Strategic Plan

2014-2015 to 2018-2019

September 2014

Our role is to provide educational programs of breadth, based in the great traditions of world art, design and film and fertile with the spirit of innovation and creativity.

Ellen L. Meyer
# Watkins College of Art, Design & Film
## Strategic Plan
### 2014-2015 to 2018-2019

### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioners and Board of Trustees</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission, Vision, Values and Commitments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Assumptions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary Review of Goals, Objectives and Benchmarks, 2013-2014</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See page 3 for Table of Contents for this section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals, Objectives and Benchmarks, 2014-2015 to 2018-2019</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments to a Learning-Centered and Student-Centered Institution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internal Opportunities and Challenges Contents

I. Academic Programs..................................................................................................................31
   Reaffirmation of Accreditation 2015: Quality Enhancement Plan, Opportunities and Challenges

II. Students, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Safety and Security.........................36
    Class Size, Admissions, Semester System, Graduation, Retention, Financial Aid, Tuition, Student Life,
    Career Services, Student Housing, Student Satisfaction, Campus Security and Safety, Opportunities
    and Challenges

III. Faculty....................................................................................................................................51
    Full-Time Faculty: Number, Adjunct Faculty: Number, Credentials, Full-Time Faculty Salaries,
    Full-Time Faculty Contracts, Full-Time Faculty Benefits, Adjunct Faculty Stipends, Teaching
    Load Assignment, Rank and Promotion, Participation in Governance, Opportunities and Challenges

IV. Community Education...........................................................................................................56
    Opportunities and Challenges

V. Administration and Staff.......................................................................................................58
    Administrative Organization, Duties and Responsibilities of Administrators, Opportunities and Challenges

VI. Commissioners and Board of Trustees.................................................................62
    Opportunities and Challenges

VII. Institutional Diversity.........................................................................................................63
    Opportunities and Challenges

VIII. Publications.......................................................................................................................64
    Opportunities and Challenges

IX. Facilities, Technology, Equipment and the Library .............................................65
    Campus and Facilities, Cecy Reed Student Center, Ten-Year Plan for Expansion and Growth;
    Technology and Equipment, Library, Opportunities and Challenges

X. Budget, Finance and Institutional Advancement..............................................71
    Budget, Five-Year Budget Plan, Tuition and Institutional Aid, Institutional Advancement, Opportunities
    and Challenges

XI. Accreditation.......................................................................................................................76
    Opportunities and Challenges

XII. Planning and Accountability.........................................................................................78
    Institutional Effectiveness Calendar, Opportunities and Challenges

XIII. Summary.............................................................................................................................82
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film
Strategic Plan
2014-2015 to 2018-2019

Purpose

This document is intended to provide an overview of Watkins College of Art, Design & Film and its strategic focus. Contained herein are the college’s history, mission and plan.

The college maintains a five-year strategic plan to guide its operations and decision-making. The strategic plan is a living document that is regularly updated with ongoing annual research, assessment and planning focused upon improving all aspects of the institution’s educational and administrative operations.

The plan benefits from and reflects the work of the college’s constituents—students, faculty, staff, alumni and the Board of Trustees. Their valued participation in the ongoing assessment and planning processes sets the stage for a learning-centered environment, providing a thoughtful, creative education in the visual arts.

Ellen L. Meyer
President
# Commissioners and Board of Trustees

## Commissioners

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Susan A. Basham</td>
<td>Brownlee O. Currey, Jr.</td>
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</tbody>
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## Trustees

## Officers

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<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuel E. Stumpf, Jr.</td>
<td>Ken McDonald</td>
<td>Taylor H. Henry</td>
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<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Secretary/Treasurer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                     |                     |                     |
| Beth Scott Clayton Amos | J. Reginald Hill    | Laurence M. Papel  |
| Lynn Bennett         | James R. Kelley     | Walter Schatz       |
| David H. Berryman    | Jerry L. Maynard II | Steve Sirls        |
| William H. Braddy III| Carol L. McCoy      | John M. Steele      |
| James H. Clayton III | Eileen N. McGinn    | Tarun Surti        |
| Stephanie Conner     | Lucille Nabors      | Laura Turner       |
| Debbie G. Crowder    | Debbye Oliver       | William Warfield   |
| Dee Doochin          | Cano A. Ozgener     | Waddell H. Wright  |

## Trustee Emeriti

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<tbody>
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<td>Ward DeWitt, Jr.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Ex Officio

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Haslam</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
History

Samuel Watkins Legacy and the First 100 Years
Watkins Institute, operating now as Watkins College of Art, Design & Film, opened in 1885 through a bequest by Samuel Watkins, a civic-minded Nashvillian whose gift to his community would begin an educational legacy that continues today. Orphaned at age four and overcoming a lack of any formal schooling, Watkins eventually became a successful and wealthy businessman. Determined to improve educational opportunities in his community for those who would come after him, he left a legacy that has benefited many Nashvillians over the past 129 years and is the genesis of today’s Watkins College of Art, Design & Film.

Upon his death in 1880, Samuel Watkins provided property in the center of the city and $100,000 to be held in trust by the State of Tennessee and to be used for the educational benefit of the people of Nashville. The Governor of the State appointed commissioners who were charged with the actual oversight of the institution. In his will, Watkins specifically gave wide latitude to the commissioners to establish the school’s mission and curriculum, stating only that the school should “provide information upon such subjects as will be beneficial in the business of life.” Specifically modeled after Cooper Union, established 26 years earlier, Watkins followed the successful New York City development as the second such community-based institution designed to meet the broad educational and cultural needs of its citizens.

From its beginnings, Watkins College of Art, Design & Film has served the community by providing a variety of educational and public service opportunities to people of all ages. In meeting this responsibility, the institution has always had a particular interest in the arts. One month after it opened its doors in March of 1885, the school under the auspices of the Nashville Art Association held Nashville’s first comprehensive art exhibition and soon after began an art school. In 1886, Harper’s Weekly published a photograph of Watkins’ art facilities and stated that Nashville had developed into an art center and “would become a rallying point for art in the South.” Instruction in the visual arts has continued without interruption for 129 years.

Over its long history, the institution’s leaders have regularly assessed the educational and cultural needs of the community and offered programs to meet those needs. In addition to programs in the arts, Watkins offered a wide range of courses in diverse disciplines. Documents in the institution’s archives indicate that the school in its first 100 years provided learning opportunities to nearly 350,000 men, women and children in Nashville. There are few, if any, institutions in the city and the state that have touched so many lives and that have had such an important educational and cultural impact on the life of the city. (In addition to serving the arts, amongst other educational endeavors, at the turn of the century Watkins aided in the Americanization of immigrants, and in the
1930s and 40s, the institution helped women prepare for the workplace and offered servicemen returning from World War II the opportunity to complete their high school degrees.)

The Second 100 Years
In the latter years of the 20th century, Watkins College of Art, Design & Film moved through a period of significant transition in its programming. With the advent of technology centers and community colleges, as well as the expansion of opportunities provided by Nashville’s public and private elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities, many of the educational needs that Watkins had addressed were now being met by other institutions. Despite Nashville’s growing wealth of educational resources, one significant cultural and educational need—the visual arts—remained substantially lacking except for programs offered at Watkins. By the early 1990s, Watkins determined to concentrate its programs and resources exclusively on providing educational, cultural and public service needs in the visual arts.

The transition began in 1977, when Watkins received approval through the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to offer associate degrees in fine arts and in interior design. A Nashville School of Art and a Nashville School of Interior Design were established as entities within the institution. Both programs grew quickly over the next decade. By 1992, the interior design program had been accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) for its associate of fine arts degree program. Shortly thereafter, the college curriculum also included a degree program in photography.

In the mid-1990s the institution established the Film School, which quickly gained a regional and national reputation for excellence. In 1998, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission approved bachelor of fine arts degrees in film and in interior design. Subsequently, additional bachelor of fine arts degree programs in graphic design, fine art and photography were approved. In 1996, the college became an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). And in 2010, Watkins achieved accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

In its 129th year of continuous educational service, Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is an independent visual arts institution offering the Bachelor of Fine Arts, the Bachelor of Arts and Certificates in Film and Interior Design. Complementing its primary emphasis on studio-based undergraduate programs in the visual arts is its continuing and historic commitment to community education and outreach, providing a wide variety of educational and cultural opportunities to adults, teens and children.

Today, Watkins is positioned to expand its role as a major cultural and educational force in Nashville and beyond.
Mission, Vision, Values and Commitments

Mission

Watkins College of Art, Design & Film offers a studio-based curriculum, supported by a strong academic foundation. The faculty and staff are committed to a learning-centered environment that challenges the student to engage the mind, train the eye, and cultivate talent and skill into an active realization of creative potential.

The mission represents a commitment by the Watkins academic community of students, faculty and staff:

Learning-Centered Environment
The focus of the institution is on educational outcomes. Based on ongoing assessment of student learning, the institution is dedicated to improving programs, curricula and instruction.

