

REPORT OF THE WSCUC TEAM
SPECIAL VISIT

To University of Saint Katherine

February 26-28, 2020

Team Roster

Dr. Robert Cushman, Site Team Chair, President, Pacific Union College

Dr. Maria Zack, Site Team Assistant Chair, Chair and Professor of Mathematical, Information, and Computer Sciences and Chair of Physics and Engineering, Point Loma Nazarene University

Tom Arendt, Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs /CFO, Southern California University of Health Sciences

Dr. Dan Shapiro, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, California State University, Monterey Bay

Dr. Patricia Prado-Olmos, Vice President for Community Engagement, California State University, San Marcos

Dr. Mark Goor, Vice President, WSCUC, staff liaison to the University of Saint Katherine

The team evaluated the institution under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective evaluation for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. This report and the Commission letter are made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution, Accreditation History, and Visit

Saint Katherine College was founded in June 2010 by Dr. Frank Papatheofanis in Encinitas, California, and in 2011 the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) approved the College for operation. In 2014 the campus moved to San Marcos, California. In 2016, BPPE approved Saint Katherine College changing its name to the University of Saint Katherine (USK). When WSCUC granted USK accreditation in 2016, authority to issue degrees shifted from BPPE to WSCUC purview. USK is rooted in the Orthodox Christian tradition, and provides a balanced education in the liberal arts and sciences. While USK is the only independent Orthodox Christian higher education institution of liberal arts and sciences in the Western hemisphere, it does not receive any financial support from or answer to any church body or authority.

Fourteen students enrolled in USK's first class in September 2011. By the fall of 2019, 237 students were enrolled in the institution. The first student graduated from the USK in May 2013. Since that first graduation, nearly 60 students have graduated from the USK. The University has four full-time faculty members and 29 adjunct faculty. The University has 25 full-time employees, including the President, and 41 part-time employees, including adjunct faculty.

The University offers a distinctive set of degree programs that reflect their Orthodox Christian mission and focus on four major disciplines: BA in Arts and Humanities (with concentrations in Art, English Language and Literature, Interdisciplinary Studies, History, Music, Psychology, and Orthodox Christian Theology); BA in Business Management; BS in Kinesiology (with concentrations in Health Science and Exercise Science & Athletic Performance); and BS Natural Sciences (with concentrations in Biological Sciences and Chemistry & Biochemistry).

Since the initial WSCUC accreditation of USK in March of 2016, USK had a special visit in February of 2018 as its first checkpoint in the six-year accreditation cycle. Following that visit, the

Commission issued a Notice of Concern. In July 2018, the WSCUC Commission issued a letter to the University of Saint Katherine that outlined several major requirements to be addressed during a WSCUC Special Visit scheduled for February of 2020. This report discusses the findings of that special visit.

B. Description of Team's Review Process

The purpose of this special site visit was to evaluate USK's progress on the recommendations stated in the Commission's July 20, 2018 letter to the institution. The Commission issued a Notice of Concern and requested that USK respond to the following requirements:

1. Add new sources of revenue. (CFR 3.4)
2. Produce and share with university leadership regular financial statements (balance sheet, profit and loss, cash flow). (CFR 3.4)
3. Include all campus constituencies, especially faculty, in the strategic planning process. (CFR 4.6)
4. Use budget allocations to guide the strategic plan. (CFR 4.6)
5. Use data drawn from the Institutional Research Office to regularly inform the strategic and enrollment planning processes. (CFR 4.2)
6. Prioritize enrollment management tactics, including tactics for retention, according to a clear set of strategies and implement them accordingly. (CFR 3.4)
7. Engage the Board of Trustees in development activities to create a strong culture of shared governance and reflect the responsibilities of a higher education governing board (CFR 3.9).

During this Special Visit, the 5-member team requested meetings with groups composed of members of the university administration, faculty and staff, and representatives from the governing board. The visit occurred at the USK campus at 1637 Capalina Road in San Marcos, CA, on February 27-28, 2020. On February 27, various meetings were scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and ranged from 30 to 60 minutes in duration. Meetings were kept on schedule and guided by a list of questions based on the requirements contained in the Notice of Concern and determined in advance by the team.

