative between the College and the School of Medicine, has made an initial investment in instruments and infrastructure and is now in a hiring phase. Structural Biology faculty will have dual appointments in the College and the School of Medicine. The Senior Steering Council admires the CICN and CSB initiatives and views these ongoing projects as experiments from which the College can learn. The Steering Council also encourages attempts to build upon existing strengths by establishing additional interdisciplinary programs; candidates include new initiatives in Biomathematics, Biophysical Sciences and Bioengineering, Environmental Risk and Resource Management, and Nanoscale Science and Engineering.

Building strength in interdisciplinary programs such as the Center for Structural Biology goes hand in hand with building strong discipline-based graduate programs. Interdisciplinary programs are linked to the departments by the Ph.D. degree. For the CSB and CICN and other interdisciplinary
programs to compete nationally and internationally, graduate students who join these programs from Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, and Psychology must be among the best in the country. Attracting outstanding faculty to interdisciplinary programs and building infrastructure and instrument centers will not be enough if Vanderbilt does not compete for the best students.

The CICN has been successful in helping to bring new faculty talent to campus and in focusing existing efforts at Vanderbilt. Proposals from the CICN and the Psychology Department to improve and increase the pool of graduate students reflect the strain that develops on a department when an influx of faculty talent is not appropriately matched by numbers and quality in the pool of graduate student co-workers. The Senior Steering Council endorses efforts to improve the quality and numbers of graduate students in CICN-linked departments and suggests that this should be done through the existing central funding mechanism for the program. Failure to address this critical issue will lead to frustration of the ultimate goals of the initiative and also reduce the quality of the core discipline programs in the participating departments.

The CSB and other interdisciplinary programs in the Natural Sciences will face a similar problem as a number of faculty associated with it are hired and become members of or have secondary appointments in Arts and Science departments. Just as new programs require an investment in infrastructure and library resources, graduate student lines in Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics must support the increase in faculty talent in these departments. Junior and Senior faculty are expected to compete on a national and international level, and to do so effectively and efficiently they need high-caliber graduate students. A decision that an investment in graduate students is not required to establish such programs will compromise these initiatives. Furthermore, an interdisciplinary development strategy should not undermine the intellectual core of the participating departments; it could be devastating were we to follow aggressive recruitment of faculty talent yet fail to address the graduate student quality and quantity problem. Hence, in addition to funding interdisciplinary endeavors, the College and University must provide funds to recruit and support graduate students so as to preserve and strengthen the core areas within these departments.

One short-term solution to the problem of shortfalls in the recruiting of high-caliber graduate students is to increase faculty reliance upon postdoctoral research associates. Frequently, a high-profile faculty member can attract research associates of a higher caliber than the graduate students recruited by the department. The productivity of a research associate is high relative to that of a beginning graduate student and the cost is only modestly greater than that of a graduate research assistant. However, the rankings of a department may be more strongly influenced by graduate student production and quality than by similar measures for postdoctoral trainees. This conflict between individual research and departmental strength and recognition requires a concerted effort by the University to correct the balance in favor of more rigorous graduate programs.

Support of graduate students throughout their careers as research assistants by expenditures from faculty grants clearly helps in the competition for the best students. The high cost of supporting students at Vanderbilt compared to the cost of doing business at competing universities discourages
faculty from supporting graduate students on grants, however, particularly in the early years of a graduate students’ education when a heavy course load and the 72-hour requirement results in large tuition expenditures. In some disciplines, hiring a graduate student research assistant may be as expensive as hiring a postdoctoral co-worker. Indeed, no single action would benefit the Natural Science programs at Vanderbilt more than a tuition waiver for students hired as research assistants on federal grants. Charging federal grants for tuition channels the resources provided by external grants and contracts to the support of postdocs, and graduate programs suffer as a result.

The evolving national research and funding strategy favors interdisciplinary science. Natural Science departments at Vanderbilt should adjust to this reality. The traditional view of departments in which subspecialties are propagated in hiring decisions by historical birthright will not permit the assembly of groups that can work in concert to solve interdisciplinary problems. Historical views of boundaries between the physical, chemical and biomedical sciences may restrict interdisciplinary initiatives. Strong programs in Chemical Biology and Biological Physics, for example, will have impact in several corners of the campus and raise the national visibility of all participating departments, but only if tradition does not block the recruiting and retention of faculty with interdisciplinary interests.

From this perspective, we make the following recommendations:

*The Senior Steering Council encourages attempts to build upon existing strengths by establishing interdisciplinary programs like the currently operating centers for Structural Biology and for Integrative and Cognitive Neuroscience. Candidates include new initiatives in Biomathematics, Biophysical Sciences and Bioengineering, Environmental Risk and Resource Management, and Nanoscale Science and Engineering.*

*We recommend that the College of Arts and Science or the Provost’s office examine possible mechanisms and funding for intensive efforts to identify and recruit outstanding graduate students, either at the departmental or divisional level.*

*In addition to funding for interdisciplinary endeavors, the College and University must provide funds to recruit and support graduate students in the Natural Science departments to preserve and strengthen the core areas within these departments.*

*We recommend that the College of Arts and Science reexamine its policy of charging research grants for part or all of the costs of tuition for graduate research assistants. The College should encourage funded investigators to support graduate research assistants.*

C. Analysis of the Caucus 4 Report on Technology, Teaching, and the Library

Caucus 4 (Ayers, Doyle [Chair], Hancock, Jrade, McNamara, J. Plummer, Sapir, Weintraub, and Wikswo) was charged “To review or create over-arching proposals—e.g., on teaching, technology, research innovations, etc.—not identified with particular disciplines but embracing several.” To simplify this task, the Caucus was divided into three sub-
caucuses to examine technology, teaching, and the library. We now summarize the analysis and recommendations of Caucus 4, and provide the comments of the Senior Steering Council in *black italics* without indentation, and our recommendations left-right indented and in *red italics*:

1. Technology

1.1. Information Technology

It was clear to Caucus 4 that the College of Arts and Science has serious deficiencies in computer technology and support for teaching and administration. Funded research in the natural sciences has adequate computing capabilities obtained through external grant support; there is great room for improvement within the humanities and social sciences both in awareness of the capabilities of modern information technologies, and in the opportunities for applying this awareness to research. Caucus 4 prepared a detailed proposal for specific applications.

*While the Senior Steering Council agrees with the finding of serious deficiencies in computer technology and support for teaching and administration, we are not in a position to evaluate the specific recommendations of Caucus 4.*

*The Senior Steering Council recommends that the College and the University make a major financial commitment to increase Vanderbilt’s information capabilities in support of research, teaching, and administration. This effort should include not only hardware but also an enhanced staff infrastructure. In light of the proposed Media Center and the existing facilities and services at Peabody, we also recommend a careful, campus-wide evaluation of the multimedia needs of the faculty and students for both teaching and research and an examination of how these needs might best be satisfied.*

1.2. Analytic Instrumentation and Shared Resources

The research universities that we aspire to displace in the rankings typically have an outstanding research infrastructure. The Vanderbilt Medical Center has already recognized this circumstance, has invested heavily in a number of technological core laboratories with state-of-the-art equipment and technical staff, and is already benefitting from these investments. The College of Arts and Science should follow its example. External funds are often available to cover the purchase cost of major instrumentation, but an institutional commitment is needed to maintain them and support their use by researchers and their students. The College of Arts and Science is lagging far behind the external and Vanderbilt competition in this regard.

*The Senior Steering Council recommends that the College of Arts and Science expedite the acquisition, maintenance, and use of shared instrumentation and other technical facilities and services.*
2. Teaching

Caucus 4 made four recommendations regarding teaching: 1) Department Chairs should be given more latitude in using their best, advanced graduate students in teaching; 2) Lectureships should be professionalized; 3) No significant effort should be devoted to increasing the number of postdoctoral scholars employed in teaching roles; and 4) The Masters in Teaching (MAT) program should be better supported and promoted. The Senior Steering Council does not support the first two, and concurs with the others:

2.1. Using advanced graduate students in teaching

The reputation of the College is built on the premise that a research-active faculty is involved in all aspects of a high quality and expensive undergraduate education. At present, graduate students conduct laboratories in the sciences, instruct elementary language courses, introductory writing classes, and lead discussion, recitation, and problem-solving sections of large introductory classes.

*The Senior Steering Council strongly discourages the use of graduate students in the teaching of upper-division courses.*

2.2. Lectureship professionalization

The Senior Steering Council recognizes the national trend to use non-tenure-track, term-appointment Lecturers and Senior Lecturers in place of tenured and tenure-track faculty. The College has reluctantly acceded to demands from many departments to increase the number of Lecturers and Senior Lecturers on call. Again, the reputation of the College is built on the premise that a research-active faculty is involved in all aspects of a high quality and expensive undergraduate education.

*The Senior Steering Council opposes attempts to delegate any substantial portion of the teaching mission of the College to faculty who are neither tenured nor tenure-track. To “professionalize” non-tenure track lecturers would create a parallel professional track of secondary citizens, which would in turn generate a new set of problems similar to those encountered historically between clinical and research faculties in medical centers.*

2.3. The role of postdoctoral scholars in teaching

Consistent with the position enunciated in (1) and (2) above, the Senior Steering Council does not recommend an increase in the number of postdoctoral scholars employed in teaching roles.

2.4. The Masters in Teaching (MAT) program

The very great need for teachers of Spanish, French, and especially Latin on the secondary level argues for Vanderbilt’s participation in meeting this need. Undergraduate majors in those languages (and to a lesser extent German) could begin some of their teacher certification in their
first four years, still receive strong liberal arts educations, and with one more year of study complete an MAT. In doing so, undergraduate majors in the foreign languages will enjoy increased opportunities in the job market, and would serve as ambassadors for Vanderbilt.

*The Senior Steering Council supports the concept of a five-year B.A./B.S.-M.A.T. program in the foreign languages, particularly since it could be implemented with little financial investment. We encourage the College of Arts and Science and Peabody College to continue to refine a proposal for accomplishing this aim by submission through standard curricular channels. A cost analysis would be required to determine the financial impact of tuition scholarships in the fifth year.*

3. Library

The research universities that we aspire to displace in the rankings have better libraries than we do, both in terms of the size of the collection and the quality of the facilities for both research and as places for students to study. In recognition of the Chancellor’s philosophy that if Vanderbilt is going to do something it should do it well, the Senior Steering Council notes from several different criteria that there are better libraries at many of the schools to which we lose regularly in football.

The Strategic Plan for the Library outlines a plan for future development, and Caucus 4 explored in some detail proposed improvements to the Science and Engineering Library. Within the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, at least 130,000 square feet of space needs remodeling, renovation, and new furniture. Such rehabilitation can cost as much as building new space (currently estimated at $160 per square foot). The Science Library would benefit from increased study areas, and the use of high density storage that would make possible the return of much of Science collection from the Library Annex. We recognize that a major building enhancement project with careful attention to the creation of highly usable public spaces will enhance the quality of academic life within the University. At nearby institutions such as the University of Kentucky, the University of Tennessee, Middle Tennessee State University, and University of Tennessee at Martin one finds modern library facilities. The building at the University of Kentucky cost in the neighborhood of 55 million dollars, but this is nothing more than a rough estimate of the kind of expense required to meet Vanderbilt’s needs.

The first step must be the development of an overall architectural and financial plan for the Library. Paul Gherman, University Librarian, has requested funds to employ a leading architectural firm to study our library, prepare a plan for which specific cost figures could be developed, and consider the relative costs and benefits of renovation versus construction of a new building.

*The Senior Steering Council endorses the employment of an experienced architectural consultant to study our library and consider the costs and benefits of renovation as against construction of a new building.*
The Senior Steering Council supports identification of the library as a major priority in the coming Capital Campaign.

In a subsequent section on the Vanderbilt Research and Lifelong Learning Center, we will discuss the rationale for creating an Undergraduate Library and Technology Center (ULTC).