Engage the Mind
Watkins students demonstrate critical, analytical thinking skills. The general education program and the six academic major programs combine to enable and enhance every student’s ability to think critically and analytically.

Train the Eye
Watkins students understand and can apply the basic fundamentals and principles of the visual arts. The arts foundation component of the general education program and the six academic major programs combine to ensure that every student demonstrates proficiency in basic visual arts concepts and applications.

Cultivate Talent and Skill into an Active Realization of Creative Potential
Students who graduate from Watkins are prepared to lead productive lives as artists, designers or filmmakers.
Mission, Vision, Values and Commitments

Vision

In pursuit of its mission, Watkins has a distinct and ambitious vision that focuses on what the institution is today and what it will be in the years ahead. The institution’s vision for its immediate and long-term future includes greater regional, national and international recognition:

- For its services as a distinctive art, design and film college with outstanding degree programs in all of its academic offerings
- For its established record as an academically and professionally sound institution that provides a safe, open and supportive learning environment; that produces graduates who have the tools to be critical, analytical thinkers and creators and who are equipped to find fulfilling employment locally, regionally, nationally and beyond
- For its services as an institution whose programs and students uniquely and regularly serve individuals, groups and organizations in diverse communities through projects that improve or enrich the lives of citizens, while giving students real-world learning experiences
- For its services as a cultural center in the southeast for continuing educational programs serving a diverse population with enriching non-credit programs in the visual arts.

Watkins seeks out and enrolls students who are focused, dedicated and passionate about art, design and film; who intend to pursue their fields professionally or on a continuing basis; who meet increasingly selective standards of admission, and who come from diverse communities regionally, nationally and internationally.

Watkins strives to be financially affordable through a comparatively modest tuition in tandem with financial aid.

Watkins continues to employ faculty noted for their professional work, as well as their academic backgrounds. A special effort has been made to find faculty who demonstrate outstanding commitment and ability as classroom and studio instructors. To complement their teaching proficiency, faculty members continue to be practicing artists, designers and filmmakers active in their respective professional fields.

Students leave the institution with the knowledge and skills to be practicing professionals and/or lifelong learners and scholars in the arts. Moreover, because of the special role that the visual artist should play as a conscience, critic and visionary in society, Watkins
graduates leave the institution with an educational perspective firmly based in the liberal arts.

Mission, Vision, Values and Commitments

Values and Commitments

The faculty and staff at Watkins College of Art, Design & Film place great value on the unique working, teaching and learning environment that has been established through 128 years of service to the people of Nashville and beyond. The following statement of values and commitments was created by the faculty and staff in 2003, as a description of the work environment and a long-standing commitment by them to see that these values are maintained and strengthened in the future. These values and commitments reflect important considerations when the Watkins academic community evaluates its mission, goals, objectives and benchmarks.

I. Watkins provides a small intimate and personable setting for working, teaching, creating and learning.

*Faculty and staff at Watkins like to come to work and enjoy working with each other. They know and treat each other as individuals. People are more important than structures and hierarchies. Faculty and staff also know their students as individuals. Instruction, advising, counseling and other interactions with students focus on each person’s unique abilities, interests, difficulties and hopes for the future.*

II. Watkins provides a decentralized, democratic setting that promotes freedom, flexibility, openness and participation.

*Watkins has a dynamic environment that encourages freedom, change and universal participation in problem solving. Everyone’s ideas are valued. Everyone is heard. Everyone listens. Academic freedom is valued.*

III. Watkins provides a setting that promotes and reflects cooperation.

*Members of the Watkins community work together; they cooperate for the good of the institution and for the good of the students it serves.*

IV. Watkins is an institution where all faculty and staff are committed to doing outstanding work.
Members of the Watkins community do their very best work for the institution, its mission and its students. Faculty and staff take pride in seeing the impact of their work and in seeing students succeed.

V. Watkins provides a setting that discourages non-productive competition, mistreatment of individuals and petty personal disagreements.

People avoid saying unkind things about their co-workers. People attempt to treat others as they would like to be treated. People solve their differences in a direct, tactful and sensitive fashion through open, civil communication.

VI. Watkins provides a setting where art is paramount and creativity is appreciated.

Faculty and staff at Watkins value art for its own sake and for its central roles in celebrating the richness of life, in creating new approaches to problem-solving, in encouraging new ways of thinking about individuals and their societies, and in criticizing societies’ shortcomings and failures. Watkins encourages creativity among its students and seeks to assist them in becoming outstanding artists and designers. Instructors are given freedom and flexibility, and are encouraged to be creative in their teaching methods. Instructors are valued for trying new things, testing new ideas and offering new courses.

VII. Watkins provides a student-centered setting where diversity is valued and students are viewed as individuals with unique voices, talents and hopes.

Watkins provides a supportive, nurturing setting open to students with different backgrounds, perspectives, thoughts, religions, ethnicities and racial origins. Watkins provides a setting where students who otherwise have not found an accepting environment can “fit in” and succeed.

Additionally, as the faculty and staff have sought to incorporate improvements in all of their operations, the institution has moved toward articulating its commitment to a learning-centered and student-centered college. In regards to learning, Watkins endorsed 16 principles created at California State University at Northridge in that institution’s efforts to define a learning-centered institution. Those principles are reported by Koester, Hellenbrand and Piper in About Campus (September-October 2005) and listed in the appendix section of this document. In regards to being more student-centered, in 2005-2006 the faculty and staff also endorsed 10 student service expectations as developed at Riverland Community College in Minnesota and reported in Student Affairs today (June 2006). These student service commitments can also be found in the appendix.
Planning Assumptions

General Planning Assumptions

Watkins goals and objectives should be based upon these general planning assumptions:

1. **Stabilization and growth of a small visual arts institution is linked to its ability to address critical external factors effectively.**
   - With the economic downturn of 2008 and continued uncertainty, available charitable dollars will remain steady at best, as competition for these dollars will likely increase.
   - Sluggish economic growth in various sectors, continued high unemployment or underemployment and a negative industry outlook for higher education in the near term will mean that parents and students will carefully evaluate the value of more costly private higher education and lower-cost public education.
   - Educational institutions will need to respond positively to demographic challenges in prospective student populations to address their educational needs, offer increased financial aid, and see that underserved and minority populations have access to higher education.
   - Small art and design colleges will need to be proactive in maintaining a positive and high level of visibility, communicating to prospective students and donors about the significant, qualitative attributes of independent, nonprofit accredited institutions.
   - Job growth in some visual arts areas will be less than the growth of the general job market.
   - Graduates with degrees in visual arts will need market-based skills and knowledge to succeed in a limited, competitive job market and will need to look beyond local opportunities.
   - Institutions will be obligated to assist students in finding job opportunities.

2. **Institutional leadership at all levels of a small visual arts institution needs to address important financial issues successfully.**
   - Institutions with small endowments will be funded primarily through tuition.
- Institutions with modest levels of tuition can make continued modest increases in tuition, but continued accessibility and diversity among students will often depend upon an institution’s ability to provide scholarships, institutional grants and other financial assistance in keeping with its increases in tuition.
- Community outreach and public service efforts by all institutional programs together with effective, proactive external communications, play a major role in effective fundraising and the creation of positive community standing.
- Universal commitment by all members of the Board of Trustees to fundraising is necessary for the Board to meet its fiduciary responsibilities.
- Private institutions that rely heavily on local and state granting agencies must continue to look beyond these sources for successful fundraising.
- Fundraising ability is directly related to quality assurance to the public, which is in turn related directly to an institution’s commitment to standards established by regional and national accrediting associations.
- Leadership at all levels of the institution must carefully monitor the use of financial resources through short- and long-term planning, effective management of investments and other assets, and adherence to all.
- Standard business and financial policies and procedures for expenditures are essential to protect assets and to avoid losses.
- Growth and improvement must be tempered with realistic financial considerations.
- Institutions must live within their means.