C. Institution's Special Visit Report: Quality and Rigor of the Report and Supporting Evidence

USK's Special Visit Report focused on the requirements contained in the July 2018 letter: adding new revenue sources, enhancing strategic planning, further developing recruitment and retention strategies, and enhancing board effectiveness. The primary authors of the Special Visit Report were: CFO (Mr. Ryan West) for the financial and budgeting sections, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness/Strategic Planning (Ms. Hilary Tarazi) for the integrated Strategic Planning section, Office of Admissions (Ms. Marina Trigonis) for the recruitment and enrollment management sections, and President (Dr. Frank Papatheofanis) for the Board development section. Each member of the President's Cabinet reviewed the entire report prior to submission and provided edits. The department chairs and Board members were invited to review the report and offer recommendations for change.

The report narrative was well organized, and focused on the specific recommendations identified in the Commission's letter dated July 20, 2018. Embedded links within the special visit report facilitated easy access to a variety of documents and supporting evidence. Additional data and backup documentation were provided upon the site visit team's request.

SECTION II – TEAM'S EVALUATION OF ISSUES UNDER THE STANDARDS

A. Issue: Adding New Sources of Revenue

USK's Special Visit Report outlines the efforts that the University has taken to add new sources of revenue. Interviews with the University President, its Board of Trustees, the CFO and senior leadership provided further information. As enrollment has grown, the University's dependence on non-tuition revenue sources has decreased. It is noteworthy that the University has achieved enrollment growth while maintaining a relatively flat overall discount rate (CFR 3.4).

USK hired a development professional to help it establish a fundraising function to diversify revenue. While the engagement did not result in significant revenue, it did help the institution to create a plan for adding new revenue sources. USK has endeavored to create a revenue stream from grants,

and engaged a consultant to train staff on seeking status as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and the federal grant opportunities that come with that status. The institution has also applied to foundations for grant monies and was successful in obtaining a grant in 2019. They are exploring other revenue opportunities including renting out their facilities (CFR 3.4).

USK leadership feels that having a full-time development professional on staff will not create the return on investment that the institution needs, and given its size, this conclusion seems reasonable. While a substantial and renewable source of non-tuition revenue has not been identified, USK is continuing to seek new sources of revenue as well as pursuing the potential sources identified to date (CFR 3.4).

While the team commends USK on its progress in the area of adding new sources of revenue, we encourage the institution to continue their work (CFR 3.4).

B. Issue: Regular Financial Reporting

USK has made great progress in the area of financial reporting. The team reviewed the financial statements provided in the Special Visit Report and requested additional financial reports that were made available prior to the team's arrival in San Marcos. The team also inquired about the financial statements in interviews with several groups. The President and senior leadership all acknowledge receipt of regular financial reports, both in printed form and via verbal presentation by the institution's CFO. The Board also acknowledged regular receipt of financial statements and confirmed that they feel well informed about the University's finances (CFR 3.4).

Monthly financial statements are being created and shared regularly with University leadership at Cabinet meetings. In order to achieve this objective, the University acquired an upgrade to their software that allows financial statements to be created more quickly and efficiently. The financial statements included information on cash flow, as well as balance sheets and income statements. Where

applicable, the CFO included financial metrics in graphical format, which helps a wide variety of readers to understand financial information (CFR 3.4).

In the process of assessing financial reporting at USK, the team observed that the report of the independent auditors on compliance for student financial aid included a qualification of their opinion. The basis for the qualification of opinion was the result of problems the institution had with enrollment reporting to the United States Department of Education (USDE). The institution responded to this finding by reevaluating the staffing in the finance office, and staffing was increased to provide additional support for accurate enrollment reporting. The institution also evaluated their outsourced financial aid processing firm and made a decision to change vendors as a result of that evaluation. The University engaged the audit committee of their Board of Trustees, who provided guidance and support in the resolution of the issue. Upon inquiry, the CFO informed the team that he had received requests for additional information from USDE and that the institution had complied with those requests. The institution is still in good standing with the USDE. The team spoke with the auditor to confirm that a corrective action plan had been filed with USDE (CFR 3.4).