D. Analysis of the Caucus 3 Review of Departmental Plans

Caucus 3 (Haglund [Chair], Hancock, Jrade, Wiltshire) was charged “[t]o review and select departmental or interdisciplinary proposals, graduate or undergraduate, for recommendation to the SAPG,” with the additional instructions to “review the original departmental academic plans submitted to Dean Infante (and any graduate plans not recommended by Caucus 2), select those appropriate for forwarding to the SAPG, and counsel other promising units on how their proposals might be refurbished for reconsideration.” The report from Caucus 3 identified nine proposals worthy of consideration. As before, our comments are in black italics without indentation, and our recommendations are left-right indented and in red italics:

1. Bioscience, Technology and Humanities

Although the submitted proposal for Bioscience, Technology and Humanities is not sufficiently developed for recommendation, interested parties may wish to refine the ideas represented in it for possible consideration by future committees involved in College strategic planning.

2. Center for the Creative Arts

Already recommended by SAP-CAS.

3. Cultural of the Americas

Already solicited by SAPG, and recommended by SAP-CAS.

4. Development and Democratization

Caucus 3 has identified this theme as appearing in a number of departmental proposals. Interested faculty may wish to prepare a formal proposal on the topic and submit it for possible consideration by future committees involved in College strategic planning.

5. Environmental Sciences

This proposal was solicited by SAPG and is under its review. It is recognized in the SAP-CAS review of interdisciplinary programs in the Natural Sciences.
6. Ethics and the Professions

This proposal is not at the point where it could be recommended for implementation. The issues of certification raised in this proposal are not strategic and should be addressed through the College Committee on Educational Programs.

7. Law, Literature and Politics

This proposal was solicited by SAPG and has been evaluated and restructured by SAP-CAS.

8. Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities

Later in this report, we recommend that the College move to appoint or recruit a faculty member to fill the vacant Directorship of the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities and adjust the constitution of the advisory board of the Center to reflect the increased interdisciplinary activity within the College.

9. Center for the Study of Religion and Culture

Already recommended by SAP-CAS.

E. Analysis of the Appendix on Infrastructure in the Caucus 3 Report

The Caucus 3 report included an appendix with a number of suggestions for improving the College. We now present its list of suggestions (with minor editorial adjustments), with each suggestion followed by our comments in black italics without indentation, and our recommendations left-right indented and in red italics:

The suggestions outlined briefly below are primarily gleaned from the departmental strategic plans submitted to Dean Infante in the spring of 2000. They are augmented by some suggestions made directly to Caucus 3 members by faculty during our examination of these issues.

1. Capital Campaign issues

In the forthcoming Capital Campaign, the College should put forth the strongest possible case for funding a number of major new initiatives. We ought at the bare minimum to press for funding for the following items:

1.1. Residential colleges

This is one of the best ideas ever discussed on the campus for improving the tone of intellectual and social life, and for bringing faculty and students into more frequent contact! In the student affairs arena, implementation of this proposal should be our highest priority for the Capital Campaign. Later in this report, the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council enthusiastically endorses conversion to a residential college system.
1.2. New library building

Also must be a major priority for the College. While the Vanderbilt Library staff are doing a great job under trying conditions, the library’s physical plant is simply no longer credible as part of a great research university. No wonder the undergraduates don’t want to go there! The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council’s recommendations on the Library are covered under our analysis of the Caucus 4 report.

1.3. New classrooms and office building

Although the College has been looking forward to renovating and occupying Buttrick when MRB-III is completed, this move will only begin to relieve current needs, and that barely. If any of the major SAP-CAS initiatives are funded, additional space at least of the size of Furman will be needed.

The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council recognizes that the College needs new study, classroom, and office space. While we do not view this as a strategic issue, it is absolutely critical to the ability of the College to provide the services expected of it. These needs should be recognized as possible targets for benefaction.

1.4. Endowed chairs

In the past, a general call has been raised for more endowed chairs. More useful would be identification of areas in which the creation of chairs would impart significant momentum to the College, especially to those interdisciplinary areas that the College hopes to strengthen.

To be competitive with peer institutions, the College of Arts and Science badly needs additional endowed chairs, which nationally are evolving into a rank above Professor. Acquisition of more endowed chairs is particularly important as we try to improve the quality of our faculty, in that endowed chairs are essential instruments in recruiting and retaining senior faculty of the highest caliber. In the various recommended interdisciplinary initiatives, we have identified a number of areas where endowed professorships would have particularly salubrious consequences. Core departments and programs would also benefit from endowed chairs. Our recommendation is that a vigorous effort be mounted to secure funding for these chairs.

1.5. Endowment for the College

For years, the College has lamented its dependence on tuition income. Higher priority must be allocated to breaking out of the cycle by effective and aggressive fund-raising. Recent experience in Vanderbilt’s School of Engineering shows that significant development is indeed possible here.
While the endowment of Vanderbilt University may be comparable to that of the other private universities with which we compete, the SAP-CAS Steering Council recognizes that the endowment of the College of Arts and Science is woefully inadequate relative to comparable liberal arts colleges. We heartily endorse aggressive capital accumulation on behalf of the College of Arts and Science.

1.6. Fellowships for first-year graduate students

There are sound scholarly and pedagogical reasons for trying to offer more service-free fellowships for first-year graduate students. It is one of the few ways for Vanderbilt to become instantly competitive with universities thought to be better than we are.

In departments where the fellowships for graduate students require service during the first year or two, service-free fellowships would place Vanderbilt in a more competitive position. In many departments, an increase in the number, size, type, and duration of academic year and summer fellowships is important for building stronger programs. We endorse aggressive efforts to accomplish these objectives.

Elsewhere in our report, we also emphasize the need for recruiting better graduate students.

2. Cross-cutting administrative issues

There is an urgent need to reexamine “the way things are done” in the College. Many departments expressed variations on the theme that restructuring governance is the key to productive innovation, efficiency and enhanced performance, and quite possibly to better financial health, provided that appropriate metrics and incentives for performance and accountability are developed and implemented.

2.1. Student quality and diversity

The students at Vanderbilt are notably pre-professional rather than academic in orientation. Several department chairs mention the need to emphasize intellectual, as well as ethnic and economic, diversity. We recognize the problem, made addressing it one of our Criteria, and endorse efforts to solve it.

We endorse efforts to increase the intellectual, ethnic, and economic diversity of our notably pre-professional undergraduate student body.

2.2. Micromanagement

The College has prospered financially in part because of scrupulous attention by the College Dean’s office to budget and management issues at the departmental level. While micromanagement was probably necessary twenty-five years ago, it may now have become
a hindrance to both departments and to the College. The elements of the necessary change should include transitions to:

2.2.1 **Department-based business planning.** Departments should be managed on the basis of business plans that are appropriate to their size, needs, and strategic plans. These plans should be developed in consultation with the Dean of the College, with appropriate provisions for real delegation of stewardship and accountability. See 2.2.2.

2.2.2 **Department-centered decision making.** To some, the College is virtually ungovernable under the present micromanagement scheme, which violates management canons of span of control. Within the framework of the departmental business plans, departments could implement many routine items now requiring College approval.

> The questions of administrative micromanagement involve more than just the College of Arts and Science. It seems undeniable that a host of decisions made at the administrative level should in fact be made at the departmental level. We recognize the problem, and encourage an appropriate decentralization of responsibility and decision-making with a corresponding increase in and distribution of accountability.

2.2.3 **New approaches to sustaining interdisciplinary programs.** Several of the program directors note that they cannot offer needed courses because faculty have relocated, leaving the future of the programs in jeopardy. In a department-based management plan, department chairs could simply agree amongst themselves and execute such interdisciplinary innovations. *Will this in fact work? We are concerned about the potential conflict between departments and interdisciplinary programs, such as requests for departments to teach courses in support of interdisciplinary programs, the appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty involved in interdisciplinary programs, and the contention for budgetary authority and indirect cost allocation for these endeavors.*

> We recommend that the College ask the Provost to establish a task force of senior faculty to study the impact of interdisciplinary programs on the curriculum and scheduling, the promotion and tenure process, and financial management in the various schools.

2.3. **Appointments, promotion and tenure**

The departmental plans allude to some of these difficulties, but most of the following ideas were suggested to Caucus 3 during its review of the earlier plans.

2.3.1 **Managing the search process.** Appointments in Department X often have consequences for Department Y. Search committees should be appointed with due
consideration. [Similar logic applies in the sciences to the Schools of Engineering and Medicine as well.] The College has recently encouraged this consultation and collaboration. See 2.2.3 above.

2.3.2 The first year. New faculty need to have special consideration both for their first-year teaching assignments and for developing a long-range plan for effective teaching, as well as for getting a jump start on scholarship and grant support. Departments should manage this responsibility within the framework of their instructional plans.

We agree that new faculty should have special consideration in their first-year teaching assignments and for developing a long-range plan for effective teaching, as well as for jump-starting scholarship and grant-writing programs, and that departments should manage this responsibility within the framework of instructional necessities.

2.3.3 Retention and promotion. The departmental guidelines for achieving tenure and promotion should be formalized as rapidly as possible. Standards for meeting the teaching criteria for tenure are much in need of revision; the continuing reliance on student ratings as the sole measure for evaluating instructional activity is counterproductive. The CAPT Report recommendations may need revisiting to take this consideration into account.

We encourage the Dean and the Provost to complete their review of departmental implementation of College regulations regarding tenure and promotion.

2.3.4 Appointments, tenure and promotion in an interdisciplinary environment. It is proverbial wisdom that junior faculty cannot be tenured for interdisciplinary scholarship. Or is it only for “interdepartmental” or “interschool” scholarship? If we are moving toward a more interdisciplinary environment for graduate work, are changes needed in the way we evaluate interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching for tenure? See 2.2.3 above.

2.3.5 The role of the PTRC. During the CAPT study, numerous improvements were made in department and college/school procedures for tenure and promotion. However, the role and procedures of the PTRC were not well defined, with the result that it is now viewed by junior faculty as a kind of “star chamber.” Appropriate procedures [for] and constraints [upon] the PTRC to remedy both the reality and the (mis)perception need to be developed and promulgated.

The administration should be made aware of concerns that the role and procedures of the promotion and tenure review committee (PTRC) are ill-defined, with the result that the PTRC is now viewed by some as a kind of “star chamber.” The Senior Steering Council believes that appropriate
procedures and constraints should be developed and placed on the PTRC to remedy both the reality and the (mis)perceptions of its role, and that these measures should be announced.

2.4. Flexibility in teaching assignments and formats

In a decentralized management scheme, departments have the greatest stake in managing their teaching mission effectively. Chairs need the flexibility to define, in consultation with the College, what the teaching mission of the department is, and then to manage it independently.

2.4.1 **Department-based management of teaching.** Departments should develop plans to discharge their teaching obligations under the oversight of directors of undergraduate and graduate studies and with due regard to the scholarly activities of the faculty. *See 2.2.2 above.*

2.4.2 **Team teaching.** Team teaching can be regulated most effectively at the Department level; the College should not feel obligated to provide a “one-size-fits-all” policy for teaching credits in team-taught courses. In principle, department chairs [and faculty] should be able to agree on a course-by-course basis. *See 2.2.2 above.*

2.4.3 **Modular or unconventional course formats.** The growth of interdisciplinary graduate programs poses special challenges to the conventional scheduling of graduate courses. Undergraduate courses such as those providing advanced learning experiences can also benefit from flexibility in teaching format, including “half semester,” “May-mester” and intensive short-course formats. *See 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 above.*

2.5. **Instructional and research staff.**

High-quality staff free faculty to do things that faculty do best, and are more effective than faculty at many tasks central to research and scholarship. These needs vary from department to department.

*There is a high and widespread level of dissatisfaction with the policies and performance of the Division of Human Resources at Vanderbilt. Some of the issues raised below go beyond considerations of administrative competence, thus indicating a need for a systematic review and repair of the Division and other units implicated in the items below. Furthermore, Vanderbilt must recognize the costs of competing in both the local and national markets for administrative, clerical and research staff. The points raised in the following list are worthy of detailed study and prompt action.*
2.5.1 College vs. departmental administrative services. The College should investigate the trade-offs between providing centralized services such as financial analysis and student evaluation data and letting individual departments manage these functions.