3. **Institutional leadership at all levels of a small visual arts institution needs to address critical operational issues regularly and successfully.**

- Insightful, research-based, creative marketing and recruiting locally, regionally and nationally, including thoughtful use of recruitment personnel, admissions publications, the website and electronic marketing, will be important for attracting more and better qualified students.
- Enrollment stabilization and growth will be directly linked to the institution’s ability to operate competitively with other educational institutions in using processes and procedures that facilitate the movement of prospective students toward making a final enrollment commitment.
- Enrollment growth and retention will be directly linked to the institution’s ability to offer quality, updated programs with an adequate number of highly qualified faculty within a student-service oriented environment.
- Quality-based institutions provide a clean, well maintained, safe and secure learning environment.
- Quality and the assurance of quality to the public are directly linked to an institution’s commitment to operating standards established by regional and national accrediting associations.
4. **Institutional leadership at all levels of a small visual arts institution needs to address critical program issues regularly and successfully.**

- An institutional effectiveness program must be fully operational at all levels of an institution with particular emphasis on measurable student learning outcomes and subsequent, ongoing efforts for improvement.
- A student-centered institutional effectiveness program uses instruments that measure skills and knowledge levels at admission, measures value-added skills and knowledge in general education and in major programs, addresses retention and graduation rates, monitors learning objectives linked to the institutional mission and job-related skills and knowledge, and reviews employment and long-term satisfaction by graduates.
- A quality-based general education program reflects the institutional mission, has a written philosophy and vision provided to students, has a well-defined and focused curriculum that includes a cross-curricular emphasis on reading, writing and critical thinking, and has a sufficient number of full- and part-time teaching faculty with appropriate credentials and commitments to the program.
- A quality-based institution has sufficient highly qualified full-time faculty to teach an appropriate proportion of courses in general education and in each major program.
- A quality-based institution makes appropriate use of highly qualified adjunct faculty.
- A quality-based institution has a student life program that provides sufficient advising, counseling, recreational opportunities, a safe and secure environment, study opportunities, internship opportunities among local and regional businesses and organizations, and career assistance.
- A quality-based institution has a racially and ethnically diverse representation within its Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff and students, and is proactive in creating educational opportunities for minority groups and other under-served populations including adult learners.
- A quality-based institution forms mutually beneficial partnerships with culturally and ethnically diverse community organizations and other higher education institutions.
- A quality-based institution promotes through its students, faculty and staff a commitment to community service through on-site and outreach programs.
- Quality and the assurance of quality to the public regarding academic and non-academic programs are directly linked to an institution’s commitment to the standards developed by regional and national accrediting associations.

5. **Institutional leadership at all levels of small visual arts colleges addresses critical facilities issues regularly and successfully.**
A quality-based institution provides sufficient learning and studio resources for its general education and academic major programs, and sufficient space for administrative and other support services.

A quality-based art, design and film college provides students with access to an adequate collection of slides, films, computer and internet resources, books and periodicals that directly support general education and programs in the visual arts and provides qualified library, information systems and equipment services staffing.

A quality-based institution intent on creating a campus community of students living, studying and working cooperatively together provides sufficient on-site student housing.

A quality-based institution provides students with an attractive, aesthetically pleasing, safe and secure campus, grounds and buildings.

6. **Quality-based institutions of higher education maximize their chances of success overall through an integrated, system-wide program of institutional effectiveness.**

   - The program is linked in every respect to the institutional mission statement, which is approved and regularly evaluated by the Board of Trustees.
   - The program includes a strategic plan with goals, objectives and measurable benchmarks for the entire institution, is created, evaluated and updated regularly, and is used to guide all aspects of the institution’s operations.
   - The program has an ongoing calendar for evaluation procedures of all academic and non-academic programs, units and personnel throughout the institution, which sets forth goals, measures success in meeting those goals and uses data for subsequent improvement.
   - The program has an ongoing calendar for evaluation procedures to determine success in students’ academic program, setting forth learning objectives, methods for measuring the degree to which those objectives are reached, and for using outcome data to improve all aspects of the classroom and studio learning environment.
Planning Assumptions

Institution-Specific Planning Assumptions

Based on the above general planning assumptions, the following are specific to Watkins College of Art, Design & Film.

Mission and Values

- The mission of Watkins will continue to focus on providing a quality visual arts education in a small student- and learning-centered environment.
- The legacy of “Watkins Institute” will continue with expanded service to the local and regional communities as an educational and cultural center for enriching experiences and continuing studies in the arts.
- Watkins must maintain a commitment to short- and long-range planning so that resources are used effectively in support of the institution’s mission.
- Watkins must continue to promote an environment of openness, transparency and tolerance.

Accreditation

- Watkins will meet and exceed the standards of appropriate regional and national accrediting organizations, demonstrating continuing universal and positive commitment to a student- and learning-centered environment with ongoing assessment and data-based improvements.

Programs, Faculty and Staff

- Watkins will monitor and modify as necessary its general education and academic major programs to ensure that their curricula reflect critical and appropriate skills and knowledge in each area, supporting departmental missions and the overall college mission.
- Careful attention to addressing basic skills in the visual arts, reading, writing and critical thinking throughout the curricula will occur.
- Successful retention and persistence to graduation are important institutional goals and will require proactive attention to students by all faculty and staff.
- Watkins will take advantage of the Nashville metropolitan area’s numerous higher education institutions with productive partnerships and consortia agreements.
• Watkins will need to make special provisions to increase opportunities for diverse populations with favorable financial aid programs.
• Watkins’ quality educational programs in the visual arts require outstanding classroom and studio instructors with strong academic and professional credentials, who place the academic and artistic success of their students as the constant top priority.
• To recruit and keep outstanding faculty, Watkins will provide salaries and benefits that are competitive with its peer institutions.
• Watkins will recruit, employ and maintain dedicated, insightful, student-friendly administrators and staff who are team players, innovative thinkers and problem solvers.

Facilities and Technology

• Watkins will continue to create attractive and functional studio, classroom and living facilities with state-of-the-art technology and educational resources that promote learning and creativity.

Student Life

• Watkins will continue to provide and improve appropriate assistance to students with regard to career choices, internships and preparation to enter the job market.
• Watkins will continue to maintain the institution’s legacy of providing a safe, secure and healthy learning and living environment.

Stability, Growth and Development

• Growth and development over the next five years will occur at a slow pace, given the economic downturn and continued uncertainty nationally and regionally. With strong leadership and management at every level, Watkins can expect a relatively stable environment over the next three years and positive growth and development in years four and five. The new student population will steadily increase, returning to a higher yield from prospects, as seen prior to January 2013.
• The economic sluggishness has impacted prospective students with an increasing number selecting public institutions and community colleges solely for reasons of cost. The stability (years one through three) and growth (years four and five) of the new student population will be based upon: 1) increased recognition as an accredited institution of higher learning; 2) substantial, targeted financial aid; 3) comprehensive recruitment and retention plans; 4) timely curricular development in employment-oriented fields, and 5) up-to-date facilities and equipment.
• Watkins’ location in Nashville with its increasing attention nationally as a creative city will serve the college well.
• The higher education landscape is more competitive regionally with for-profit institutions focused on the arts and nonprofit public and private liberal arts colleges and universities that have regionally and nationally accredited arts programs.
• Effective marketing for Watkins will be linked to its competitive advantages with emphasis on its history of quality programs, its commitment to offer the highest quality and most innovative, contemporary visual arts education in the region, reasonable tuition and fees, the availability of financial aid, its small, unique and student-centered creative community, and its attractive and well-equipped learning, creating and living facilities.

• Strategic growth in enrollment is important to the long-term health and success of Watkins. Watkins will plan to grow its enrollment so that a breadth of academic programs can be supported well and a greater economy of scale can be reached.

Revenue

• To maintain its quality programs, Watkins will rely on an appropriate mix of tuition and fees, fundraising and income from investments.

• Watkins will continue to receive support from government granting agencies and periodically from the State of Tennessee.

Governance

• Watkins will annually recruit Board members who will make a positive and energetic commitment to the welfare and success of the institution.
Summary Review of Goals, Objectives and Benchmarks
2013-2014

A review of institutional efforts over the 2013-2014 academic year to meet specific benchmarks under the four major institutional goals reveals a significant number of accomplishments as well as some shortcomings and unmet challenges. Below is a summary discussion of what was accomplished and what remains as a challenge in the institution’s plans from the past year.

Accomplishments and improvements were achieved under all four goals.

Goal 1 Institutional Effectiveness

- Assessments were made and reported in all academic and non-academic units; the assessment processes were further refined; the overall body of assessment data was enlarged, and all units set goals and objectives for improvement based on assessment data. There was also some improvement in the timeliness of reports and adherence to the assessment calendar deadlines.

Goal 2 Financial Health and Stability

- The college continued strong resource management, achieving an unqualified audit report in 2012-2013, no annual operating deficit, reduction of existing debt, and maintaining a low student loan default rate. In 2013-2014, the college achieved a budget surplus for the 12th consecutive year with further reduction of debt (unaudited report) and once again a low student loan default rate.
- In fundraising, the annual 2013-2014 campaign achieved positive results, raising $494,885 (unaudited figures) on a goal of $437,000, or 13% above budget. Trustee giving was at 100% for the fourth time in Watkins’ history, with 77% of the voting membership giving at the Samuel Watkins Society level ($1,000) or above. In capital fundraising, the college received a $200,000 grant from the State of Tennessee.
- Community Education implemented major marketing and programmatic changes, resulting in more sophisticated outreach, which is appropriate for
a college of art. Revenues increased by 32% in 2012-2013 and an additional 19% in 2013-2014.