The team found USK's financial reporting to be greatly improved and finds that the objective of this recommendation has been achieved (CFR 3.4).

C. Issue: Enhance Strategic Planning and Budget Alignment

Prior to the visit, the team reviewed a number of planning documents. These include: The 2018-2021 USK Strategic Plan with Leads and Resource Needs, Strategic Plan 2018-21 Faculty and Staff Engagement, Student Senate feedback on the strategic plan, a snapshot from the strategic plan monitoring dashboard, the May 17 Strategic Plan Progress Report, agenda and minutes from Academic Senate and Board of Trustees meetings, and a description of plans to involve students in strategic planning (Feb. 13, 2020). Information from these documents informed the comments on strategic planning contained in this report.

In response to concerns expressed by the Commission, USK has invested significant time in strategic planning. The University has hired its Senior Director of Strategic Planning & Interim IR Director who came to USK with strategic planning experience from her time working at UCSD. Under the leadership of this new Director, the strategic plan has been significantly revised, aligned with WSCUC standards, and contains 7 goals, 20 strategies and 73-75 tactics (the number depends on the version of the plan). The tactics are set to be accomplished in the 2018-21 period, and each one of the 73 tactics has a lead assigned to it. A dashboard has been set up to track progress on the plan and the first year of results were shared with the USK community in May of 2019. The university focused its first year on a number of initiatives around recruitment and retention, and that work, along with the steps that the school has taken to reshape its financial model to be less dependent on a small number of significant donors, has had a significant impact on the USK learning community (CFR 2.13, 4.6).

The Commission was concerned about the limited connection between USK's strategic plan and budget. This alignment has two parts: engaging in strategic activities that support the budget/enhance revenue, and identifying funding for specific strategic initiatives. USK has prioritized strategic plan tactics that have direct financial implications. These include adjusting the financial model to reduce dependency on donations, and carrying out a number of initiatives connected to student retention. USK has hired a Director of Student Success and Services and a Student and Staff Development Director in Athletics. Both new staff members are creating programming to enhance student engagement and support retention efforts. The University has also hired an experienced full-time Chief Academic Officer who is working with the Faculty Senate to further connect curriculum and academic activities with student success. Finally, USK has aligned core academic programs with those in high demand and is also considering some additional degree programs in light of revenue generation. These all are important steps in attaining long-term financial sustainability and are to be commended (CFR 2.13, 3.1, 3.4, and 4.6).

USK's Special Visit Report states "USK recognizes that there was insufficient analysis of the costs of the previous plan's goals, too little prioritization, and little alignment with available resources. During the recent planning process..., steps were taken to align the Strategic Plan with budget realities." The current 2018-21 includes funding for targeted new hires to support specific initiatives. This includes hiring a Chief Academic Officer, two key staff members to support student success, and a Director of Strategic Planning. All of these steps have been taken. Additional funds have been budgeted to support fundraising efforts, website work, and a change in athletic conferences. The budget also includes funding for outsourcing the financial aid office functions, this contract allows financial aid processing and compliance to be handled by a third party. Based on the evidence, it is clear that USK is making specific connections between resource allocation and the strategic plan (CFR 4.6).

D. Issue: Strategic Planning and IR

USK recently assigned responsibility for institutional research and strategic planning to a single person and created the position of Director of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research. This role has been taken on by the individual who has been responsible for strategic planning. There are currently no plans to hire a new IR director, however, the new Director, who has strategic planning experience, believes the workload is manageable, at least over the short term (CFR 4.2).