2.5.2 Staff development. Many departments need administrative services that cannot be met by the staff categories authorized by the College. Personnel policies should favor the hiring and retention of staff members capable of running conferences, managing Web pages, handling mid-level computing tasks, helping with proposals and similar tasks requiring more than routine secretarial training.

2.5.3 Staff salaries. Several departments mentioned the problem of competitiveness in salaries and benefits. This is particularly pressing as we compete for higher-quality staff with greater skills in information technology. Both job descriptions and salary levels need to be re-evaluated.

2.5.4 Long-range funding for staff. Presently, instructional staff are budgeted against expected tuition income. There is no analog in the College for research staff, leaving research equipment in which the College has invested millions of dollars to be maintained by graduate students and research associates who are temporary and who often do not have the requisite specialized expertise. An appropriate mechanism is needed for supporting these facilities from combinations of indirect costs and user fees.

2.6. Career Center

Several departments mentioned the inadequacy of the Career Center in helping graduates locate first jobs.

We recommend that a qualitative and cost-benefit analysis be conducted to determine whether the funds used to support the Career Center might be better invested elsewhere.

3. Information technology and research infrastructure

Although the College appeared a decade and a half ago to be in the forefront of this area (e.g., in the “Mathematica across the Curriculum” initiative), we now seem to lag well behind our peers and need to examine our commitment to continual improvements in our management of information technology.

3.1. Support for information infrastructure and facilities

An investment-oriented strategy is clearly needed to bring our IT infrastructure up to the appropriate level, particularly in departmental and College offices.
3.1.1 **Computerizing College administration.** Nothing shows our IT weakness more clearly than the fact that the College still operates with a largely paper administrative system. We need to put all routine administrative functions including student evaluations, minutes of College meetings and course enrollment information on the Web, eliminate paper distributions from the CAS, and provide all data for departmental analysis in downloadable electronic form.

*This is a University-Central issue more than just a College one. We agree fully that Vanderbilt is behind many other universities in this regard. We recommend that University Central move quickly to bring our information technology infrastructure into the 21st century. This may require a significant financial investment, accompanied by a change in the culture.*

3.1.2 **Acquiring up-to-date scheduling software.** OASIS was designed a long time ago and is no longer adequate. It is inflexible and provides little feedback in electronic form to faculty and administrative staff. The College should move more aggressively to acquire a 21st century software package for these functions. *We agree wholeheartedly. See 3.1.1 above.*

3.1.3 **Pushing for a paperless University.** At long last, some grants accounting information is being made available over the Internet to researchers. The College should take an aggressive stance with respect to computerizing all University-related administrative functions, including purchase requisitions, personnel action forms, and property accounting functions. *See 3.1.1 above.*

*We support attempts to convert Vanderbilt into a paperless university with all University-related administrative functions computerized. We recognize, however, that with regard to Human Resource Services (Personnel), a significant decrease in the error rate is required lest mistakes proliferate more widely and rapidly than is already the case.*

3.1.4 **Centralized research support.** In the sciences, certain centralized services should be provided on a recharge basis for analytical and shop functions. Business plans for these facilities probably need to be approved at the Provost’s level (presumably by the Associate Provost for Research) to avoid waste and duplication of effort and facilities. Computer support is particularly lacking! *See the analysis of the Caucus 4 report.*

3.1.5 **Instructional laboratory facilities.** Departments should be challenged to demonstrate that the instructional laboratories (in all disciplines, not just science!) keep pace with facilities available at our peer institutions. This could be done, for example, by asking traveling faculty to take a look at the status of instructional facilities at the host institutions and to report back. This issue should also be a frequent agenda item for the University’s development staff.
We recommend that College departments be challenged to see that Vanderbilt instructional laboratories and classrooms are equal to if not better than facilities at our peer institutions.

3.1.6 Faculty use of information technology. The College has been developing more and more electronically equipped classrooms but a surprising number of faculty still do not make use of these resources. We need to find out why. Is it that we are naturally hospitable to Luddites? Or do faculty need more help and opportunities to learn to use these resources effectively?

We agree that the faculty needs to be encouraged to utilize information technology, but as we discuss in our review of the Caucus 4 report, there needs to be a larger University commitment to supporting the academic information infrastructure.

3.2. New IT resources for the College

Catching up in information technology will require investments in some new resources, many of which can probably be funded through grant or in-kind contributions.

3.2.1 Digital media center. Such a center would provide expert resources to faculty from all departments for development of instructional materials. Financing for such a center—e.g., backcharging to departments—will be a ticklish issue here. See the analysis of the Caucus 4 report.

3.2.2 Digital services center. This center would be available to faculty and staff for handling routine service requests. The tradeoffs between such a center and departmental-level capacity for handing information or digital services will have to be studied carefully. See the analysis of the Caucus 4 report in Section III.C and the discussion of the Undergraduate Library and Technology Center in Section III.F.9.2.

3.2.3 Automating University functions. Many aspects of procurement, property accounting, general ledger functions and other research-related administrative functions remain manual or semi-manual, leading to mistakes and extra work for faculty and staff. The College should press for upgrades of administrative systems in University Central. Also see 3.1.1 above.

We recommend that the College press for upgrades of administrative systems in University Central, particularly with regard to procurement, property accounting, general ledger functions and other research-related administrative operations.

3.2.3 Web-site development. Most of the work involved in Web site development for departments, courses and scholarly enterprises is now being done by faculty and students. This is not usually an effective use of faculty time. A modest investment
in staff would have a huge payoff in enhancing Vanderbilt’s appearance on the Web. *See the analysis of the Caucus 4 report.*

4. Clever but inexpensive initiatives

Many enhancements of the College's productivity and reputation are not expensive. Nevertheless, they require some budgeting and, in some cases, restructuring of programs.

4.1. Research stipends for students

Undergraduate and graduate research fellowships for the Robert Penn Warren Center and other College centers would be an important and relatively inexpensive way to signal the partnership between faculty and students in the scholarship that informs the life of a university college. *We have already addressed this issue.*

4.2. Scholarship policies

There is no mechanism in the College of Arts and Science for awarding first-time merit-based financial aid to students after matriculation. Reserving a few Honors scholarships for top performers after the freshman year could aid in the retention of our best students when they have shown that they in fact can do exceedingly well. One way to do this is to earmark funds offered to incoming freshmen but not used (because they go somewhere else) for a competition for sophomore scholarships.

*We recommend for immediate implementation that a few honors scholarships be reserved for otherwise unsupported top performing freshmen as an aid in the retention of our best students.*

4.3. Admissions policies

More targeted admissions searches are needed to change the mix of student interests, generate a more differentiated and diverse student body, and [recruit] for specific talents and experience. [In plain text, fewer pre-professional students] *We have already agreed that the College needs a more diverse student body, and believe that modest adjustments to the recruiting and admission policies may contribute to achieving this goal.*

4.4. Web sharing of faculty expertise

Development of a Vanderbilt intranet-based, searchable interdisciplinary clearinghouse for research and teaching interests (a different kind of “faculty registry”) would make it easier to develop intra-University collaborations. This is in principle already possible through searches of the Web but requires that all faculty have up-to-date Web résumés. *See 4.5 below.*
4.5. Web sharing of specialized facilities

Creation of a Web-based, searchable index to Vanderbilt research facilities and service capabilities that can be searched from both inside and outside the University. This could be particularly useful in generating external support for specialized analytical or research facilities.

*We recommend the development of a web-based Vanderbilt Research Index that covers faculty expertise, research facilities, and service capabilities.*

4.6. Grantsmanship in the humanities

Although grant awards in the humanities tend to be small, more entrepreneurial activity in this sphere can be encouraged and rewarded. Sponsored Research could be asked to help identify funding sources and programs. The SR search capability for faculty research interests is a big help here.

*We recommend that the College or the University provide specialized staff support for pursuing grant opportunities in the arts and humanities.*

4.7. Intellectual outreach to Nashville

Possibilities include: Student docents at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, faculty speakers for the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and local professional clubs and associations, more faculty interaction with the local entrepreneurial community, development of flexible mechanisms for initiating collaborations with local industry, Web-based and paper information on specialized Vanderbilt expertise, etc. The list might be extended.

*The Senior Steering Council encourages an expansion of Vanderbilt’s outreach efforts to the Nashville community.*

F. Additional Recommendations

In addition to those items specifically outlined in the charge to SAP-CAS, the Senior Steering Council has identified several other areas worthy of further exploration by the College and University Central.

1. Proposals Worthy of Continued Development

In other sections of the report, particularly the review of the Caucus 3 Report in Section III.D, we have recommended the continued development of a number of proposals. There are other proposals, considered by Caucus 1, that should be merged to form a stronger proposal:
We recommend that work continue on the development of the proposed Program in Gender and Sexuality, possibly through the Warren Center Program for 2001-2002.

We recommend that the faculty involved in the proposal for the Interdisciplinary Program in International Relations coordinate their efforts with the faculty involved in the proposal for further development of the Center for European Studies.

We endorse the idea of a Masters in Public Policy, and strongly recommend that the faculty proposing it pursue possibilities through existing channels with the Graduate School, and explore potential overlaps with the Graduate Program in Social and Political Thought.

We recognize the importance of training teachers of English as a Second Language, but believe that the College of Arts and Science should not assume primary responsibility for this activity. We encourage our foreign language departments to support relevant endeavors by Peabody College, as appropriate.

We recommend that work continue within the College of Arts and Science on the development of the proposed Vanderbilt Institute for Medicine, Health and Society, and that a dialogue be maintained with related programs under discussion within the School of Medicine.

There is potential value in the proposal for a Center for Nashville Studies. We recommend that its authors work with the authors of the proposal for a Vanderbilt Institute for Research in Popular Music to develop a joint proposal on locally grounded cultural studies for presentation to the Academic Venture Capital Fund.

2. Financial Aid

Caucus 7 (Siegfried [Chair] and Christensen) examined possible changes in the financial aid strategy for the College. We summarize their analysis here, described in more detail in Appendix B.

In order to improve the academic quality of its undergraduate students and enhance their racial, geographic, and economic diversity, the College of Arts & Science supports efforts to enhance grant (or “scholarship”) aid in need-based financial aid awards conditional on academic credentials. For academically strong students, reduced family and student contributions and smaller loans should be replaced by increased grants. This change should enhance matriculation rates of students from among those with SAT scores exceeding 1320 and family incomes below $100,000, a group for which Vanderbilt currently is not competitive. Quietly increasing grant assistance to needy students with high academic potential can broaden the economic diversity of the undergraduate population without sacrificing academic quality. It can be an effective strategy accomplished at reasonable cost because students eligible for need-based aid are likely to be responsive to modest increments in financial aid awards. This financial aid strategy should help
attract talented students who have financial need in a way that is affordable to the University and is unlikely to provoke significant off-setting responses by competing institutions. It can make Vanderbilt accessible to more students from lower and middle income families.

*We recommend that academically strong students who qualify for need-based aid should receive increased grants so that loans and family/student contributions may be reduced sufficiently to make Vanderbilt accessible to a more economically diverse population.*

3. Residential Colleges

A system of residential colleges at Vanderbilt would do more to change and elevate the profile of the University than any other single initiative. Residential colleges would simultaneously sharpen the intellectual focus of undergraduate life, increase the substantive involvement of faculty in that focus, and improve the quality of student experience in general. As one student on the original College committee for this purpose put it, “Residential colleges would fix everything.” They will not do everything, of course, but they will change the culture and character of Vanderbilt.

*Consistent with our goal of moving Vanderbilt University forward in research and scholarship, we enthusiastically endorse plans for a residential college program that includes all undergraduates and continues for the full four-year period. Such a system will build on existing strengths of Vanderbilt, including the commitment to undergraduate education, our compact residential campus, and the fine housing program already in place. Residential colleges will enhance opportunities for faculty-student interaction outside the classroom; create a robust and inclusive intellectual atmosphere on campus that will increase Vanderbilt's appeal to the best students; and make good on our responsibility to educate the whole person.*

4. Continuing Studies and Part-Time Graduate Programs

A number of other universities, most notably John Hopkins, offer high-profile continuing studies and part-time graduate programs. The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council asked Professor Carol Burke, formerly a graduate dean at Johns Hopkins, to examine the feasibility of such programs at Vanderbilt. Appendix C is based upon her report.

