

MU Strategic Advantages Survey

Faculty Survey Responses

Faculty Survey Responses to the Six Questions

1. What are you most proud of at MU?

- 19 responses focused on faculty quality, collegiality, and the ability of the faculty to collaborate across departmental and divisional lines.
- 5 responses focused on the comprehensiveness of our program offerings.
- 4 responses focused on our land grant mission.
- 3 responses focused on the student friendly environment of the campus and the high quality of our undergraduate programs.
- 2 responses focused on the strength of a few specific nationally recognized programs and one facility, i.e., journalism, family and community medicine, counseling psychology, cognitive psychology, nursing, human development and family studies, telehealth, and the reactor.
- 2 responses focused on campus history and tradition.
- 2 responses focused on openness to change and innovation.
- 2 responses focused on the beauty of the campus.
- Items mentioned once included quality of life in Columbia, “fantastic facilities,” positive relationship between faculty and administration, medical student board performance, commitment to research, quality education at a bargain price.

2. Where do you see the greatest potential for building partnerships and collaboration at MU?

- 25 responses (by far the largest cluster) focused on some aspect of the life sciences. Included in this set are the following:
 - 7 mentioned aging/gerontology.
 - 6 mentioned medicine, vet med, agriculture, and the life sciences.
 - 3 mentioned the life sciences and “high tech disciplines.”
 - 2 mentioned autism and the health professions.
 - other areas mentioned in the context of the life sciences were engineering, families and children and autism, youth studies, health communication, bioinformatics, comparative medicine, nutrition and welfare, behavioral

ecology, phylogenetics, neurobiology, HIV-AIDS, plant sciences, medicine and engineering.

- 3 responses focused on journalism and communication.
- 3 responses focused on some aspect of the arts and humanities, i.e., literary arts and the Missouri Review; literary arts English, theatre, and Mizzou on Broadway; English, philosophy, history, theatre, art history, and religious studies; theatre with a comedy theme including a Mark Twain comedy conference; and interactive theatre.
- 3 responses focused on business—with life sciences, economic development, law, communication, journalism.
- 2 responses focused on nuclear science and the reactor.
- Others mentioned were dispute resolution; geological sciences, soils, and environmental science; human development, family and community studies, education and counseling psychology with a focus on diversity; hotel management and life sciences; philosophy and the sciences; math education involving educational psychology, math, statistics, and engineering; focus on societal issues; campus and extension statewide; international programming.

3. Where do you see the greatest potential for building partnerships and collaboration beyond the campus?

- 18 responses focused on the life sciences. Individual responses included:
 - With the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, Stowers, state agencies, corporations (7).
 - firms with an interest in aging.
 - Columbia Area Career Center.
 - state agencies including MDC, MDNR, and MoDot plus federal agencies including USDA, US Army Corps of Engineers.
 - the health professions with private health care providers and the Mo. Hosp. Assoc.
 - biotech firms.
 - other med schools with a rural focus.
 - HIV-AIDS group with KU to form a regional hub.
 - medicine and Washington Un.
 - neuropsychiatric engineering with the pharmaceutical industry.
- 3 suggested collaboration involving the reactor and nuclear science with UMR, UMKC, K-State, Polytechnical Institute of Puerto Rico, private firms, and the national labs.

- Other responses included “tap Politte’s brain” to work with Apple and Adobe; dispute resolution; regional science centers with Washington Un. and the other UM campuses; Kaufmann Foundation; other Big 12 and Big 10 universities (2); City of Columbia (2); global and international links; Stephens College; major firms in SL and KC particularly for graduate program support; state legislators; Canadian firms and institutions; the EU countries for joint degree programs; Asian partners for ESL; and a performing arts center to serve the state.

4. What suggestions do you have for taking greater advantage of our unique resources at MU?

- 13 responses focused on some aspect of faculty rewards and support for development and collaboration.
 - competitive salaries.
 - funding for faculty positions for interdisciplinary research.
 - better support to involve young faculty in research.
 - establish an organization similar to the Life Sciences Center to foster collaboration in other areas.
 - more “us” and less “me” in our reward systems.
 - find more ways for our bright faculty to interact.
 - educate the faculty about strengths outside their own areas.
 - more hires in behavioral psychology, animal communication, and phylogenetics.
 - more funding for interdisciplinary research.
- 2 responses suggested building more effectively on our most unique resource (MURR) starting with expansion of the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute.
- 2 responses focused on the arts and humanities.
 - establish a research/teaching institute in the humanities possibly offering an MA in Liberal Studies.
 - further develop the Center for Literary Arts.
- other responses included increase faculty publications; invest in programs connected to the uniqueness of MU (reactor, swine facility, nano-tech); identify and invest in a few areas where we can be best in the world; improve clinical efficiency in the hospital and clinics where we are among the least efficient in the nation (would free resources for research); orient freshman legislators; build on atmospheric science; develop a web-based continuing ed program for primary care physicians; do not let administrators micro-manage—let creative faculty do their work; reduce parking on campus and increase its price to save space on campus for academic buildings and provide bus service to clusters of private apartments used heavily by our students; be the best land-grant university in the Midwest; establish more formalized and supportive international programs;