Examples of IR data use highlighted by USK in their institutional report included evidence indicating many students enrolled at USK were poorly prepared for college-level work which "validated a focus on academic support services." The institutional report also indicated IR data is shared with Student Affairs for the purpose of identifying students likely to need academic intervention, which was confirmed during interviews with student affairs professionals. In additional materials requested by the team, USK noted that in response to the study, "Student Success and Course Attendance," they increased the budget for Student Affairs and allocated Department Chair time to target students who are struggling academically. During interviews, student affairs professionals, coaches, and faculty told us

they regularly accessed data available on Populi, an integrated college management software platform that includes a Student Information System (SIS). However, faculty and staff do not have access to typical student success dashboards that, for example, allow for review of disaggregated data. Use of data seems primarily on an individual student level, although that is not surprising given the small student population. Interviews with the Board of Trustees, as well as with the President's Cabinet, Senior Staff, and the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Team (which were mostly the same individuals) similarly indicated IR data have been recently presented and discussed at meetings and used to inform strategic planning and enrollment decisions (CFR 2.10, 4.2, 4.5).

The SEM Plan has been updated, now explicitly aligns with the new Strategic Plan, and includes relevant and appropriate IR data, such as retention rates by cohort, statistics on student diversity, and enrollments by term and funnel level. The SEM Plan duplicates the tactics under the following subset of Strategic Plan goals: Orthodoxy, Scale, Community, and Service. It also identifies additional student retention strategies under the categories of Academics, Social, Spiritual, Physical, and Emotional. The Director of Student Affairs is responsible for all of these additional actions, with additional individuals identified for some categories. The SEM Plan presents data on unduplicated headcount showing steady increases: 147 students in 2017, 202 students in 2018, and 237 students in 2019. Additionally, USK reports significant increases in student diversity, with the student body changing from a majority white, non-Hispanic population in 2014 to majority Hispanic/Latino in 2019. Although neither the Strategic Plan nor the SEM Plan contain metrics for measuring progress, statistics on student population size, retention, and diversity suggest at least some of USK's strategies and tactics have been effective (CFRs 2.11, 2.13, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2).

While the SEM Plan includes Strategic Plan strategies and tactics, student retention strategies, IR data, a SWOT analysis, and statistics on web and social media traffic, that information is typically not explicitly connected to the strategies and tactics presented in the plan. Further, the SEM Plan does not

scan the external environment. For example, it contains no data on local, regional, state, or national trends in high school graduation rates, college readiness, or other relevant state and national trends and policies that might inform program planning and strategic enrollment goals and strategies (CFR 4.2, 4.7).

USK provided evidence that relevant and appropriate IR data are being used by all internal stakeholders for strategic planning and enrollment decisions. USK has developed a more comprehensive SEM plan aligned with the Strategic Plan. There are, however, significant opportunities to make the SEM Plan more coherent and effective by more explicitly connecting and integrating information and data presented in the plan, identifying metrics that will help USK evaluate the effectiveness of individual strategies and tactics, and incorporating and analyzing data on relevant external factors that are typically included in SEM plans (CFRs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.7).

E. Issue: Participation in Strategic Planning

Based on the review of the documents, it is clear that since the last WSCUC visit, USK has revised and updated the Strategic Plan, and in doing so, reduced and prioritized the number of goals and strategies and created a timeline for implementation. The process of updating the strategic plan included individual interviews with members of the President's Cabinet, full-time faculty, the IR Director, and others, all conducted by the current Director of Strategic Planning and Institutional Research. Additionally, since the last visit, approximately ten strategic planning workshops were conducted with the Board of Trustees, the President's Cabinet, Department Chairs, adjunct faculty, staff, and students (CFR 4.6).

Team interviews with the Board of Trustees, faculty (including adjuncts), academic affairs staff, and student affairs professionals (including coaches and staff in athletics) provided evidence that USK has engaged the entire institution in the strategic planning process. All groups interviewed confirmed that they attended multiple meetings to discuss the strategic plan, that their feedback and ideas were reflected in the plan, and that they felt actively involved in and committed to implementing the plan.