In 1992, the College of Arts and Science initiated the Masters in Liberal Arts and Science as a program in continuing education that provided much-needed community outreach. This program has been a success by all counts and continues to be well-subscribed, with thirty-five faculty from fifteen departments teaching MLAS courses to approximately 150 adult students, with a total of fifty MLAS degrees awarded. The MLAS provides some income to the College, but not of the magnitude that might be expected for a more professional program in continuing education and part-time graduate studies whose tuition might be paid in part by employers seeking to retain or train their staff.
The Law School and the Owen Graduate School of Management recognize the potential financial benefits of such programs, and have proposed the creation of an Executive Conference Center to allow expansion of their present offerings. The extent to which the College could benefit from mounting a similar endeavor is as yet undetermined. The Senior Steering Council imagines that some part-time graduate programs could enhance smaller departments but might detract significantly from other well-established graduate programs, particularly at a time when a major effort is being mounted to enhance the quality of existing graduate programs.

Issues to be resolved include whether the surrounding community could support a part-time graduate program centered in the College of Arts and Science, the extent to which a fraction of the program faculty could be drawn from outside of Vanderbilt, whether there are competing programs at other Nashville colleges and universities, how the tuition income would be distributed among participating faculty and departments and the College, and whether teaching in such programs might count toward a faculty member’s teaching load. Whether the intellectual and managerial costs would be justified by the financial return and increased public outreach would have to be determined.

*We recommend that the College of Arts and Science determine the relative costs and benefits of embarking on an initiative to offer, either independently or as part of a larger University Central effort, opportunities in continuing studies and in part-time graduate programs.*

5. Early Admission for Undergraduate Students

A number of other universities have established innovative early-admission programs targeted at attracting very strong undergraduate students.

*We recommend that the Provost’s office, the College of Arts and Science, and the Admissions Office work together to evaluate the merits of allowing prospective Vanderbilt freshmen to matriculate at the end of the junior year of high school and complete requirements for the diploma with the first-year Vanderbilt curriculum.*

6. Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities

In light of the Steering Council’s recommendations for the creation of several new interdisciplinary centers involving the humanities and social sciences, we believe that the College would benefit from the coordination of the activities among the new and existing academic centers. An academic director for the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities could serve admirably in this role.

*We recommend that the College move to appoint or recruit a faculty member to fill the vacant Directorship of the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities and adjust the constitution of the advisory board of the Center to reflect the increased interdisciplinary activity within the College.*
In light of our expectation of the appointment of a Director of the Warren Center, we recommend deferral of action on the proposal for a Center for Critical Studies until its authors have the opportunity to consult with the new Director.

7. Graduate School

As indicated by many of our recommendations, we strongly support major investments in graduate programs at Vanderbilt. Because a University committee is examining the role of the Graduate School at Vanderbilt, we did not address issues of management of the graduate programs.

8. Professional Schools

The Senior Steering Council recognizes that there is a great opportunity at Vanderbilt for closer coordination of activities between the College of Arts and Science and the professional schools. It would be foolish not to take full advantage of our compact campus and a tradition of inter-school interactions in developing revised admission procedures and timing, cross-listing or cross-enrollment for professional courses, and enhancement of as-yet-unfocused interests in interdisciplinary subjects, such as ethics in the professions.

We recommend that the Provost’s Office, each of the schools in University Central, and the Medical and Nursing Schools work together to create enhanced opportunities for greater interaction between preprofessional undergraduate education and the professional schools.

We recommend that the Provost’s office, the College of Arts and Science, the Graduate School, and the professional schools at Vanderbilt work together to ascertain the merits of allowing early admission of our undergraduates into Vanderbilt graduate and professional degree programs.

9. Vanderbilt Conference, Research, and Lifelong Learning Center

As part of the strategic planning process the Owen School has proposed that the University establish an Executive Conference Center. The primary tenants of the Conference Center would be the professional schools, which would use the facilities to expand their executive education offerings. But the proposal also foresees that the Center would provide a university-wide opportunity to establish other continuing education programs. Because of ample hotel space nearby, the proposal does not include provisions for sleeping accommodations. The stated preference is to maximize the space dedicated to learning and physical interaction. Such space would include a high-quality dining room that would offer excellent food service throughout the day. It would also include a number of small break-out rooms, a set of five to seven classrooms accommodating between 30 and 70 students, and a spacious common area. All classrooms would be outfitted with state-of-the-art teleconferencing equipment and wireless technology. Some classrooms would be reserved for individual schools on a continuous basis.
Staff offices would also be supplied for the individual schools. There would be a small business center and enclosed parking on-site.

The proposed new building presents the University with the opportunity to consider other functions it might serve that would enhance its usefulness and attractiveness for faculty and students as well as for the clientele that the Owen School hopes to cultivate.

For conceptual purposes, the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council imagines the new building to have six stories—sorted by function, arranged for flow—above an underground parking garage:

- **Ground Floor:** Bookstore and coffee bar or restaurant
- **Floors 2 and 3:** Undergraduate Library and Technology Center
- **Floor 4:** Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Study
- **Floor 5:** Lifelong Learning Center: Continuing Education and Part-time Education
- **Floor 6:** Executive Conference Center

The basic objective would be to bring into contact usually separated segments of Vanderbilt and the larger community in order to dramatize the commitment to the kind of innovative, diverse, and dynamic educational environment that the Chancellor regularly invokes in his vision statements for Vanderbilt. The proposed building would produce a flowing confluence of executives and undergraduates; high level oversight of research and lifelong education; commerce and reflection.

*We recommend that the University examine the merits and feasibility of expanding the concept of the Executive Conference Center to form the Vanderbilt Conference, Research and Lifelong Learning Center, which would include the Executive Conference Center, the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies, the Vanderbilt Center for Continuing Graduate Education, an Undergraduate Library and Technology Center, and the Vanderbilt Bookstore.*

**9.1. Bookstore and Coffee Bar or Restaurant**

Plans are already underway to build a new bookstore. Its location on the site of the International House of Pancakes at the intersection of Broadway and 21st Avenue would be ideal, significantly remote from Borders, yet close enough to campus to draw students and members of the community. It would provide intellectual and commercial anchorage for the north end of campus, particularly at nights and weekends when the main campus is relatively deserted and direct automobile access would be desirable for reasons of both safety and convenience.

The commercial goals of a bookstore might appear to conflict with the academic objectives of a library, but we believe that creative forethought could design a bookstore/library combination to bring undergraduates out of their dorms and educate them to appreciate the seamless connection between the world and the library, as between books and digital technology. The bookstore/library complex would be a place of recreation and reflection, solitary study and group interaction. There are economic benefits as well, in that the revenue stream of the bookstore would help defray the costs of the building and its below-ground parking; customers would use...
the parking garage primarily during the day; other users would benefit from it at nights and on weekends.

9.2. The Undergraduate Library and Technology Center (ULTC)

Construction of the ULTC would respond to two of the professed needs of the Central Library: 1) a versatile and attractive space for students to study in solitude and in groups; 2) a technology service center that would complement other proposed digital centers on campus by providing assistance to faculty and students in the preparation of web-based instructional programs and projects, as well as in the digitization of various textual materials.

The ULTC would occupy two stories of the proposed building in a manner that would benefit all building users and the larger Vanderbilt community by combining study and viewing spaces: assembly spaces (perhaps including a small coffee bar); a digital service center; one small, digital classroom; the relocated Microform and Media Center; a reserve room; a current periodicals collection; and a small but useful collection of books (perhaps a recent arrivals collection).

The construction of the ULTC would not solve all of the problems of the Central Library. Substantial renovation would still be necessary; additional staff would have to be hired. Yet it would add important functions, attract students, and free up space in the Central Library for graduate and faculty study areas as well as for additional stacks.

We recommend that the University evaluate the merits and feasibility of creating an Undergraduate Library and Technology Center (ULTC).

9.3. The Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Study (VIAS)*

Although we have developed a structure for sponsoring initiatives from the faculty, there is no overall structure for providing administrative support to newly established centers, for monitoring their progress, for assessing their status, and for matching faculty from successful ventures with potential outside funding sources. Nor is there an organizational structure for the incubation of promising projects over a set term where faculty could develop proposals worthy of significant support.

Vanderbilt has a number of existing institutes and centers, many of which operate in isolation of or even in competition with each other. An informal umbrella organization, which we term the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies (VIAS), could aid in the coordination of activities of these institutes and centers, and would provide a common organization to support the many centers whose proposals have sprouted through this strategic planning process. Many of these proposals define interesting ways of encouraging collaboration among faculty, but few of them require the extensive administrative structures they propose (full-time directors and administrative assistants). VIAS could provide administrative support for transinstitutional, inter-school, multi-school and even interdivisional programs and eliminate redundancies and inefficiencies in coordination and staffing, leaving the participating faculty free to conduct research. An Institute director could also

*This section benefits from detailed suggestions provided by Professor Carol Burke.
work with the University Development Office to raise money for these endeavors in a coordinated fashion.

VIAS could administer specially assigned interdisciplinary faculty and graduate student lines. It could promote the interests of graduate study by raising funds for named fellowships (e.g., a year’s stipend for dissertation fellowships in the humanities and social sciences; a year’s stipend for the science student to study another discipline, such as law or business). Graduate support is not easy to raise, but prospective donors might be intrigued by contributing to the Institutes for Advanced Studies. VIAS could organize searches for faculty with broad constituencies. It could be a mechanism for making joint tenured appointments between research centers and departments.

VIAS could be an excellent attractor for senior faculty recruits offered appointments as a Fellows of the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies for one to two years while completing a transition from previous positions to full-time status at Vanderbilt. With endowment funds, VIAS could become part of a package to attract eminent scholars by providing research and writing time without teaching, advising and committee duties.

Most important, VIAS would bring prestige to Vanderbilt by representing it to the outside world as an ambitious, progressive research institution with a unified vision—a version of the university that would attract both prospective faculty and donors. Too few Southern universities are on the map as major centers of research, and VIAS could provide a clear perceptual if not strategic advantage to Vanderbilt.

Finally, an Institute for Advanced Study could offer an interesting answer to questions under discussion about the future of the graduate school. At institutions like Johns Hopkins, founded as a graduate school, and at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Cornell, Stanford and a number of the large public research universities, whether or not a graduate school continues to exist as a separate administrative entity seems to have little effect on research. Stanford did away with its graduate school a few years ago, and graduate education and research continued to flourish. At universities that historically placed priority on their undergraduate programs, graduate schools have served as advocates for graduate education and research.

For many years, the tasks of monitoring graduate education and research have fallen to the same dean. Vanderbilt, like many other institutions, separated those functions by hiring a Vice Provost for Research. The Senior Steering Council does not believe that those functions should be merged into a colossal, unmanageable structure. The demands of identifying, promoting, and supporting sponsored research that would summon a research administrator frequently to Washington, and the need to advance technology transfer certainly would keep a single person busy enough, too busy to invest great amounts of time in foundation and private donor fund raising, in fostering innovative collaborations, and in tending to the graduate program.

The tasks currently assumed by the Graduate School, together with innovative, inter-departmental and inter-divisional research efforts that link not just faculty but their post-docs and their graduate students could form the basis of a productive set of Institutes operating under the umbrella of VIAS.
The governance of VIAS might consist of a board chaired by an academically qualified director and including the Provost (or the Vice-Provost for Research), the Vice-Chancellor for Medical Affairs (or his designate), one representative from each institute or center, and one representative from each of the three divisions of the College of Arts and Science. VIAS would also recruit a visiting board, composed of past or prospective fellows, to meet with the governing board annually. Permanent staff for VIAS would include an administrative assistant, a development officer, and clerical staff assigned to assist the directors of the centers and institutes.