- The college achieved the budgeted full-time equivalent student enrollment goal of 321 full-time equivalent students (FTE). There were 325.50 FTE in Fall 2013.
- The institution announced a tuition increase for Fall 2013 to continue to develop educational programs that meet expectations. Since 2009, tuition has been reviewed every year, a substantial change from previous increases every two years to more modest increases annually. The 2013-2014 increase was again complemented by higher institutional aid at 18% of tuition and fees. Moreover, scholarships programs designed to target diversity were awarded to several outstanding new students.
- A low student loan default rate of 8% was achieved.
- The Office of Admissions served the college with sophisticated strategies during a difficult economy through an assertive recruitment direction with an admissions marketing plan, increased databased marketing, well designed publications, an updated website and online applications. Targeting transfer students through printed materials, electronic media and expanded community college visits focused upon interest from this population, at a time when more individuals have been attending state and community colleges for economic reasons. In addition, a full-time admissions counselor was added during the recruitment season. As of June 4, 2014, the college saw an increase in deposits of 27% over the prior year (80 vs. 63). Final student enrollment will be determined in early September.

Goal 3 Academic Programs, Student Support Services, Community Outreach and Public Service

- Curricular review, and revisions where appropriate, took place in all academic programs.
- The general education program has continued to use measures for the assessment of learning. With the leadership of the director of general education, the management and implementation of the program has demonstrated progress for key disciplines based upon quantifiable competencies.
- The Bachelor of Arts program has demonstrated a 72% increase in FTE enrollment since Fall 2008.
- The Department of Interior Design introduced a 24-credit Certificate in Interior Design, which focuses upon fundamental skills and knowledge of interior design, architectural drawing and historical concepts.
- The Department of Photography developed a new commercial focus as part of the photography major.
- Full-time faculty taught the majority of classes (57%). In addition, the institution continued to benefit from highly qualified adjunct instructors.
- A full-time faculty search in fine art was successfully concluded.
• The Writing Center expanded its services to include more classroom visits and a variety of workshops concerning essay organization, research and professional writing. Ninety students made appointments for tutoring.
• Watkins Arcade Gallery (WAG), the college’s first off-site gallery, opened in the downtown arcade and offered additional exhibition opportunities to students. WAG was successful in its first year with 11 exhibitions, which provided students with professional development opportunities and garnered strong press and feedback from the community.
• Students in all programs continue to be awarded local and national prizes and scholarships, as well as participate in internships and exhibitions.
• Faculty and staff focused upon the preparation of the documents, from governance and finance to academic programs and facilities, for the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in June 2015.
• As part of the SACSCOC process, faculty and academic administration designed and developed the Quality Enhancement Plan, re-envisioning the college’s foundations program.
• The admissions, financial aid, registrar and student housing offices completed automation of the Empower software system and are functioning properly. The business office including student billing are expected to be fully operational within the Empower system in 2014-2015, thus providing efficient movement of student information throughout the college.
• Programs and services provided by the Office of Information Technology and Equipment Services have been regularly assessed and implemented to provide more effective support to students, faculty and staff, achieving a 92% overall satisfaction rating in all areas.
• In 2011-2012, the college instituted a film student lab fee, as is done in other colleges, to meet industry standards and student needs, ensuring that expensive equipment is repaired, replaced and added in the Film School. The lab fees sufficiently covered student needs in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.
• After several years of students’ lack of participation in student government, the Office of Student Life instituted the student forum, a flexible attendance model which engaged more student participation and achieved results, such as extended building hours and mid-term course/faculty evaluations.
• The library continued to improve the collection, to provide user-friendly services, to expand its website, and to give greater access to digital libraries.
• The library’s third annual zine and book arts festival, Handmade & Bound Nashville, was held in October 2013, bringing 600 attendees to the college’s campus, approximately the same attendance as 2012.
• The fourth Visiting Artist Lecture Series provided the students, faculty and broader Nashville community access to acclaimed artists in all disciplines, adding to a critical dialog about contemporary art, design and film.
• The agreement signed by the college and Belmont University in January 2011, which gave Belmont students the ability to pursue a minor in film production as well as take other courses across the Watkins curriculum and Watkins students the ability to take courses in Belmont’s Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business and in its Department of General Education, resulted in 33 Belmont students taking the film minor in 2013-2014.

• As part of its goal to increase agreements with two-year colleges and universities, Watkins joined Tennessee’s public universities and many private colleges to enable students at two-year community colleges to transfer to Watkins with a maximum number of credits in order to complete the BFA and BA degrees in a timely way. The transfer of credits is specifically articulated for each major on the college’s website. (See Tennessee Transfer Pathway.) In 2013-2014, the college maintained and revised its partnerships with four-year institutions and is continuing to explore agreements with other universities and two-year community colleges outside of Tennessee.

• Community Education revised and expanded their programs and marketing, resulting in a significant increase in enrollment.

Goal 4 Operational, Organizational and Physical Resources

• The Cecy Reed Student Center, in its fourth year of operation, has proven to be a remarkably positive addition to the campus, creating a sense of community. The boardwalk provides a great amenity for the college’s lakeside setting.

• In Fall 2013, college housing was at 111% capacity with 100 students living in the residence halls and nine housed off-site.

• A ten-year master plan for expansion and growth was executed and approved, expanding residential and academic facilities along with the creation of green spaces and a lakeside commons. The college, having begun the quiet phase of fundraising in 2012, will determine the next steps in the fall of 2014.

• Ongoing maintenance and improvements in the classroom, studios and residence halls, in instructional equipment and furnishings, in ventilation and the electrical system, and in landscaping services have taken place annually.

• In 2013-2014, the college replaced and improved major parts of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems and made interior upgrades including the gallery flooring and the lighting studio renovation.

• Security enhancements, including ten additional high-definition security cameras and improved monitoring in 2013-2014, have been implemented and are updated regularly. Additionally, several safety and security systems have been installed that utilize paging and a text alert system for emergency notifications of faculty, staff and students.
• The wireless network has been continually improved with wider coverage and more security.
• Staff and faculty computers have been upgraded on a consistent schedule.
• The Operations Manual was reviewed and updated in its entirety.
• As of 2013-2014, the college’s retirement plan is regularly monitored and reviewed by an investment committee of board members and administration, as well as investment consultants, who provide financial planning expertise and education for faculty and staff.
• Board meetings continue to include: 1) educational components, thus enhancing knowledge and understanding about the academic program, and 2) receptions, therefore supporting communication among board members.

Despite a year of impressive accomplishments, some significant objectives and benchmarks for 2013-2014 were not met and remain challenges for 2014-2015.

Goal 1 Institutional Effectiveness

• The college will improve its demonstration of ongoing quantitative and qualitative assessment. In 2014-2015, supervisors will review and address goals and outcomes of their staff’s and faculty’s institutional effectiveness reports. Goals will be revised as appropriate.
• The college will continue to build on effective quantitative and qualitative processes for all major college plans and documents by updating existing effective goals and objectives.
• While the college has had an uneven history with the supervisory oversight of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan, it has more recently been in place under the direct auspices of the vice president for academic affairs. Although the vice president for academic affairs was new to these processes in the spring of 2012, her skill set is ensuring successful results throughout the college with both quantitative and qualitative outcomes. There also exists an appropriate division of duties with the appointment of a director of the Quality Enhancement Plan in July of 2012.

Goal 2 Financial Health and Stability

• Although the college was successful in all financial measures, it is planning for reduced revenues in 2014-2015 and will monitor revenues and expenses carefully, given the sluggish economy for the college’s demographic. Since the spring semester of 2013, there has been a decline in new student enrollment. Through strong leadership and management, Watkins expects a stable continuing student population over the next three years and positive growth and development in the succeeding years.
• College affordability and financial aid will continue to be a challenge with an increasing number of students attending four-year public colleges and universities and two-year community colleges. The Office of Admissions
will continue to revise specific marketing goals, objectives and strategies for high school students and for two-year college students. An additional admissions recruiter was added in the fall of 2013 during the recruiting season, and a new user-friendly, technologically up-to-date website was launched in the spring of 2014. The impact of these changes will be evaluated in 2014-2015.

- The college will need to be assertive in fundraising to achieve 2014-2015 goals and beyond, especially in its consideration of an expanded fundraising event, the initiation of a planned giving program and capital fundraising for phase one of the master plan.

- The goal for the faculty compensation study completed several years ago was that Watkins should be a leader among similarly sized colleges of art and design. As budget permits, the college should continue to improve its ratio to median AICAD salaries at all ranks.

- Enrollment in the Department of Interior Design declined with the closure and phase-out of the Associate of Fine Arts degree program and has not improved. While the department demonstrates strong retention of students, the institution will need to increase new enrollment in interior design to ensure the vitality of the major. The new concentration in sustainable design in Spring 2013 and the introduction of a certificate in interior design in Fall 2013 are strong steps forward. In addition, as recruitment for interior design requires different methods than all other areas, a minimum of three-to-five articulation agreements with two-year colleges should be made for this major. The director of admissions, working with the vice president for academic affairs, will lead this effort.

- The Board of Trustees, president and administrative leadership will need to evaluate a trend in declining new enrollments and determine strategies for improvement and change beginning in the fall of 2014.