When asked, they were easily able to describe specific examples to illustrate their claims. There was a clear sense of shared ownership of the plan and responsibility for its implementation. In fact, the majority of faculty brought their personal copies of the Strategic Plan to their meeting with the team (CFR 4.5).

The team remains concerned, however, that the Strategic Plan still has too many strategies and tactics for the small size of USK's administration, faculty, and staff. For example, the plan includes tactics intended to promote and support faculty scholarship. However, given other faculty responsibilities in advancing multiple tactics in other areas (on top of significant teaching and advising loads for department chairs), it was unclear how these particular tactics could be implemented to achieve the desired effect. When asked about this during interviews, faculty acknowledged finding time to engage in scholarly activities is a challenge given their significant other responsibilities to which they are deeply committed. Similarly, USK's deeply committed Director of Student Affairs oversees a large number of co-curricular programs--spanning academic assistance and student life--and at the same time is actively involved in day-to-day planning and facilitation of activities, preparing communications, and fulfilling teaching responsibilities (although the latter were recently reduced). It is difficult to imagine how--without additional professional staff--she can also assess programs, engage in professional development, and do the strategic planning needed to best support USK students as the institution grows and matures (CFR 2.8, 2.11, 3.1, 3.3).

USK has taken several--and clearly effective--actions to improve their strategic planning process, including hiring key personnel with the appropriate experience and expertise needed to help the institution mature. USK has also made a significant and successful effort to engage all internal stakeholders in the strategic planning process, including making the strategic plan more visible, ensuring accountability using a strategic planning dashboard showing progress on all strategies and tactics, and promoting dialog. Since the last visit there has been a noticeable and positive shift in institutional

culture and climate. At the same time, the team is concerned about the large number of strategies and tactics in the current Strategic Plan and SEM Plan, the sustainability of these efforts, and USK's capacity for maintaining progress while attending to the well-being of its deeply committed faculty, staff, and administration (CFR 3.1, 3.6, 4.5, 4.6).

F. Issue: Further Developing Recruitment and Retention Strategies

The team reviewed the Special Visit Report, appendices and, during the visit, conducted interviews with a range of individuals including athletic coaches, the strategic enrollment management team, student affairs personnel, academic senate and senior staff.

In the Special Visit Report, the institution describes specific strategies undertaken, or in development, that are expected to yield steady enrollment growth with a 2023-2024 target of 255 full-time students enrolled. It is clear the institution seeks to attract and educate students in liberal arts, Orthodox Christian environment and is currently focused on an 80-miles radius of campus in the county service areas of San Diego, Orange, Riverside, Imperial Valley and San Bernardino. Within these parameters, the institution has crafted a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEM) that lists goals and strategies to guide enrollment through the 2023-2024 academic year. The SEM goals align to the USK values and mission and are connected to the USK Strategic Plan.

Interviews revealed that the staff, coaches and faculty actively participate in recruitment and retention of students. The institution has established modest enrollment growth goals that they believe they can meet with the current infrastructure for retention and student success. Furthermore, USK has refocused their recruitment efforts on potential students who "fit" the values and mission of USK. Staff and athletic coaches recruit students who want to experience an education founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian tradition of Inquiry Seeking Wisdom (CFRs 3.4, 2.10).

This focus is realized through a pathway to admission and enrollment that was repeatedly described in multiple interview settings. Nearly everyone articulated the concept of "fit" and described a

process of active recruitment with individual students and their families. Indeed, the team repeatedly heard that “families” are the focus of recruitment efforts through comments such as, “We know we’re recruiting the whole family,” or “We invite students for a tour and insist they bring a parent or family members.” The institution has adopted a clear strategy of early connection and discussion with potential applicants that establishes a deep relationship with the applicant and their families before the formal application is submitted. This early and intensive outreach allows potential applicants and their families to fully understand and know what USK can offer the applicant, how the applicant will experience success and informs USK how the applicant will enhance the learning environment and community at USK (CFRs 2.10, 2.12).