Program and budgetary responsibilities of VIAS would include:
- Providing support staff for established and incubating centers and programs.
- Compensating departments for faculty release time to participate in interdepartmental programs.
- Supporting visiting fellows who would participate in the centers, institutes, and working groups.
- Allocating selected graduate lines to centers and institutes.
- Housing joint appointments.
- Monitoring progress of working groups.
- Assessing the success of centers or programs with sunset provisions.
- Conducting Delphi studies to predict future transinstitutional and interdivisional research projects.
- Seeking outside funding to sustain and expand successful centers and institutes.
- Sponsoring symposia and lectures.

In the proposed building, VIAS would require offices for staff and visiting fellows, two conference/seminar rooms, and a central lounge.

We recommend that the University evaluate the merits and feasibility of creating the Vanderbilt Institutes for Advanced Studies (VIAS).

9.4. The Lifelong Learning Center

The Lifelong Learning Center would house the offices of Continuing Education and Part-time Education. Continuing Education would run on the model of the College’s Masters of Liberal Arts and Sciences (MLAS), albeit more ambitiously, and would develop courses for members of the community who have an interest in the kind of intellectual stimulation that a classroom experience conducted by Vanderbilt faculty can provide. Part-time programs, discussed in more detail in Section III.F.4, would be degree-granting programs established and supervised by individual departments and programs in the University. Courses would be designed to attract a clientele from the health, software, and music industries whose career opportunities would be enhanced by a postgraduate degree from Vanderbilt. Both the curriculum and the personnel involved would be subject to quality control by academic departments. Because the degree would be a true MA or MS rather than an MLAS, the costs of tuition would be significantly higher than for Continuing Education and the returns to individual faculty, participating departments, the schools, and the university proportionately greater. Because we could expect that employers would in part subsidize their employees’ tuition, we could be reasonably certain that a
well-designed, responsive part-time program would be successful and eventually generate substantial revenue per annum.

We recommend that Vanderbilt investigate the intellectual merits, economic benefits, and logistical requirements for creating continuing education and part-time graduate degree programs to be managed by the Vanderbilt Lifelong Learning Center.

9.5. Executive Conference Center

The uppermost floor of the building would house the Executive Conference Center proposed by the Owen School. We believe that the kind of mixed-use building we have proposed would not only provide essential services for the executives who would participate in the Owen programs; it would be a positive attraction to them to carry on their activities in a dynamic conspectus of the University rather than in an appended satellite. As with the interdisciplinary programs discussed above, this building with its shared facilities would be a creative response to the Chancellor’s charge to integrate the professional schools and the College.

The Senior Steering Council endorses the construction, with modifications, of the Executive Conference Center proposed by the Owen School.

G. Proposals Not Currently Recommended

In the course of reviews by the several caucuses and the Senior Steering Council, a number of programs were evaluated but not recommended for investment at this time. Critiques of unsuccessful proposals should help proposal authors to refine both the concept and design of the proposed activity. We urge each of the participants in the construction of these proposals to work within the structure of ongoing strategic planning for the College to produce stronger proposals that better match the strengths and needs of the College of Arts and Science.

While the concept and the proposal were excellent, the Institute for the Study of Popular Music does not fit within the Center for the Creative Arts as presently designed. Hence we cannot evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of that proposal relative to other components of the Center. The Masters in Fine Arts in Creative Writing in the proposed Center for the Creative Arts does not adequately meet a sufficient number of the stated selection criteria to merit inclusion. We hope that our recommendation for the establishment of a Center for Creative Arts and the recruitment of a director for this program will provide a mechanism that will lead to joint programs with Blair, and to the inclusion of writing programs within the Center.

Although an inclusive Program in Law, Humanities, and Politics is recognized as being worthy of vigorous future development, the proposed program in Law and Politics does not meet a sufficient number of the stated selection criteria and hence was not recommended. We affirm the conclusion of Caucus 1 that the Proposal for a Center for Research on Economic Development and Information Technology is not appropriate for further SAP-CAS or SAPG consideration. The proposal for a Center for European Studies was not considered to be of a strategic nature and hence was not recommended. The proposal on Ethics and the Professions is not at the point where
it could be recommended for implementation. The issues of certification raised in this proposal are not strategic and should be addressed through the College Committee on Educational Programs. We do not recommend at this time any further action by the College of Arts and Science on the development of a program in E-Communication and Commerce, or an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Culture Studies.

IV. THE BIG PICTURE: THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE COLLEGE

The preceding analysis and recommendations were motivated not only by specific requests from the Provost’s Strategic Academic Planning Group, but also by the recognition that the faculty of the College of Arts and Science are poised to make bold proposals for the future of their College. The College faculty mobilized itself for this project in an unprecedented manner and has presented and then iterated a large number of proposals. The Senior Steering Council has recommended many of these, has suggested continued development of others, and has withheld endorsement of some. We have also reviewed a large number of suggestions for improving both the College and the University, and have recommended that most be implemented. However, a successful strategic plan must articulate a philosophical approach to guide the College along an optimum path for the future. In this section we analyze a number of broad-reaching issues and provide recommendations that may help as the faculty of the College of Arts and Science strive to move Vanderbilt to a higher level of accomplishment and recognition.

A. Ongoing planning

We believe that the College would benefit from the establishment of a working group of senior faculty to serve as a clearing house for proposals on a continuing basis. This working group would meet three to four times a year to provide a forum for discussion of new or reworked proposals. This new committee will also provide a mechanism for iteration and further review of proposals previously submitted.

We recommend that the Dean of the College of Arts & Science create a Standing Committee for Academic Planning.

The Standing Committee for Academic Planning should be a group of senior faculty in the College of Arts & Science charged with encouraging the strategic development of new ideas originating within the College. This group would solicit and support faculty proposals for innovative programs in research and scholarship, particularly interdisciplinary ones that might not fit within a single department. The group would identify ideas worthy of pursuit, and recruit faculty from the College and the larger University to bring these ideas to fruition. The Committee would need funds to support the cost of developing proposals aimed at obtaining higher levels of funding from the College, the Provost's office, or external sources. Activities worthy of support include, for
example, planning workshops, external consultants, and possibly national or international
courferences.

_We recommend that the Dean of the College of Arts & Science create a fund, comparable
to the College Venture Fund for instructional innovation, that would enable the Standing
Committee for Academic Planning to support the strategic development of proposals for
innovative and creative programs in research and scholarship._

The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council recognizes the significant effort expended by authors of
the successful proposals recommended by SAP-CAS. The College should encourage the formation
of working groups to explore new ideas for academic endeavors and should invest resources to
help these groups meet the high standard of proposal-writing required by the College, the
University, and external agencies.

_We recommend that the College move vigorously to identify an appropriate academic
officer whose primary responsibility would be to provide enhanced advisory, technical and
programmatic support for the identification of sources of funding, the development and
refinement of research and curricular proposals, and the launching and coordination of
new academic endeavors._

**B. The College Commitment to Teaching**

All future strategic planning for the College must include provisions for the continual
strengthening of Vanderbilt’s commitment to first-class teaching at all levels —
undergraduate, graduate, and professional. Preservation and perpetuation of our tradition
of teaching excellence is and must remain of paramount importance. As at the best research
institutions, however, innovative teaching and pioneering research go hand in hand: intense
application in the library or laboratory complements imagination and vigor in the classroom. The
improved quality of faculty research in the College must and will manifest itself in the improved
quality of faculty instruction. But the equilibration of these two essential College missions cannot
be achieved and maintained without vigilance, renewal and endowment. The College must
continue to employ the best teachers, provide state-of-the-art pedagogical space, equipment,
training, and counseling, upgrade teaching evaluative instruments, and liberally reward
demonstrated excellence in teaching. It must also search for creative new ways to ensure that
research and scholarship appropriately contribute to pedagogical refinement. In short, that
teaching is a fundamental responsibility and privilege of the College must be internally and
externally recognized by the allocation of investment dollars, by qualitative enrichment, by
programmatic and personnel enhancement, and by high-profile publicity.

_We recommend that the faculty continue to regard teaching as a professional responsibility
equal in importance to research._
C. The Interface of the College of Arts and Science and the Medical and Engineering Schools

The structure of SAP-CAS and its Caucuses permitted little formal communication with representatives, planners or administrators from the Medical School during our deliberations. While SAPG has representation from the Medical School, it is, essentially, a University-Central planning group. Because collaborative projects that cross the Medical School-Arts and Science interface are of interest to many College departments and programs and are particularly important for the development of the Natural Science departments, a permanent planning group for consideration of trans-institutional proposals would serve an important function for Vanderbilt. No administrative planning group of this kind, composed of a healthy mix of individuals from the two areas, was in place during our deliberations although in the past such a group produced plans for several major “trans-institutional” investments. We understand that such a planning group is currently being formed, the Trans-institutional Academic Priorities Committee (TAC) with faculty and administration representatives from both the Medical School and the University Central.

*The Senior Steering Council supports the formation of a Trans-institutional Academic Priorities Committee with the hope that it will encourage and support transformative initiatives that build upon existing strengths and that identify new areas for investment.*

Institutes that span the Medical School-Natural Science interface might have a positive impact on the development of Natural Science departments in the College. Institutes that bridge the College and Medical School interface might serve to create a cushion between the different Arts & Science and Medical School cultures of research and teaching. Such trans-institutional institutes might be used to offer faculty the opportunity to mix the Medical School and Arts and Science models for faculty activities at Vanderbilt. This would offer both Arts & Science and Medical School faculty more flexibility in defining their career goals and their contributions to Vanderbilt, and this model could also possibly bring more outstanding scientists into Arts & Science classrooms. Similar creative structures might prove useful in developing interdisciplinary programs between Arts and Science and the School of Engineering.

*We urge the Trans-institutional Academic Priorities Committee to consider opportunities for the development of additional initiatives and institutes that span the Medical School-Natural Science interface.*

D. Evaluating Existing Graduate Programs

While composing the recommendations that fulfill the charge to identify as worthy of increased investment 3-5 graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences and any additional natural science graduate programs, the SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council became aware that two aspects of the process of strategic planning for the future of graduate education will require continued study and assessment. First, because the College of Arts and Science is small in comparison to most of its peer institutions, it cannot compete in every discipline in which, in principle, graduate education might be offered. This fact raises a strategic
question: should the College continue to offer advanced degrees in nearly all humanistic and social scientific disciplines, even if doing so portends a continuation of its uneven record of achievement, or should it instead concentrate its resources on a smaller number of programs that thereby might perform at a more distinguished level? The Senior Steering Council ultimately made no recommendation about this matter, but in the preamble to Section III.B on Targeted Investments in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences based upon the Caucus 2 report, we acknowledge that any reallocation of resources aimed at raising the reputation of one group of graduate programs will unavoidably require that other programs be trimmed. The consequences of such choices must be faced directly.

A second and related strategic issue arises in connection with the possible reduction of the number of graduate degree-granting programs. As the Senior Steering Council also notes in the preamble to our analysis of targeted investments, no graduate program can thrive in complete isolation from flourishing programs in cognate disciplines. To believe otherwise is inconsistent with the turn toward interdisciplinary teaching and research in the humanities and social sciences that is otherwise so heavily marked in this report. For this reason, it is crucial to the future of graduate education in the College that if there should be a smaller set of degree-granting programs, then that set must be crafted with the aim of establishing cogent and mutually supportive intellectual and institutional relations among its constituent programs. To neglect issues of synergy among graduate programs would be to squander scarce resources in a context which calls for a much greater focus in planning graduate training than Vanderbilt has hitherto mustered.

Both of these strategic issues — the possible decrease in the number of graduate degree-granting programs and the enhanced importance of the relations among them — became clear to the Steering Council because our charge forced us to adopt a position of oversight in regard to the future of graduate education. While we take no stand on how to prepare for this future, we are certain that the importance of these issues is inexorable and that to fail to address them from a continued position of oversight will be hazardous for the College.