develop new research programs that will enhance our competitiveness for NSF and NIH funding.

5. What is unique about MU in terms of physical layout, geography, research, service, and teaching?

- 8 responses focused on the beauty of the campus.
- 7 responses focused on the unique combination of life science disciplines, e.g. engineering, medicine, vet med, biological sciences, and a reactor on one campus.
- 7 responses focused on MU's mid-USA location. One of these said that we are the hub of the nation with a microcosm of the transportation problems facing the nation, and, with Senator Bond chairing the Transportation Committee; we have an opportunity to develop a transportation emphasis with federal support.
- 4 responses focused on MU's history of successful collaboration across divisions and departments.
- 3 responses focused on the reactor.
- Other responses included the Thomas Hickman House, Sanborn Field, Buck's Place, and several wineries in the area; wide interests in aging combined with the ability to work in an interdisciplinary mode; Columbia is a great place to live; writing intensive program; coordinated dietetics program is unique in Missouri; only Missouri institution with a presence in every county (through extension); uniquely placed to serve rural Missouri; commitment to rural issues; one of the most complete campuses in the nation; best combination of literary study and creative writing in the nation; and suited to become the arts center of the State.

6. What do you consider to be our "best bets" for development of a few broad academic areas in which MU is recognized to be among the very best in the world?

- 37 responses focused on some aspect of the life sciences, with considerable variation in regard to specific areas. These responses included the following:
 - aging (6)
 - nuclear reactor involving medicine, vet med, science disciplines, and engineering (5)
 - comparative medicine (4)
 - autism and special education (2)
 - other areas mentioned were cancer research and treatment building on Ellis Fischel programs; the health professions; health care and wellness; dietetics; genomics and bioinformatics; telehealth; reproductive biology/immunology; vet med; primary medical care, informatics, and continuing education for primary care physicians; laparoscopic expertise

and ultrasound; behavioral ecology and animal communication; agriculture; plant biotechnology; HIV/AIDS.

- 11 responses focused on journalism in combination with communications, literary arts, campus writing program, and creative writing.
- other responses included film studies; conflict resolution (2); math and science education (2); stronger undergrad programs (2); sustainable rural development; engineering; programs that serve service industries, e.g., hotel and restaurant management; transportation; the arts; geotechnical engineering; atmospheric science.
- comments included there are no viable “broad” areas; look for bargains where we can get high gains for small investments, e.g., public policy, library science; connect better with Mark Twain and Harry Truman.

Summary

1. The Task Force received ___ responses from faculty across the campus, and, as expected, there is great diversity in the nature of the responses. Though some overall summary comments are possible (see below), there is no substitute for reading the responses as submitted—the richness may well be in the detail and excellent ideas may have been submitted by only one faculty member. To facilitate a review of all of the responses, they have been pulled together on a question by question basis (attachment ___). In addition, a much shorter attempt to summarize the responses on a question by question basis is provided (see attachment ___).
2. A long and positive experience with collaboration across disciplines and organizational lines was a point of pride for many of the respondents. They are proud of the faculty quality and collegiality that has made this possible, and they see further development of collaborative programs as a high priority for the future. However, there is great diversity of views about where this development should take place.
3. There is good recognition by the faculty generally that we have a few programs that have been long recognized as being very strong nationally, e.g., journalism and family medicine.
4. There is broad-based support for further development of the life sciences broadly defined but great diversity in regard to specific areas.
5. There is broad-based support for using the reactor as perhaps our most unique physical resource to further develop programs in nuclear science and medicine.

6. In response to question 6, which asked for “best bets” for future development:
- By far the largest number of responses focused on the life sciences (37), with clusters of responses for aging (6), nuclear science and medicine (5), comparative medicine (5), and autism (2).
 - There were 11 responses that focused on journalism in combination with communications, literary arts, the campus writing program, and creative writing.
 - No other area was suggested by more than 2 respondents.