- The institution must continue to track retention rates. While actively recruiting a full-time student population and providing expanded financial aid, proactive advising and intervening early when students show signs of failure have been positive. The Retention Committee should continue to meet regularly to assess these actions and set specific goals for the 2014-2015 academic year. More in-depth data analysis should occur, looking at retention rates from freshman to sophomore year, sophomore to junior, and so forth. The focus on the foundation year for the Quality Enhancement Plan should contribute to better retention rates in the long term.

- In Community Education, the new director should continue the positive momentum of the program and further evolve it, meeting the needs of the community. Enrollment and revenues will follow.

Goal 3  Academic Programs, Student Support Services, Community Outreach and Public Service
• While significant progress was made with the evaluation of the transfer of credits from two-year public institutions and an agreement to participate in the Tennessee Transfer Pathway, assertive development of specific articulation agreements with community colleges should occur in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.
• Goals should be set and actions taken for increased retention of students.
• Working with the department chairs, the Office of Career Services should further develop its programs for both students and alumni to expand internships and employer connections.
• Additional curricular programs will be researched and developed keeping in mind the college’s mission, resources and employment opportunities for students. The president and vice president for academic affairs will work with the faculty accordingly.
• The Bachelor of Arts in Art will be annually evaluated through the Institutional Effectiveness process.
• The Film School will review its curriculum to ensure currency of offerings and concentrations.
• The effectiveness of Maymester and the Summer terms should be evaluated, along with the long-term best use of the college’s facilities for programs during the summer months.
• National faculty searches will take place as programs and enrollment grow.
• Concern remains for the need of administrative assistance and will be addressed when the college grows. In the meantime, personnel will be employed on a temporary, part-time basis as needed.

Goal 4 Operational, Organizational and Physical Resources

• The financial aid and business offices completed many aspects of automation within the institution-wide software, Empower, in 2013-2014. Empower personnel also provided greatly needed and updated training on campus for all employees who utilize the system. Full implementation should occur in 2014-2015 with the business office becoming fully operational, thus enabling efficient movement of student information throughout the college.
• The institution will need to continue to be rigorous in its assessment of reasonable safety and security for its students.
• The college’s Operations Manual, available online for all members of the community, was reviewed internally and revised in 2013-2014. In the next year, human resources consultants should review the manual to determine if additional policies and revisions are necessary.
• With full-plus occupancy in the residence halls, but an expected decline in full-time equivalent enrollment for 2014-2015, the president and Board of Trustees will need to determine the next steps in moving forward with phase one of the campus master plan in the fall of 2014.
• Physical expansion of curricular areas, and specific determination of such, will take place: 1) in order of priority need and available space within the
existing academic building, and 2) with the execution of phase one of the campus master plan.

Academic year 2013-2014 was a productive and successful one. With the strategic plan as a broad-based guide, significant improvements were made throughout the institution. However, challenges remain to be addressed by all departments in the upcoming academic year and new ones, as always, have emerged.

In addition, while goals two, three and four are appropriate for maintaining over the next several years, goal one on institutional effectiveness needs re-thinking. For many years now, the institution has had an energetic focus on institutional effectiveness with an emphasis on the process. Certainly, the process will continue to be at the core of the institution’s initial goal toward effectiveness and improvement. In the last five years, the institution has been successful in capturing the concept and process of assessment and improvement into its culture. Thus, it now seems appropriate to alter the wording and emphasis in goal one so that it centers the institution more directly on maintaining and cultivating its commitment to quality, assessment, and improvement. Reports on institutional effectiveness should center on both quantitative and qualitative assessments. The institution will make this transition as it considers external and internal challenges for 2014-2015 and beyond.

Finally, perhaps the most important upcoming challenge, and reward, is the institution’s preparation for reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in June 2015. This process ensures that Watkins meets standards for high quality collegiate education. All of the college’s constituents must be fully engaged.
External Opportunities and Challenges

Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is fortunate to be located in Nashville, as the institution provides important educational and cultural opportunities to the people it serves. The institution is a leader and participant in a vibrant arts community locally and across the state. There is also a large, dynamic higher education community in Nashville that offers Watkins important opportunities for partnerships with significant economic and programmatic advantages. The college operates in facilities that are highly functional and aesthetically appropriate on an urban, lakeside campus, which is accessible from major city thoroughfares and interstates.

The Nashville metropolitan area and the entire state of Tennessee offer Watkins a growing population with many positive demographic characteristics that provide great promise to undergraduate colleges. There continues to be unmet needs in higher education in the Nashville area and throughout the state among college-aged students and also among adults, including potential career-changers in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, along with senior adults interested in non-credit learning and enrichment experiences. These unmet needs, particularly high within the Hispanic and African-American segments of the population, offer the college the opportunity to make important educational differences in the lives of the minority communities, while also enhancing the college campus environment with increased levels of cultural and ethnic diversity. Seventy-two percent of the college’s population is from Tennessee.

Positive demographic and location factors have historically been complemented by positive economic factors, particularly in the service industries, as well as high productivity and a comparatively low cost of living. Despite the current economic climate nationally and regionally, Nashville, with a growing metropolitan area population of 1.73 million (2014), ranked fifth among the 25 “Best Places for Business and Careers” by Forbes magazine, July 2014, and generated a 3.9% expansion in employment. The state ranked third in the US in job growth and business according to the annual CEO survey conducted by Chief Executive magazine in May 2014. Nevertheless, the 2008 economic downturn and sluggish recovery in some sectors have presented challenges to Tennessee’s economy overall, including an unemployment rate of 7.1% in July 2014, which is higher than the national average of 6.2% and many individuals reporting underemployment.

Both nationally and locally, the cost of a college education continues to rise while endowments have not grown and public funding is cut back, compelling many more colleges and universities to seek private funding, and the competition for these private dollars is increasingly more intense. However, Watkins expects to increase raised monies, and its reasonable tuition rate places the institution in good stead as an
affordable private college option. Moreover, the current US Administration’s stimulus plan provides increased incentives in the way of tax credits. Available monies through Pell Grant awards have remained stable.

Watkins College of Art, Design & Film continues to have opportunities to enhance its financial standing with support from the city and state arts commissions, occasional direct appropriations from the State of Tennessee, and local foundations and corporations. The institution has also significantly expanded its use of federal financial aid programs in recent years. With its low student loan default rate, the institution will be able to continue expanding this important source of support.

In the face of these generally positive opportunities, Watkins must address challenges. The college’s endowment is small and there continues to be competition for funds from government and private sources. Of critical importance, the college’s revenues are 79% tuition-driven at a difficult time for student enrollment nationally, regionally and locally. With uncertainty remaining about the economy, questionable affordability of private higher education for moderate- and lower-income students and rising student debt issues, Watkins faces significant competition for students with less expensive public institutions. This situation, in turn, causes increased competition among specialized art colleges for students who can afford private higher education. In addition, because Watkins is small, single-purposed and relatively new as a regionally accredited institution (2010), and is only beginning to develop a sizable alumni base that demonstrates strong and prestigious employment, the path forward in the near term is especially challenging.

These competitive forces underscore Watkins’ need to maintain and further develop the quality and breadth of its programs and to maintain and exceed the standards of accrediting associations. Moreover, in addressing the changing nature of higher education as the market is increasingly dominated by larger colleges and universities, Watkins must communicate its strengths to potential students by stressing its uniqueness, its place in Nashville’s arts community and its qualitative strength in visual arts education, and by continuing to expand and improve its recruitment methods. The institution will also need to continue looking for productive ways of partnering with other institutions in its effort to remain strong in the local, regional and national market in art, design and film education. The long-term fundamental demand for a college degree does remain high.

Affordability is the major issue for many prospective students in this continuing challenging economic climate. Watkins will weigh carefully decisions to increase tuition in tandem with exploring opportunities for expanding scholarships and other forms of financial aid. Minority students will need to be further targeted for expanded financial assistance.

Students throughout Tennessee and beyond, who need to take advantage of higher education opportunities, also present some preparedness issues. ACT scores suggest that many students require some degree of attention in developing basic academic skills before they can successfully complete their college programs. Watkins will continue to look carefully at its general education program, how each course is taught, particularly
those courses that address reading and writing skills, and its assessment of the Writing Center.

The historically strong local economy has been an asset to the college in many respects. However, with the slow economic recovery, placement of graduates in the art, design and film fields is a challenge. Watkins will focus further upon cultivating internships, networking with businesses, educating graduates for ways to approach the job market and assisting in successful placement activities. In addition, a projected increase of 12% in new student enrollment from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014, along with further increases in subsequent years, would again ensure the growth of the student population overall. The underlying assumption is that the economy will grow and affect a broader segment of society, which includes individuals of moderate- and lower-income levels.