We recommend that the absolutely central issues of the possible reduction decrease in the number of graduate degree-granting programs and the enhanced importance of the relations among graduate programs be taken up either by the proposed Standing Committee for Academic Planning or by a special Committee on Graduate Programs, advisory to the Dean of the College.

E. Coherence and Balance in the SAP-CAS Recommendations

The SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council has forwarded to the Dean four interdisciplinary proposals and a ranked list of departments in which it believes strategic investment would reap high rewards. These interdisciplinary proposals and the graduate programs of traditional departments were considered individually. The interdisciplinary proposals build on current strengths in various departments. The departments identified for new investment converge on the interdisciplinary programs. English is involved in all four recommended interdisciplinary proposals. Spanish and Portuguese and Anthropology play a central role in the Center for the Americas proposal.
It is not clear, however, whether the recommendations adequately span or meet the intellectual needs of the college, or whether we have accumulated a series of parts not yet suitably fit together. Three of the five departments ranked by SAP-CAS are in the Humanities Division (English, Spanish and Portuguese, and Philosophy), and the other two are in the Social Science Division (Anthropology and History). Of the four interdisciplinary proposals recommended by SAP-CAS, three are primarily humanities proposals (Law and Humanities, Creative Arts, and Religion and Culture), while the fourth (Center for the Americas) relies heavily upon both History and Anthropology. In these proposals, other social science departments are represented only on the periphery, although their participation in the various initiatives would be welcome should they choose to pursue research interests compatible with the projects of those centers. Whether and how social sciences should be better integrated into the overall strategic plan will be determined in part by the research directions chosen by the faculty of these departments, and also by the reviews of proposals and programs by our successors and the College and University administration.

On the other hand, the concentration of interdisciplinary proposals in the humanities runs the risk of creating redundancies, or of spreading current faculty strengths so thinly across projects that none achieves its potential.

We cannot evaluate the potential coherence of the sum of our recommended proposals because we do not know which will be funded. Nor can we anticipate what additional proposals might arise from subsequent strategic planning by the College of Arts & Science. The SAP-CAS proposals subsequently recommended by SAPG might contribute to either an imbalance in the disciplines targeted for development or a redundancy in funding for particular departments and programs, both of which consequences would have to be addressed by yet another round of reviews by the College and University Central.

In addition to evaluating the coherence and balance of the scholarly aspects of the interdisciplinary proposals, it will also be necessary to assess the impact of the proposed centers on the curriculum. This impact will take several forms, including implications for teaching loads, and the match between undergraduate student interests and the graduate programs targeted for investment.

V. EPILOGUE

The Strategic Academic Plan of the College of Arts and Science would not be complete without an epilogue. The Epilogue cannot be written today to be placed between the end covers of this document; it must instead be written by the faculty of the College of Arts and Science in one year, or at most two. Very few of our recommendations can be implemented without substantial effort and money; the great progress made by the College of Arts and Science in the past several decades is a testimony that most easy changes and many challenging ones have already been accomplished. Within the next year or two, we should be able to discern whether the faculty of the College of Arts and Science, our new Dean, and the higher administration at Vanderbilt University have the strength of character, determination, and
intellectual and financial resources to bring our recommendations to fruition. Too often academic strategic plans rot on a dusty shelf where the epilogue becomes the next strategic plan, written a decade later. It would be a travesty were this the fate of our current project.

Were nothing to come of our report, one might readily blame the “Administration” for not implementing our many and well-reasoned recommendations. What will make all of the difference in the content of this report’s Epilogue will be the role of the faculty of the College in implementing our recommendations. It is often said that the planning process is more important than the planning product: today the faculty is energized, a large number of excellent ideas have been brought to the table, new collaborations have been established, and opportunities identified. Whether this momentum is maintained or dissipated is truly the choice of our faculty. No administrative or development officer can raise sufficient funds to meet our stated ambitions; were that possible, our original ambitions must have been too modest. The strongest guarantee of a favorable Epilogue will be that an energized faculty continues to press itself, the administration, our alumni, and the many individuals, foundations, organizations, and agencies that might support the strengthening of the College of Arts and Science. Historically, the faculty of the College of Arts and Science has been a collegial and rather complacent body with a reassuring and outwardly calm demeanor. If we wish to move the College of Arts and Science to a higher plane at a rate that exceeds our historical pace, we must shed this complacency but in a manner that does not risk destroying either the collegiality or charm of the College of Arts and Science. We can best do this by continuing the broad and intense dialogues engendered by the SAP-CAS planning process. We should hold the Administration and ourselves accountable for progress toward implementing our recommendations.

Implementation of our recommendations will be expensive: residential colleges might cost one hundred million dollars; the endowment for our many recommended activities might cost several hundred million more. The faculty can and should advocate for and participate in the vigorous pursuit of the required funds. Many of our goals can be realized by writing proposals to outside agencies, but this will take dedication, perseverance, and a level of enthusiasm that are the hallmarks of an enterprising academic researcher. Administrators seldom write proposals, but they can be instrumental in identifying funding sources, in motivating and facilitating the writing of proposals and meeting with donors, and in demonstrating to the funding agencies the unfaltering commitment of the University to make best use of the resources it has been granted. Although the University Administration maintains a Development Office charged with raising funds from a broad spectrum of benefactors, our faculty cannot sit back and merely wait for the funds to arrive, but should be active in identifying and encouraging donors.

This Strategic Academic Plan of the College of Arts and Science should be viewed not as a blueprint for a better College, but as a reservoir of ideas from which the Vanderbilt community can draw in its attempt to make all of Vanderbilt a better place. Ideally, when the Epilogue to this report is written, we will be able to congratulate ourselves and the Administration on two years of hard work that has produced a steady flow of ideas through the strategic reservoir and a documented improvement in the intellectual, cultural, and artistic productivity and profile of the College of Arts and Science and the entire University.
Respectfully submitted,

Professor John Wikswo, Chair, A.B. Learned Professor of Living State Physics, Professor of Physics
Professor Jerome Christensen, Centennial Professor and Chair of English
Professor Marshall Eakin, Associate Professor and Chair of History
Professor Paul Elledge, Associate Dean, *ex officio*, Professor of English
Professor Gregg Horowitz, Associate Professor of Philosophy
Professor Ned Porter, Stevenson Professor of Chemistry
Professor John Siegfried, Professor of Economics
Professor Susan Wiltshire, Professor of Classics, Chair of Classical Studies
VI. APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A.1 — CHARGE TO SAP-CAS

4 December 2000

TO: Senior Steering Council for College Strategic Planning (Professors Wikswo, Chair, Christensen, Eakin, Horowitz, Porter, Siegfried, and Wiltshire)

FROM: John H. Venable, Dean

SUBJ: Charge to the Council

In light of Provost Burish’s extension of the timetable for the University’s strategic planning process, the College of Arts and Science has another opportunity to consider its own long-term plans and to propose additional initiatives to the University Strategic Academic Planning Group (SAPG). As you probably know, the SAPG has provisionally approved existing and proposed interdisciplinary initiatives in Law and Business, the Learning Sciences, Nanometer-Scale Materials, Biophysical Sciences and Bioengineering, the Culture of the Americas, and Environmental Risk and Resources Management, and transinstitutional initiatives in Neuroscience and Structural Biology. But central areas of College inquiry—discipline-centered and interdisciplinary foci of research and teaching—are not yet represented among the SAPG’s favored programs. While I support these several initiatives recommended by the SAPG, and will entertain other scientific proposals for development within the College, I am deeply concerned by the virtual absence, to date, of humanities and social science representation in the SAPG-approved academic plans, and the imbalance of College or University emphasis that might be inferred from it. I therefore welcome the opportunity provided by the Provost to commission a second phase of the College planning process with the purpose of expanding its vision and widening its embrace—of rendering it inclusive, representative, and faithful to the College’s total mission.

I am very grateful to you for agreeing to serve the College in this effort by joining the Senior Steering Council for Strategic Academic Planning for the College of Arts and Science (SAPCAS). Your work will begin immediately and continue until a plan acceptable to the Dean and to the Provost has been designed, no later than the end of the Spring 2001 term. The Council should consult documents produced in the earlier phase of the College’s academic planning but should not feel constrained by them. The Council will report to me.

The Council is charged with the following tasks:

1) In consultation with the College faculty, to formulate a set of priorities for the College, for the next five to ten years, which will serve as a foundation for the construction of a strategic academic plan;
(2) To solicit ideas for strategic academic initiatives from members of the College faculty;

(3) To conduct a review of these proposals against the criteria for strategic initiatives established by the SAPG, and to recommend those deserving adoption to that body;

(4) In the same context, to assess and, if approved, to develop three multi-school initiatives—Law, Literature, and Politics; The Culture of the Americas; and The Center for the Creative Arts—suggested by my office for possible recommendation to the SAPG;

(5) To consult the departmental strategic academic plans produced for Dean Infante and consider their recommendations;

(6) To identify three to five strong graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences, as prescribed by the SAPG, and additional graduate programs in the natural science division, for emphasis and investment, adhering to the following guidelines: such programs should have critical mass; they should have attracted and suitably placed superior students; and they should have ongoing financial support.

(7) To work closely with the SAPCAS sub-committees of my appointment (in consultation with Professor Wikswo) and any other faculty groups it may assemble for expert or specialized advice;

(8) To take particular notice of proposals from and in the humanities and social sciences in order to guarantee fair and balanced representation of College interests in the academic plan;

(9) To recommend to me at any time additions to this charge that have the support of a majority of the Steering Council;

(10) To draft a Strategic Academic Plan for the College of Arts and Science.

No more important task than this one currently faces the College. It is crucial to our future that it be addressed with intelligence, imagination, vision, energy, and a collegial spirit. I trust you to bring these assets to the assignment. I am very grateful for your willingness to accept it, and I look forward to working with you on it.

Please find attached an outline of the SAPCAS sub-committee structure that I am proposing. In most cases, one Steering Council member is assigned to a sub-committee. Sub-committees report, of course, to the Steering Council.

I welcome your responses to this Council charge.
APPENDIX A.2 — SAP-CAS STRUCTURE

STRATEGIC ACADEMIC PLANNING for the COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE (SAP-CAS)
Caucus Structures, Proposals, and Possible Initiatives

SAP-CAS Senior Steering Council:

Professor John Wikswo, Chair
Professor Jerome Christensen*
Professor Marshall Eakin
Professor Gregg Horowitz
Professor Ned Porter
Professor John Siegfried*
Professor Susan Wiltshire
Professor Paul Elledge, Associate Dean, ex officio

*Also members of the expanded SAPG

Caucus 1: Charge: To solicit, review and/or design possible College contributions to multi-school, interschool, and transinstitutional research/educational initiatives (including those listed below):

Caucus: Burke, Christensen, Eakin, Horowitz, Kreyling (Chair), Porter

A. Law, Literature and Politics

Sub-caucus: Christensen (Chair), Oppenheimer, Zeppos

This Caucus should consider existing strengths in Law and Literature, build on a newly designed cooperative program between Political Science and Law, and develop an academic proposal for exploiting both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

B. The Culture of the Americas

Sub-caucus: Eakin (Chair), Fitz, Gregor, Kreyling, Outlaw

This Caucus should begin with the proposal already accepted by the SAPG and develop it into a fully-fledged initiative, with potential contributions from the various schools and programs stated and documented. Emphasis should fall upon opportunities for graduate students.
C. Center for the Creative Arts

Sub-caucus: Burke (Chair), Clayton, Daniels, Hallquist, Horowitz, Murphy, Sloop, and Dean Mark Wait (Blair)

This Caucus should work toward an expansion, intensification and centralization of creative arts activity at Vanderbilt, with attention to the opportunities for creativity afforded by recent technological advances. It should consider the plausibility of offering a graduate degree in writing, building upon existing strengths in English, but including educational opportunities in film-making, digital composition, imaging, on-line journalism, photography, scene-design, studio arts, and music. “Writing” is here broadly conceived to include not merely fiction and poetry but non-fiction, science, law, play- and screen-writing.