Retention efforts at USK are also highly coordinated. Interviews revealed that multiple groups at USK have responsibilities and roles in student success. Indeed, the Academic Senate includes a subcommittee on Student Retention. The language of student success, where students experience academic success, learn and thrive spiritually and holistically and feel a strong sense of belongingness and community, permeated interviews with nearly every constituency group at the institution (CFRs 2.10, 2.11).

For example, the team learned that everyone at USK value its small size because having fewer students allows for more personalized attention from professors, administrative staff, and coaches. A tight collaborative and cooperative network of communication has emerged between coaches, faculty and staff so that any individual who notices a change in academic performance or notices something “just off” about a student can immediately reach out to others for additional information or support to connect and intervene with a student. The ability to connect with peers about student success was a theme that emerged in every discussion the team held at USK (CFR 2.10).

USK has implemented systems to closely track academic success indicators such as class attendance, assignment completion and course grades. These indicators are monitored by

administrative staff and academic department chairs; department chairs serve as academic advisors and meet with each student twice a semester to support retention and assure appropriate progress towards a degree (CFR 2.10).

USK has taken steps to establish academic supports such as a mandatory class for all first-year students, College Student Success, which focuses on college-going and independent learning skills such as time management, finances, communication, etc. The institution also supports a Math Lab and a Writing Lab coordinated and staffed by adjunct professors who provide direct support to students. In addition, the Math and Writing lab professors communicate with classroom faculty about patterns of student learning challenges and work with classroom faculty to anticipate challenging assignments that might be supported by strategic use of the Math and Writing lab services. This degree of coordinated and cooperative communication is a valuable tool for USK to leverage for student success. The team also learned of plans to establish a one-stop shop for Student Services including admissions, registrar, financial aid, among others, so that students can navigate systems more easily (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13).

USK has a burgeoning co-curricular environment including a Student Senate, and a growing array of Student Life activities. At least two strategic hires, a Director of Student Affairs, and a Student and Staff Development Director, have launched aligned efforts and initiatives to build a stronger sense of community, enhance belongingness and assuring USK's mission of Inquiry Seeking Wisdom is made real in daily life and interactions at the institution. Among the events described to the team was a dodgeball tournament that drew teams comprised of students, faculty and staff that was hailed as a great success for bringing people together across boundaries for fun and fellowship. The team learned that these events also include a talk or speaker focused on spiritual development and connections, thus staying clearly grounded in the USK mission (CFRs 2.11, 2.13).

While it is clear that USK has a plan for enrollment growth and increased student retention, the team also identified areas for further attention. Assessment of student support services and co-curricular programs is key to continuous improvement. The team encourages USK to develop a deeper understanding of the external landscape for enrollment issues in higher education as a whole. The team also encourages USK to continue their work to develop a student-support culture responsive to student needs as well as aligned with an overall culture of higher education (CFR 2.11, 2.13, 4.7).

G. Issue: Enhancing Board Effectiveness with Development

The Board of Trustees consists of 14 outside members plus the President of the University. The outside board members are volunteers who bring diverse professional experiences and expertise to USK in the fields of education, engineering, law, finance, medicine, civic engagement, organizational change, and philanthropy. The Board meets as a group three times per year either by conference call or on campus in San Marcos, CA. The Board created four committees charged with oversight and review of various areas of the institution. The Board is further assisted in its work by a group of advisory bodies made up of volunteers from diverse backgrounds (CFR 3.9).

A document outlining Board members' duties and responsibilities was adopted in 2012. These policies have been part of the orientation and training for all new Board members as they begin their service. Board members are encouraged to attend Association of Governing Boards for Universities and Colleges (AGB) seminars in person or online. A conflict-of-interest policy is also included in the University's by-laws (CFR 3.9).

Following receipt of the 2018 WSCUC site visit team report, the Board Chair implemented a comprehensive review of Board governance standards as defined by AGB. Based on what was learned during the review, the Board Chair now ensures that strategic planning and budgeting are regular agenda items for board meetings. After reviewing a revised draft of the USK Strategic Plan on November

18, 2018, the board provided further feedback and unanimously approved the final draft of the Strategic Plan on November 29, 2018 (CFR 3.9).