External factors are significant both for the opportunities they present for the institution and for the challenges they pose. Successful planning will allow Watkins to maximize its advantages and reduce potential negative impacts. There will continue to be an important role for a small, independent college to play in the higher education environment by responding effectively to external forces and the changes these forces bring by offering unique, specialized programs with a high degree of quality—a very different role than is found in broad-based university programs. For Watkins, with its focus on the visual arts, this means programs that require a great deal of direct student-to-faculty interaction and mentoring with significant learning experiences based on hands-on studio instruction, supplemented with professional internships and community-based service learning projects.

Watkins must continue to maximize its strengths in facilitating learning by further emphasizing its assets as a small, personalized learning community with reasonable tuition in a creative and safe city. The institution’s positive standing within the city and state provides the college with an opportunity to increase its reputation for providing useful, affordable and quality programs, to serve as a leader in the visual arts community, and to provide leadership and partnerships in the arts within the higher education community.
### Internal Opportunities and Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Opportunities and Challenges</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. <strong>Academic Programs</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaffirmation of Accreditation 2015: Quality Enhancement Plan, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. <strong>Students, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Safety and Security</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Size, Admissions, Semester System, Graduation, Retention, Financial Aid, Tuition, Student Life, Career Services, Student Housing, Student Satisfaction, Campus Safety and Security, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. <strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Faculty: Number, Adjunct Faculty: Number, Credentials, Full-Time Faculty Salaries, Full-Time Faculty Contracts, Full-Time Faculty Benefits, Adjunct Faculty Stipends, Teaching Load Assignment, Rank and Promotion, Participation in Governance, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. <strong>Community Education</strong></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. <strong>Administration and Staff</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Organization, Duties and Responsibilities of Administrators, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. <strong>Commissioners and Board of Trustees</strong></td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. <strong>Institutional Diversity</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. <strong>Publications</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. <strong>Facilities, Technology, Equipment and the Library</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus and Facilities, Cecy Reed Student Center, Ten-Year Plan for Expansion and Growth; Technology and Equipment, Library, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. <strong>Budget, Finance and Institutional Advancement</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget, Five-Year Budget Plan, Tuition and Institutional Aid, Institutional Advancement, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. <strong>Accreditation</strong></td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. <strong>Planning and Accountability</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness Calendar, Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. <strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategic planning for colleges and universities requires not only an understanding of the external forces which help to focus their successes and issues, but also a careful examination of their internal operations with the opportunities and challenges they present. This is particularly important for Watkins College of Art, Design & Film in view of the conclusion reached in the previous section of this plan dealing with external factors. An over-arching conclusion in that section of this document was that the institution’s most promising and critical response to external factors, particularly competition among institutions offering educational programs in the visual arts and in a difficult economy, should be to ensure that Watkins continues to offer the highest quality programs possible at a reasonable cost.
This section of the strategic plan looks at many of the significant internal aspects of the institution which impact quality.

I. Academic Programs
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film offers the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in five programs: Film, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Interior Design and Photography; the Bachelor of Arts in Art, and Certificates in Film and Interior Design. The BFA in Film features a major with five concentrations: cinematography, directing, editing, producing and screenwriting and the BFA in Graphic Design offers concentrations in illustration and web design. As of Spring 2013, Interior Design has offered a concentration in sustainable design and in Fall 2013, a Certificate in Interior Design. The Department of Photography will add a commercial focus to its curriculum in the fall of 2014. The BA in Art, begun in the fall of 2007, provides concentrations in five different media-based areas. These degree programs are included within the accredited institutional membership of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) additionally accredits the BFA in Interior Design. All degree programs are discussed in detail in the college catalog and their curricula are presented in full.

In keeping with its mission, Watkins’ general education program includes a liberal arts core, and the Department of Fine Art includes a fine arts foundation for all students. The liberal arts core consists of a diverse series of classes in the humanities, arts and sciences. Its goals are to ensure that students develop skills as writers, speakers and thinkers and to give them a broad understanding of major cultural and historical traditions. A new program focusing on these goals was implemented in 2007-2008 and is proving to be successful. The fine arts foundation provides a base of knowledge that students use in all major disciplines, such as color, composition, drawing skills and an appreciation of the visual arts as a whole.

Greater attention has been focused upon the development of basic writing and study skills in all fundamental courses in general education and in the entry-level courses in each of the major programs. To address these issues, the Writing Center opened in the fall of 2008 through the General Education program in conjunction with the library. The Writing Center became more visible in 2010-2011. A qualified and dedicated Writing Center manager became the primary tutor and visited many classes to address writing issues regarding research, essay organization, citing sources, as well as other components for individual course assignments. In 2013-2014, 90 appointments for tutoring were made, a 29% increase from the previous year. In 2014-2015, the Center will sponsor workshops in essay organization and resume writing and set new goals to further involve the faculty in encouraging student participation.

The faculty annually evaluates the curriculum in each academic major program, as well as general education and the fine arts foundation. Evaluations include: outcomes testing for students, student and departmental chair written evaluations of instruction, and faculty evaluation of departmental missions, learning objectives in each courses, course
syllabi and forms of pedagogy. These evaluations form the basis for institutional effectiveness goals and outcomes for subsequent years.

In Spring 2012, Graphic Design added a Web Design concentration, which provides an opportunity for students to develop competence and skill as web designers and web developers, as well as acquire knowledge of graphic design essentials—typography, graphic design theory and illustration.

To address enrollment in Interior Design, the president formed an Interior Design Task Force in Fall 2010 to develop and implement programmatic and enrollment strategies for increasing the number of students in the department, thus ensuring the vitality of the program. Aggressive enrollment goals set for Fall 2012 were not reached due to a variety of factors, including the impact of the broader economic environment. Since then, the department has made significant programmatic changes, which include a concentration in Sustainable Design (Spring 2013), focusing upon sustainable, environmentally conscious design, e.g., using non-toxic or recycled materials in buildings and fabrics to meet the demands of the profession and the interest of prospective students.

In addition, in Fall 2013, the Department of Interior Design began to address a new audience by offering a Certificate in Interior Design to students who wish to explore their interest in pursuing a career in interior design or allied profession, and/or build a portfolio toward a BFA in Interior Design. It emphasizes the fundamental skills and knowledge of interior design, architecture, design concepts and design history, thus building a foundation-level understanding of the technical and aesthetic principles essential to comprehending space planning, color, drafting, materials and finishes.

To further enhance the student body, the offerings of the Film School and Watkins’ programs broadly, in January 2011, Watkins College of Art, Design & Film and Belmont University signed an agreement that benefits students at both institutions, as well as the arts community in Nashville and beyond. Through this agreement, Belmont broadens opportunities for its students by allowing them to pursue a minor in film production through the Film School at Watkins. Additionally, students in the Belmont Honors Program may take supplemental courses at the college. Watkins broadens opportunities for its students by offering them the chance to take courses in Belmont’s Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business and in their Department of General Education. In 2011-2012, 20 Belmont students (Fall and Spring semester totals) enrolled in a film minor at Watkins and five Watkins students took courses at the Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. In 2012-2013, 17 Belmont students enrolled in a film minor at Watkins and four Watkins students took courses at the Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. And in 2013-2014, 33 Belmont students matriculated at Watkins. This was a major development initiated by Watkins that should build upon the strengths of both institutions and foster creative collaboration. In Fall 2013, Belmont initiated a BA in motion pictures, which the university believes will complement our joint offerings as reflected in the agreement.
The college will continue to increase agreements with other colleges and universities, whenever it is possible to build upon the strengths of both entities. In Spring 2012, the college joined Tennessee’s public four-year universities and many private Tennessee Independent College and University Association (TICUA) institutions to enable students at two-year community colleges to transfer to Watkins with a maximum number of credits in order to complete the BFA and BA degrees in a timely way. Specific pathways to transfer to Watkins for the completion of the degrees are accessible on the college’s website—Tennessee Transfer Pathway. Students who spend two years at a community college in Tennessee can now complete Watkins’ BA program in two years or the BFA program in two and a half years. In 2012-2013, a new joint agreement in graphic design was secured with Rend Lake College in Illinois, in addition to those agreements that currently exist with Georgia Perimeter College, Columbia State Community College and Pellissippi State Technical Community College. Four other agreements with two-year colleges in Georgia, Kentucky, Florida and Delaware, that include multiple majors, are in process.

A special feature of all academic major programs is the commitment each has to experiential learning and service-learning opportunities. Every department uses hands-on activities in a real world laboratory that enhances knowledge and brings the lessons learned in the classroom and studio directly to the marketplace for service to others and, in turn, for enhanced learning for students. These projects additionally help students begin to see, understand and make the critical transition from college life to a profession in the visual arts. Each year, every department engages students in projects in the community that benefit other nonprofit organizations, public schools, charitable groups, businesses, civic organizations and others. In the past decade, the institution has engaged in hundreds of these service-learning projects.

On-campus since 2010, and continuing every year since then, an unprecedented lecture series featuring nationally and internationally recognized artists, designers, filmmakers and critics has taken place. The purpose of these lecture series is to share new ways of thinking and creating with students and the broader Nashville community. New in Fall 2013 was the Watkins Arcade Gallery (WAG), the college’s first off-site gallery, which opened in Nashville’s downtown arcade and has offered additional exhibition opportunities to students. WAG was successful in its first year with 11 exhibitions, which provided students with professional development opportunities and garnered strong press and feedback from the community. WAG will remain as a presence among downtown galleries in 2014-2015.