Caucus 2: Charge (Revised): To develop a single, long, unranked list of strong, existing departmental or interdisciplinary graduate programs in the College of Arts and Science qualified for increased development. This list should include a brief rationale supporting each selection

Caucus: Bahry, Bell, Gay, Siegfried, Staros (Chair)

This Caucus should solicit and review proposals from departments and programs for the enrichment of graduate curricula, instruction and other training, and forward with the report those data used to form this list.

Caucus 3: Charge: To review and select departmental or interdisciplinary proposals, graduate or undergraduate, for recommendation to the SAPG.

Caucus: Haglund (Chair), Hancock, Jrade, Wiltshire

This Caucus should review the original departmental academic plans submitted to Dean Infante (and any graduate plans not recommended by Caucus 2), select those appropriate for forwarding to the SAPG, and counsel other promising units on how their proposals might be refurbished for reconsideration.

Caucus 4: To review or create over-arching proposals—e.g., on teaching, technology, research innovations, etc.—not identified with particular disciplines but embracing several.

Caucus: Ayers, Doyle (Chair), Hancock, Jrade, McNamara, J. Plummer, Sapir, Weintraub, Wikswo

A. Technology

Sub-caucus: Ayers, Plummer (Chair), Sapir
B. Teaching

Sub-caucus: Jrade, McNamara, Weintraub (Chair)

C. Library

Sub-caucus: Doyle (Chair), Hancock

Caucus 5: Charge: To research the “strategic academic plans” or similar documents from other institutions, particularly colleges of liberal arts within research universities, for additional ideas on initiatives appropriate to and plausible for implementation in the CAS.

Caucus: Ayers, G. Graham, Harris, Weintraub (Chair)

Caucus 6: Charge: To conduct an in-depth review of curricular offerings, programs, research projects, specialized knowledge and other academic activities in our sister Vanderbilt colleges for opportunities for additional synergistic collaboration with CAS at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Caucus: Cornfield, Damon (Chair), Marcus, Russell, Scott

Caucus 7: Charge: To determine how the financial aid goals College might be optimized in light of the goals of this strategic planning exercise.

Caucus: Siegfried (Chair), Christensen

Caucus 8: Charge: To examine the feasibility of instituting part-time graduate programs at Vanderbilt.

Caucus: Burke

Other support: Russell McIntyre, Associate Dean of Arts & Science, served as a consultant to the Senior Steering Council and several of the caucuses. Administrative support was provided by Cheryl Cosby of the Department of Physics and Astronomy and by Melissa Wocher, Patricia Landers, and Diane Hampton of the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Science. Don Berry of the Department of Physics and Astronomy was the SAP-CAS webmaster.
APPENDIX A.3 — SAP-CAS PREMISES

Premises for Strategic Academic Planning for the College of Arts and Science (SAP-CAS)

January 13, 2001

These seven premises will guide us in formulating and assessing proposals for shaping the aspirations and crafting the future of the College of Arts and Science.

1. Improving Vanderbilt University’s eminence in research requires the strengthening of the faculty and graduate programs in the College of Arts and Science.

2. Vanderbilt University’s tradition of pedagogical excellence is central to the growth and training of our students and the well-being of the entire institution. The College of Arts and Science must continue to support and reward the highest quality of undergraduate and graduate teaching.

3. As a liberal arts college within a major research university, the College of Arts and Science can provide undergraduates with extraordinary opportunities for learning through research.

4. Vanderbilt has earned a reputation for excellence in research. Now we should aim at even greater accomplishment and at more widespread recognition. The College of Arts and Science and University Central must develop and strategically support research initiatives by providing appropriate resources to those units where the opportunities for attaining distinction are most promising.

5. Because much of the most exciting research is occurring at the borders between traditional disciplines, promoting it requires significant investments that often exceed what can reasonably be expected from individual departments, programs, and schools. Beyond its benefits for research, reinforcing dynamic exchanges among disciplines is also a means of strengthening multiple academic units at once. To realize the future to which the College rightly aspires, the University must commit to create interdisciplinary, multi-school, inter-school, and transinstitutional initiatives that encourage collaboration among departments, programs, and schools and to support them liberally with central resources.

6. The academic mission of the College is advanced by engagement with larger communities. The College of Arts and Science must enhance its support for the innovative integration of service with research and pedagogy.

7. We must strive to make Vanderbilt a more diverse community. To this end, the College of Arts and Science must support enterprising academic and social initiatives to broaden perspectives, to transform the intellectual culture, and to recruit and retain faculty, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students and undergraduates from historically under-represented populations.
APPENDIX A.4 — SAP-CAS CRITERIA

Criteria for Strategic Academic Planning for the College of Arts and Science (SAP-CAS)

January 24, 2001

Prologue: Proposals should be consistent with the Chancellor’s goal of advancing Vanderbilt to the front rank of American research universities, contribute to enhancing the intellectual environment of the College of Arts and Science, and strengthen Vanderbilt’s covenant with the community. To accomplish this, the following ten criteria will guide us in formulating and assessing proposals.

1. Proposals should require significant investment in graduate education at Vanderbilt University and reaffirm our commitment to provide an unexcelled undergraduate experience.

2. They should involve a broad spectrum of faculty rather than a few individuals.

3. They should strengthen the disciplinary integrity and expand the interdisciplinary range of individual departments as well as the College and the University. They should forge effective faculty links within and across departmental lines, and, where appropriate, foster greater integration with the College of Arts and Science and its sister schools.

4. Proposed investment in an interdisciplinary program or project should reinforce rather than weaken the core disciplines and departments.

5. A sufficient number of present Vanderbilt faculty should be firmly committed to participating in the project, although project realization may require recruitment of a specific external candidate, or in extraordinary circumstances, more than one individual.

6. Proposals should be bold. They should require significant new intellectual and financial investment.

7. The anticipated gains for the College of Arts and Science should be clearly identified and commensurate with the investment.

8. Normally, proposals should show promise of generating the funding necessary to sustain the project following its establishment. For programs with few or no external funding sources, however, the initial, dramatic impact from significant investment may obviate the need for continuous generation of new funding.

9. Proposals should contribute to the creation of a stimulating and enriching learning environment at all levels and assist in recruiting and retaining the very best scholars.

10. Proposals should recognize the need to recruit and retain an intellectually, racially, and culturally diverse student body and faculty.
## APPENDIX A.5 — SAP-CAS GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAS</td>
<td>The College of Arts and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caucus</td>
<td>A sub-committee of SAP-CAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>The criteria established by SAP-CAS for judging the appropriateness of an interdisciplinary initiative for acceptance into the University strategic plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdivisional</td>
<td>An academic initiative that involves two or more divisions within the College of Arts and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-school initiative</td>
<td>An academic initiative that involves two schools (exclusive of Medicine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Initiative</td>
<td>An academic initiative that involves two or more disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-school initiative</td>
<td>An academic initiative that involves more than two schools (exclusive of Medicine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP-CAS</td>
<td>The Strategic Academic Planning group for the College of Arts and Science, appointed by the Dean and charged with developing an academic plan for the College, for submission to SAPG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPG</td>
<td>The Strategic Academic Planning Group, appointed by the Provost, charged with developing an academic plan for the University for submission to the Board of Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSC</td>
<td>The Senior Steering Council. The group of seven, appointed and charged by the Dean, responsible for overseeing SAP-CAS, receiving its recommendations, and drafting a strategic plan for the College, for submission to the Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transinstitutional initiative</td>
<td>An academic initiative that includes the Medical Center and University Central</td>
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December 18, 2000

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

You will find attached to this letter another from Professor John Wikswo announcing the launching of a second phase of the College’s strategic planning endeavor. We ask you to read it carefully, paying particular attention to the schedule it establishes for executing the process.

We cannot stress strongly enough the importance of two themes of Professor Wikswo’s letter:

(1) Strategic planning for the College is a collective, collaborative, consultative effort: its success depends upon contributions from faculty at all ranks, in all departments and programs. Faculty silence will spell failure.

(2) Rapid response is essential. First call is last call. Successive deadlines for our working groups require prompt activity from the beginning by all participants in the planning process.

Strategic academic planning is for the immediate future the highest priority for the College, after teaching. It represents the most promising opportunity we are likely to have for at least a decade to effect major changes in the implementation of our mission. We have been extremely gratified by the faculty’s early response to this opportunity. With sustained energy and excitement throughout the process, we will almost certainly be successful in significantly advancing the University.

Thank you for your thoughtful, energetic participation.

John H. Venable
Dean

Richard McCarty
Dean-designate

Enclosures
December 14, 2000

TO: Faculty, College of Arts and Science
FROM: John P. Wikswo, Chair, Senior Steering Council for College Strategic Planning
RE: Strategic Academic Plan for the College of Arts and Science (SAPCAS)

I am writing to request your help in our efforts to prepare a comprehensive strategic plan for the College of Arts and Science.

A brief review of the ongoing University planning effort will help place our project in an appropriate perspective. In the Spring of 1999, Provost Tom Burish initiated an effort by the Strategic Academic Planning Group (SAPG) to develop a strategic academic plan for University Central. I have been a member of SAPG since its inception. In September, 1999, Provost Burish wrote to the University Central faculty and deans, requesting that each school submit a strategic plan to him by March 31, 2000. On February, 1, 2000, Dean Infante requested that A&S departments provide him with their strategic plans by 18 February, and on April 31, he submitted to SAPG his strategic plan for the College. SAPG, working under a tight time schedule set by the Board of Trust, reviewed the seven school plans, organized a planning retreat in July, and requested white papers on interdisciplinary proposals that had been outlined in the various school plans. Through the summer, SAPG continued to review proposals and formulate its core recommendations. By mid-October, SAPG had completed its initial effort, and distributed to the retreat participants a draft of a portion of the University Plan. By late summer, it became obvious to SAPG and a number of other faculty that the College plan, and the portions of it that were appropriate for inclusion into the University Plan, did not adequately present a strategy for continuing to build the College and anchor its central position in the University. Fortunately, at meeting of the recent Board of Trust, the deadline for completing the University plan was extended until 25 April, 2001.

As a result of the extension of the deadline for SAPG, the College now has an opportunity to revisit and refine its strategic plan. Dean Venable has appointed a Senior Steering Council for College Strategic Planning, with Professors Christensen, Eakin, Horowitz, Porter, Siegfried, Wiltshire, and me as members. Dean Venable, Associate Dean Paul Elledge, and I have identified six sub-committees or Caucuses that will examine specific aspects of the College Planning effort. The Steering Council and the Caucuses comprise the group that will be responsible for Strategic Academic Planning for the College of Arts and Science (SAPCAS). Each department will have a faculty member serving on SAPCAS, not to act as a representative of departmental self-interests but to provide a bi-directional conduit of information between the faculty and SAPCAS.

We have a great deal to accomplish in a very short time. We anticipate having a draft report to Dean Venable by early March to allow for adequate review by the College faculty and the Faculty Council prior to the April submission of the complete College plan to SAPG. That in turn means that the Caucus reports must be in draft form by 1 February and final form by 15 February. Hence we need input from the College Faculty immediately!

I urge each of you to review both the enclosed documents (our Charge and the organizational plan for SAPCAS) and the strategic plan submitted last February by your department, and consider carefully how the College might best realize its potential for greatness. I would appreciate hearing from you in writing (Box 1807 Station B or john.wikswo@vanderbilt.edu) as soon as possible, and no later than January 15. In Dean Venable’s words, “it is crucial to our future that [this project] be addressed with intelligence, imagination, vision, energy, and a collegial spirit.”

Enclosures
March 20, 2001

TO: Arts and Science Faculty Members
FROM: John P. Wikswo, Chair, Strategic Academic Plan, College of Arts and Science
RE: SAPCAS Website and Caucus Reports

The Strategic Academic Planning Group of the College of Arts and Science (SAPCAS) has prepared a web site with information on the activities of our committee and, most important, the reports from most of our Caucuses. You can find these at www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/strategic

This is a working website, in that over the next several weeks, we will be posting additional reports and making minor revisions and corrections to the existing ones. We will notify the faculty when the Final Report of the Senior Steering Council is posted.