The Board created four committees including Audit, Academic, Governance, and Physical Plant. In 2019, the Audit Committee met with the CFO to discuss audit progress and findings, on multiple occasions (at least eight times in 2019). In the December 2019 USK Special Visit Report, it was stated that the Physical Plant Committee and the Governance Committee met one to three times in 2019 depending on need. The site visit team was not able to observe evidence that these committees were functioning effectively. The Board discusses all matters covered at the Committee meetings at its regular meetings (May 17, October 4, and November 8, 2019); separate Committee meeting notes are maintained with oral reports from the Committees integrated into the minutes of the regular meetings. Samples of Board minutes were quite brief and did not contain much information about deliberations of measures adopted or any specifics of board committee meetings. The team strongly encourages that future board meeting and board committee minutes provide more detail about the Board's deliberations (CFR 3.9).

Board effectiveness continues to improve. AGB guidance materials have proven useful in improving Board understanding of roles and responsibilities. The Board continues to favor collective general discussion of University matters. The December 2019 USK Special Visit Report stated that the board continues to improve committee activity, but that this remains a challenge. As a result, the Board Chair is working to create a schedule of committee meetings for 2020. Additionally, committees will be required to provide the Chair with minutes rather than verbal or written notes of their deliberation. The team encourages the USK Board Chair follow through with this plan (CFR 3.9).

The site visit team met with a group of ten outside board members (seven attended in person and three attended via conference call). The Board members are enthusiastically committed to the mission of USK and unanimously support the university president. At its May 18, 2018 general meeting,

the Board adopted a policy for evaluation of the president. All Board members are required to complete an annual survey assessment based on the American Council of Trustees and Alumni Institute for Effective Governance recommendations. Although the site visit team did not see the results of the Board's self-assessment, the Board Chair indicated that an assessment was recently completed. The 2018-19 assessment of the President resulted in an endorsement of his continued leadership. Board members seemed very knowledgeable about the college and expressed collective satisfaction with the quality and amount of information provided to them by the administration (CFR 3.9).

In summary, the USK Board appears to have functioned for the last few years similar to an entrepreneurial enterprise board. This proved valuable as USK was founded and funded by donations during its early growth and development. As USK continues to mature and become sustainable, the Board should also mature into functioning as a higher education board. Although board committees have been formed, outside of the Audit Committee, it was not apparent to the site visit team that they are functioning effectively. As USK continues to grow and hire additional faculty, the Academic Committee function will need to be implemented. As the board has grown in size, several board members with experience and expertise in higher education have been added. Implementing a high functioning Academic Committee with higher education expertise will be invaluable in creating and sustaining shared governance within the academic mission of the university (CFR 3.9).

SECTION III – OTHER TOPICS, AS APPROPRIATE

There were no additional topics identified during the visit.

SECTION IV – FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TEAM REVIEW

The team commends the University of Saint Katherine for:

- Building an interlinked, interwoven, collaborative, cooperative community that is working together toward a shared vision of the future.
- The Board of Trustees' commitment, active engagement, and generosity.

- Including all campus constituencies in the strategic planning process.
- Systemic thinking related to recruitment and retention in which faculty, staff, and coaches work collaboratively to support student success.
- Fostering a significant and rapid improvement in institutional culture, climate, and effectiveness through strategic hiring of qualified personnel.
- The faculty, staff, and coaches' passion and dedication to students and their success.

The team recommends that the University of Saint Katherine:

- Continue its progress in strengthening day-to-day financial operations (CFR 3.4).
- Continue its progress in finding new sources of revenue (CFR 3.4).
- Continue to link the strategic plan with budget development and resource allocations (CFR 4.6).
- Continue to build a formal board structure appropriate for an institution of higher education by activating standing committees and implementing intentional board education (CFR 3.9).
- Research external factors that will help the institution to anticipate and respond to a changing higher educational environment (CFR 4.7).