The institution was elected as a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD) in September 2010. AICAD is a consortium of 43 art and design schools representing the best in creative education across the US and Canada. Member institutions must be private, not-for-profit, and have both regional and national accreditation. With this affiliation, Watkins benefits in many ways from students having the opportunity to study at another AICAD institution for a semester at the Watkins tuition rate to sharing comparative data on enrollment, retention, cost of attendance, facilities, faculty and salaries. To date, this affiliation has proved advantageous from the standpoint of college recognition nationwide and the sharing of best practices among
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film has been a member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) since 1996. In October 2008, NASAD voted to reaccredit Watkins for a ten-year period. The interior design program achieved initial accreditation by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) in 1993 and on July 24, 2010, achieved re-accreditation for six years, the maximum allowable timeframe. And, at its Board of Trustees meeting on June 24, 2010, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) voted to award accreditation to Watkins College of Art, Design & Film, effective retroactively to January 1, 2010. This event was the realization of a goal that was set as the highest priority for the institution a decade ago. In June 2015, SACSCOC will address and vote upon Watkins’ reaffirmation of accreditation. Research and preparation has been actively taking place since 2012 and has a dominant focus for the vice president for academic affairs, vice president for finance and operations and the president in 2013-2014.

Accreditation is granted to an institution only after it has certified its compliance with a broad range of focused operational standards. These standards are set in place and monitored by a network of educational organizations that extend to the US Department of Education and have the purpose of certifying the highest quality of education.

Reaffirmation of Accreditation 2015: Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)
As a requirement for the 2015 reaffirmation of SACSCOC accreditation, in addition to the Compliance Report addressing mission, governance, resources and educational programs, the institution must develop a detailed Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to be implemented from 2015 to 2020. The QEP identifies key issues that have emerged from assessment and is focused upon broad-based institutional improvement that will enhance student learning.

In 2012-2013, regular and ongoing meetings occurred with faculty and staff, demonstrating diverse ideas and perspectives from all academic disciplines. The final three topics for consideration were: 1) a First-Year-Plus program for freshmen that would address skills necessary to be successful in the college environment and eases the transition to college; 2) a Writing and Critical Thinking program that would develop and refine the critical thinking, writing and communicative skills of Watkins’ students, and 3) an updated and re-envisioned Foundations program for all students, regardless of major, which would enable them to develop skills in a broad variety of media, prior to a specific focus in film, fine art, graphic design, interior design or photography. In April 2013, upon review and recommendation of the report of the QEP Topic Selection Committee and the vice president for academic affairs, the president selected Foundations as the QEP topic, noting that a strong foundation for the 21st century is essential across the BFA and BA curricula. It should result in students and graduates being able to work comfortably across disciplines, regardless of their choice of major. In 2013-2014, weekly meetings were held to design and develop in detail the Quality Enhancement Plan on Foundations. The final plan with goals, objectives, student-learning outcomes, personnel, facilities, costs and an implementation timeline will be submitted to SACSCOC in the fall of 2014.
Opportunities and Challenges

Watkins is an institution that understands its strengths and what it wishes to accomplish. Watkins will broaden its academic scope gradually to ensure that equipment, space, faculty and processes are in place to support expanded programs. Its steady focus is on affordable, high quality undergraduate programs in the visual arts. With its primary emphasis on studio-based BFA degrees in art, design and filmmaking, Watkins has been fortunate to have limited regional competition from traditional colleges and universities vis-à-vis equipment and facilities and to be able to offer students unique and needed programs. Nevertheless, there is increasing competition in these academic areas from public colleges and universities and private nonprofit and for-profit institutions overall. Watkins’ commitment to quality and improvement should hold it in good stead.

In the current economy, if the institution carefully monitors, evaluates and improves its programs and assertively recruits students, it will remain stable for the next several years and gradually grow beginning in Fall 2017. Growth will give the institution greater financial stability and the economies of scale needed to offer students a broader range of programs and classes, support services and a greater number of full-time faculty.

There will continue to be both opportunities and challenges for Watkins. The institution must ensure that its programs continue to maintain the highest levels of academic integrity and marketability so that they prosper. The institution must be continually mindful of its mission with its emphasis on equipping students with the knowledge, concepts and skills to succeed as professional artists, designers and filmmakers.

It is important to see that the curricula reflect the needs of graduates, which may not always coincide with the academic, historical, artistic and pedagogical preferences of the faculty. Students achieving positions related to the knowledge and skills they acquire in their degree and certificate programs is an important consideration. Along these lines, the faculty in each academic department regularly review their program to determine if the major needs to be reorganized, revised, updated or otherwise improved. Outcome data for each current class and market data are used in the decision-making and subsequent revisions. This process is now incorporated into the annual institutional effectiveness effort to ensure that all programs are current and committed to improvement. All programs must remain open to curricular and pedagogical changes that will enhance the marketability of students. Improved marketability of graduates can improve recruitment and strengthen Watkins’ ability to survive, grow and prosper.

With a goal of establishing increased joint agreements for the BFA and BA degrees with two-year colleges, Watkins made initial headway in 2010-2011 and significant progress in 2011-2012 with the establishment of the Tennessee Transfer Pathway agreement for students at community colleges. An additional targeted agreement with an individual college occurred in 2012-2013. Several more are in process and slated for joint agreements in 2014-2015. Establishing agreements with fellow institutions will enlarge
the pool of potential enrollees, increase visibility and marketability, and further the mission.

With stable enrollment through 2016-2017 and some enrollment expansion in the following two years, there will be opportunities for development with increased undergraduate majors, such as animation and interactive media. Watkins will introduce a commercial photography focus in 2014-2015, and in the near future will further investigate post-baccalaureate certificate programs and graduate programs, possibly in collaboration with other colleges and universities. Having both national and regional accreditation was a landmark development for the college in 2010, assuring students and parents of a responsible educational program with qualified faculty, appropriate facilities and equipment, fiscal soundness and strong governance. The reaffirmation of SACSCOC accreditation in 2015 is a crucial goal.

The biggest challenge for Watkins as a small, specifically purposed, young baccalaureate institution is the current economy. The institution will focus on its core mission during this time of economic stress. Given Watkins’ distinctness, opportunities, and demonstration of fiscal responsibility, the projections overall demonstrate stability in the near-term and growth in the long-term.

II. Students, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Safety and Security
Watkins’ enrollment in Fall 2013 was 362 students (unduplicated head count) and 325.50 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, generating 3,906 student credit hours (SCH) per semester. This represents a 37% growth in FTE students since the year 2000.

Continuing a trend in the last seven years, the majority of the students are enrolling full-time (12-18 credit hours per semester). In the fall of 2013, 69% of students were enrolled as full-time, which is similar to the 71% in the fall of 2012. Of the 362 students, 268 identified themselves as white, 42 as African-American, 17 as Hispanic, three as Asian, one as Native Hawaiian, one as Native American, four as non-resident alien and 20 identified themselves as two or more races. Six students chose not to indicate their race or ethnicity. There were 165 men and 197 women. Twenty-eight percent of the students were from states other than Tennessee as compared to 25% in the fall of 2012. Seventy-eight percent of the students were in the 18 to 24-age category and 15% percent of students fell within the 25 to 34-age category. Twenty-seven percent of the students were classified as freshmen. Based on unduplicated headcount in Fall 2013, the breakdown of students’ majors and SCH in each department was as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majors</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>BA in Art</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrolled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHs</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| % of total | 29%  | 17%      | 21%            | 8%              | 14%         | 8%        | SCHs
Students in all majors are required to take the Visual Arts Core, foundation courses, and General Education, liberal arts courses. In the fall of 2013, students generated 870 SCH (22% of total SCH) in general education core courses and 594 SCH (15%) in visual art core classes.

Of the unduplicated headcount of 362 students, 322 were pursuing BFA degrees, 29 students were enrolled in the BA degree program, 11 students were registered for the film certificate program, eight were non-degree seeking students, and 19 Belmont University students enrolled in the film minor at Watkins. Two Fisk University students took a course under the Fisk/Watkins cross registration agreement. The institution’s primary focus is the baccalaureate degree.

For the Fall 2013 semester, 95 new students entered Watkins. Eighty-seven percent of incoming students were classified as full-time. Twenty-eight students (28%) listed graphic design as their major, followed by 17 in film (18%), 16 in photography (17%), 15 in fine art (16%), 12 in the BA program (13%), and seven in interior design (7%). For new students, the enrollment pattern shifted from the prior year with film (-41%), photography (-6%) and the BA program (-14%) having fewer students; fine art (+37%), graphic design (+39%) and and interior design (+4%) enrolling more. Overall, the major programs for all students (new and returning) remained stable in numbers, demonstrating normal waves in enrollment from area to area, when comparing fall of 2012. For 2014-2015, admissions and the academic areas will review new student enrollment in fall of 2014 and adjust admissions and programmatic strategies accordingly.