Please visit that website at your convenience. There is an email button at the top of the home page that you can use to submit comments, or you can send them to me at john.wikswo@vanderbilt.edu. Comments received before March 26 will be given serious consideration by the SAPCAS Steering Council.
APPENDIX B — FINANCIAL AID GOALS

Report of Caucus 7 on Financial Aid Goals
College of Arts & Science
March, 2001

Over recent decades the role of financial aid in higher education has broadened from a traditional focus on providing opportunities for intergenerational mobility in income and wealth. It is now used also as a strategic tool by some colleges and universities to enhance the academic quality of the student body, to promote a diverse student population, and to strengthen the short-run financial condition of the institution. The College of Arts & Science is particularly interested in improving the academic quality of its undergraduate students and enhancing the racial, geographic, and economic diversity of the student body.

There are two types of financial aid: merit and need-based. Merit aid is awarded without regard to the financial situation of students or their families. It includes awards for academic, athletic, musical, or other types of achievement, as well as assistance to particular categories of students. Need-based aid is awarded to admitted students without regard to merit (other than that sufficient for admission). It is comprised normally of grants, loans, and work-study opportunities, and traditionally an expectation of a contribution from students and/or their families.

Colleges and universities that are "need-blind" in admissions are more attractive to applicants. To remain need-blind, the institution must provide all admitted students with a financial aid package that allows them to attend Vanderbilt. An institution does not have to offer an equal mix of grants, loans, and work-study opportunities to remain need-blind, however. "Preferential packaging" for students with stronger academic credentials is widespread. The distinction between need-based aid and merit aid is thus not sharp.

The College of Arts & Science offers both types of financial assistance. Merit aid is used primarily to shape the character of the undergraduate student population. Academic merit awards, in particular, are aimed at attracting students with truly superior academic potential. The justification for such awards rests largely on a belief in strong peer-effects in learning. Outstanding students also enhance faculty recruiting. The basic goal of need-based aid is to allow excellent students who could not otherwise afford Vanderbilt to attend. Need-based aid attracts students from diverse economic backgrounds.

Over the past twenty years, academic merit aid has evolved into an arms race, with more and more institutions offering increasingly generous merit-based grants. The arms race now is migrating to need-based aid. Princeton, for example, recently eliminated loans from need-based aid packages. Harvard and Yale have responded by increasing the grants in their need-based aid packages. In long-run equilibrium, financial aid arms races accomplish little other than redistributing income to targeted groups (e.g., academically talented students) because enhanced aid packages from one institution often trigger matching responses from competitors. Competition for the top students is largely a zero-sum game. To the extent that merit awards succeed in
achieving their goals for a particular institution, they attract a student population with a strong preference for financial rewards.

In some cases, Vanderbilt need-based financial aid packages currently contain an average loan component in excess of the packages offered by our direct competitors. Need-based awards at Vanderbilt also contain an expected contribution from students and/or their families, some part of which may be less visible because it derives from a "cost-to-attend" figure below what aid recipients need to spend to fit in comfortably with other Vanderbilt students. Loans and expected student and/or family contributions that are less competitive than those offered by direct competitors may affect who applies to Vanderbilt and who among the admitted students receiving need-based aid offers decides to attend.

Even if our offers are "competitive," substantial reliance on students' and their families' financial contributions may contribute to attrition at Vanderbilt because a considerable proportion of our undergraduate students appear to have few financial constraints. Students on need-based aid who must survive on a limited budget may be unable to participate in typical student activities to the extent they wish, and therefore may feel socially stigmatized.

Vanderbilt does particularly well in attracting undergraduates from the population of those with SAT scores exceeding 1320 and coming from families with annual income exceeding $100,000 (we enroll 3 percent of such students nationally). It does particularly poorly in attracting students from among those with SAT scores exceeding 1320 and coming from families with income less than $100,000 annually (we enroll only 0.3 percent of such students nationally). Because of these different rates of success and because the latter group is much larger than the former group, there is a greater opportunity for effectively using additional financial aid resources to improve the academic quality of future classes if funds are devoted to improving the attractiveness of need-based awards to students with strong academic credentials.

Vanderbilt appears to fare rather poorly in terms of enrolling "middle-class" students from families in the $40,000 to $100,000 annual income category. This implies a greater opportunity to attract academically strong students from this socio-demographic group with enhanced financial aid awards.

Accordingly, we support an effort to reduce the family and student contribution and the amount of borrowing expected of students on need-based financial aid. Harvard has just announced a move in this direction by adding a $2,000 grant to all of its need-based awards. For academically strong students a reduced family and student contribution, and a reduction in loan assistance offered should be replaced by increased grants. Such a strategy is less expensive for Vanderbilt today than for most of its competitors because of Vanderbilt's current relatively low proportion of students on need-based aid.

Less reliance on family and student contributions and on loan assistance implies larger cash grants for need-based aid students. Such a change should increase matriculation rates among needy admitted students, leading to a larger share of the student population on financial aid, and
increased need-based financial aid costs. Calculating that cost is important, but is beyond our capabilities here.

If some part of family and/or student contributions and loan assistance is replaced by grants for all admitted students who are eligible for need-based aid, the yield rate on all needy students should rise. The goal, however, is to increase Vanderbilt’s matriculation rate from its current 0.3 percent of the potential student population with SAT’s exceeding 1320 and family incomes of less than $100,000, not to increase the matriculation rate from any and all students from families with annual incomes less than $100,000.

Consequently, we endorse enhancing grant aid in need-based awards conditional on academic credentials. Such a policy effectively adds a merit aspect of aid on top of baseline need-based financial assistance. To implement this "merit in addition to need" approach, we recommend an aggressive effort to reduce loans and expected student and family contributions in the aid packages of prospective needy students who are predicted to be above average academic potential. For various reasons (work experience, federal government subsidization, responsiveness to student financial need) we believe that work-study opportunities should continue to play a significant role in most need-based financial aid packages. Work study opportunities are particularly valuable when the required tasks enhance the learning experience of students.

Quietly increasing grant assistance to high academic potential need-based students has the advantage of broadening the economic diversity of the undergraduate population without sacrificing academic quality. It can accomplish this objective at reasonable financial cost because need-based aid students are likely to be relatively responsive to modestly more generous financial aid awards. This financial aid strategy responds to the more generous aid packages being offered by more prestigious universities in a focused, low profile manner that should not exacerbate the arms race. It should help to attract talented students who have financial need, but do so in a way that remains affordable to the University, is unlikely to provoke significant responses by competing institutions, and makes Vanderbilt more accessible to students from lower and middle income families.

John Siegfried
Jerry Christensen

February 28, 2001
APPENDIX C — CONTINUING AND PART-TIME STUDIES

Report of Caucus 8 on Continuing and Part-time Studies

The SAP-CAS Steering Council requested that Professor Carol Burke review for it the possibilities offered to the College by an increased emphasis on continuing studies and part-time graduate programs. The following text is based upon her report to SAP-CAS.

“Continuing studies” and “part-time graduate programs” differ in important respects. The former generally operates as an appendage to the university with a separate school or other administrative structure. Regular faculty may "moonlight" by teaching evening and weekend courses, but they generally have little to say about the program's content, the admission criteria for students, and program evaluation. Part-time graduate programs, on the other hand, have some faculty oversight and are tied in meaningful ways to the research missions of departments and centers. Tenured faculty design the curriculum, determine admission criteria, decide whom to hire as adjuncts, and modify programs as they evolve. Large and successful Continuing Studies programs generally design programs based on the market place. If consumers demand a degree, Continuing Studies administrators will put it together, hire the adjunct faculty, market it, and grant the degree. At Johns Hopkins, for example, the School of Continuing Studies offers a MBA degree even though the university maintains no business school, no full-time business faculty and thus no hope of ever achieving accreditation for the degree.

Part-time graduate programs also assess the market for new degree programs; they do not, however, develop programs in areas in which the university maintains no scholarly expertise. Again at Johns Hopkins, for example, the institution resisted pressure to develop a master’s degree program in clinical psychology, since the department’s research focused on experimental psychology. A developmental program on aging did emerge, and although it never attained the magnitude that a clinical psych program would have done, it was certainly profitable, and, more important, the department's expertise in this area undergirded it.

Part-time graduate program degrees are not the master's degrees typically earned en route to the Ph.D. They specifically address the needs of working professionals. A master’s in biotechnology, for example, would be a professional degree designed for the large numbers of laboratory workers already in the biotech industry in a given area. CEO’s of some companies might want to keep trained workers in labs, but ambitious employees could advance by switching to management after receiving a degree in management from a nearby university offering the graduate degree to part-time students. In order to make such a program work, cooperation from the impacted industries and interested local agencies would be highly desirable.

The standard degree of Continuing Studies, the Masters in Liberal Arts, was invented by the Johns Hopkins School of Continuing Studies. It generally provides a good liberal arts background to those unfortunate enough to have missed out on one as an undergraduate. A few senior faculty might offer interesting courses in the program, but they should be warned against the risk of pitching lectures at an undergraduate rather than a graduate level.
In planning any new degree program, it is important to determine who will administer it and whether in a centralized or decentralized structure. The decentralized example at Johns Hopkins produced modest profits for the continuing studies programs offered by the School of Continuing Studies and profits of over 40% for part-time graduate programs run through the academic divisions. A centralized organization may avoid conflicts among potentially overlapping programs and squabbles about marketing funds and strategies, but it could also risk the loss of entrepreneurial zeal.

Areas at Vanderbilt where part-time graduate degree-granting programs might succeed are writing, biotechnology, communications studies, religious studies, and cultural studies, among others.
APPENDIX D — ITEMS AT www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/strategic

The following items were posted at www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/strategic for review by the faculty of the College of Arts and Science and other interested parties:

- Dean's charge to the Senior Steering Council
- SAPCAS Subcaucuses, with charges
- Cover letter from the Dean
- Wikswo letter to the faculty
- SAPCAS Schedule
- Scheduled Major Meetings and Report Deadlines
- Listing of SAPCAS members and e-mail addresses
- Glossary of terms
- Premises
- Criteria

Reports

Caucus 1 reports
- Caucus 1 Final Report

Caucus 1a reports
- Mission Statement for the Vanderbilt Program for the Study of Law and Politics
- Proposal For A Law And Humanities Program

Caucus 1b reports
- Center for the Americas: A Proposal
  - Appendix A. Proposed Budget for the Center
  - Appendix B. Current Faculty Working on Topics Linked to the Proposed Center
  - Appendix C. Current Interdisciplinary Programs that Would Contribute to the Center and Current Course Offerings
  - Appendix D. Similar Centers or Institutes

Caucus 1c reports
- Caucus 1c Final Report
  - Appendix A. Studio Art Track
  - Appendix B. Expressionism 101
  - Appendix C. Garland Hall's microcomputer laboratory
  - Appendix D. Entertainment Robotics
  - Creative Arts Center Budget

Caucus 2 reports
- Caucus 2 Final Report

Caucus 3 reports
- Caucus 3 Final Report
  - Appendix

Caucus 4 reports
- Caucus 4 Final Report

Initiatives to be Submitted to the Strategic Academic Planning Group
- CAS area studies and the SAPG initiatives
Appendix A. Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Strategic Plan
Appendix B. ARL Library Rankings, 1998-99

Caucus 5 reports
  Summary Report

Caucus 6 reports
  Caucus 6 Final Report
    Appendix I. Proposals Under Consideration
    Appendix II. Disposition of Other Proposals
    Appendix III. Key Elements of the Strategic Plans of our Sister Vanderbilt Colleges
  Proposal Rankings
    Proposed University-wide Program in Gender and Sexuality
    Electronic Communication and Commerce
    A Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Program in International Relations
    MMP Proposal
    Proposal: Center for Language Acquisition and Diversity Education
    Vanderbilt Institute for Medicine, Health, and Society

Caucus 7 reports
  Financial Aid Goals

Senior Steering Council reports
  Analysis of the Caucus 3 Report
  Analysis of the Appendix to Caucus 3 Report
  Targeted Investments in the Natural Sciences
  Targeted Investments - Humanities & Social Sciences
  Initial Recommendations

Updates