**Class Size**

Students attend classes with small enrollments, given the importance of student to faculty contact in art and design education. Per discipline, the average number of students in both lecture and studio classes, which reflects faculty to student ratio, breaks down as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headcount</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art*</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>General Education**</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes visual arts core classes.
** Includes art history core classes.

The average number of students per course in each of the visual arts disciplines for lecture and studio courses for fall semesters breaks down as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>13.5*</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes the visual arts core classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.2*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes the visual arts core classes.
### Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Fine Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecture</strong></td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Studio</strong></td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>10.7*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes the visual arts core classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Film</td>
<td>Fine Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecture</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Studio</strong></td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.8*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes the visual arts core classes.

In the past several years, the vice president for academic affairs and the academic chairs have regularly reviewed the student-to-faculty ratio and evaluated pedagogical and cost effectiveness to ensure efficient faculty utilization and class size.

### Admissions

Students are admitted to Watkins programs through a thorough review process involving initial screening by the admissions office, followed by a complete file review and final recommendation by faculty chairs with approval by the vice president for academic affairs. ACT requirements and reviews of academic preparation indicate that students who are admitted have the ability to succeed. However, the faculty, particularly those teaching in the general education program, report students arrive with less than ideal writing and study skills, which presents a challenge to the faculty in all programs. This is certainly not unique with incoming Watkins students. The college established the Writing Center in 2008 to address these issues, which is discussed in I. Academic Programs.

As projected, new student enrollment in Fall 2013 showed a 10% decrease in student body numbers at 95 vs. 106 in Fall 2012. The college also experienced a decline in new students in January 2013, as compared to January 2012. Although retention of the matriculating student body was strong, the net effect for 2013-2014 was a decline in full-time equivalent enrollment overall of 8%.

The continuing challenging economy and its effect on the affordability of a private higher education, especially for those with moderate and lower incomes, has hurt the college, as many in Watkins’ prospect pool choose community and state colleges. Also in these times parents question the viability of employment in art or art-related fields. Accordingly, the director of admissions is continually evaluating and revising strategies for both traditional new students and transfer students, updating the marketing plan and marketing materials. The college also increased its recruitment staff for the Fall 2013 recruitment season.

With the development of award-winning general marketing materials in 2009-2010, emphasis was placed on targeting, specific programs, transfer students and teachers in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. The office also launched an online application, resulting in a substantial increase in started applications. In Summer 2012, new enrollment materials, a revised marketing plan and simplified applications for all majors—with the expectation that more individuals will complete the application process—were developed and achieved results, specifically in graphic design. The college launched a new website in February 2014 which, together with the printed marketing materials from the prior year, presents a cohesive and contemporary design. For the first time since January 2013, the
college is projecting an increase in new students—12%. This increase will in turn begin to stem the decline in total enrollment.

While Moody’s 2014 US Higher Education Outlook continues to be negative for the next several years with the economic challenges in attending private colleges and universities having increased since the 2008 recession, Watkins will persist in riding these unusual rapids with strategy, with planning and with management at every level. It has continually done so throughout its history and will do so in future years. The pace for growth will be slower than envisioned for the near-term, but in the long-term, growth will occur.

**Semester System**
The academic year is organized around traditional fall and spring semesters and a summer term. In 2006, the summer term was divided into two sessions, a one month/one course “Maymester” and a second term in June and July to better address students’ schedules. Since 2010, summer enrollments have declined significantly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Enrollments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicators demonstrate that as more students have enrolled full-time during the academic year (69% of all students and 87% of new students in 2013-2014), these same students are working full-time during the summer months. It also appears that more students are taking general education courses at state institutions in the summer because it is economical to do so. In the next several years, the college will review, evaluate and revise its approach for summer offerings.

**Graduation**
A commencement ceremony is held each May to formally award degrees and certificates. The number of students completing their programs each year over the last ten years has averaged at 58. During that same time period, those who completed the BFA program increased by approximately 220%. The numbers below reflect graduates from both Fall and Spring as well as Summer semesters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BFA</th>
<th>AFA</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>BA*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The BA degree program was first offered in academic year 2007-2008.*
Retention
Retention requires consistent study at Watkins and remains complex. A number of factors have impacted efforts to gather reliable retention data in the past decade, including increased admission standards, the introduction of the BA degree program, development of three new BFA degree programs in fields that previously were limited to AFA degrees, the elimination of four AFA degree programs, and the number of non-traditional students who attend Watkins and often take many years to complete a degree or certificate program. These factors and perhaps others suggest that any conclusions from current retention data, while useful, have caveats. With anticipated stability in terms of degree and certificate offerings over the next several years and with continuation of the current trend at Watkins toward more full-time and traditional college-age students, the ongoing gathering of retention data should reveal trends and reliable conclusions about the institution’s success in retaining students.

The following summaries of data show institutional retention rates based on all students who entered the college during an academic year and who then either eventually completed a degree or certificate program or who are still actively pursuing a degree or certificate program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>BA in Art*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 2004-05</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2005-06</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2006-07</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2007-08</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2008-09</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2009-10</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2010-11</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2011-12</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2012-13</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2013-14</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The BA degree program was first offered in Fall 2007.

As noted, any conclusions from this data should be used with caution. Moreover, it is important to observe that the appearance of improving percentages is misleading since the data from more recent years do not uniformly reflect attrition rates by students who drop out or otherwise leave the institution in their second, third, fourth and subsequent years of study. More reliable data will eventually track students’ persistence to graduation over a six-year period for BFA and BA degree students and a three-year period for film certificate students, therefore permitting a more accurate analysis.

In 2013-2014, the Retention Committee focused upon persistence data. The committee reviewed comparative data, ensuring that traditional new students are separately tracked from transfer students and certificate students. In addition, both traditional new and transfer students were each tracked from year-to-year (freshman to sophomore,
sophomore to junior, junior to senior) to understand better where and how to focus on retention efforts. This data showed that students entering in Fall 2012 persisted from first to second year at a rate of 61%, which is concerning. The Retention Committee has focused on first-year students and will continue to do so in the coming year. The Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) was deployed in the fall to entering students. By orientation, 68 of the entering 95 (72%) students had completed the inventory. The CSI provides overview data on students' issues, as well as individual data on student financial security, sense of family support, concern about academic success and receptiveness to help in these areas. Based on the individual student data, students received targeted outreach from financial aid and/or career services. All students received direct outreach from the director of student life regarding some of the provided information and areas of concern, as well as referrals to other staff and faculty members. The college have replaced the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) with the CSI and has been using the data much more aggressively. Watkins will continue with the CSI in Fall 2014.

Academic and student life personnel have addressed retention, with emphasis focused upon the college’s commitment to being student- and learning-centered. Efforts have been made to attract serious and better-qualified students, including the addition of a portfolio requirement for BFA students. Through communication with the registrar’s office and academic advisors, increased efforts to provide intervention earlier in the semester when students’ class attendance and class work show signs of failure and more direct and personalized advising have been instituted. In 2012-2013, the Retention Committee reviewed current procedures, which resulted in a structured absence response system involving outreach from the instructor, followed by faculty advisors, the financial aid staff, the director of student life and the vice president for academic affairs, when appropriate. As follow-up, the committee reviewed student absences and absence interventions for the last two years. So far there is no discernible pattern. The interventions and tracking will continue for another year and be reviewed again in 2014-2015. The committee will also review successful retention efforts at similarly sized colleges of art and design. In 2014-2015, the vice president for academic affairs will again lead a workshop for faculty advisors, reviewing the college curriculum and the role and responsibilities of advising. Adjustments have been made at every level.

Other efforts to address retention have focused on improving student life programs. There is an off-site counseling service staffed by professionals. This service is available to students by appointment and at no cost for the first three sessions. Steps continue to be taken to make registration and other procedures more student-friendly. The student life office, admissions office, registrar’s office, financial aid office, business office and other offices with staff that interact regularly and directly with students are committed to providing a supportive, friendly environment.

In summary, retention emphasis is focused upon an institution-wide commitment to a student-centered, learning-centered college in all academic and administrative operations, on tracking reliable data, on improved and proactive advising, and on early intervention for students whose class work and attendance put them at risk. In 2014-
2015, the Retention Committee will work with faculty and staff to set measurable goals for improvement.

Financial Aid
The Office of Financial Aid has historically been student-centered with exemplary service to students. It has done much to increase the amount of student financial assistance, encouraging students to take responsible steps to increase their financial aid opportunities and to take care of their financial obligations in a timely and professional way. Other faculty and staff, including the institutional advancement staff, have assisted in increasing scholarship programs. An overview of the financial aid available to students shows both needed and dramatic growth. Since 2004-2005, financial aid monies have increased by 102%.

Currently, Watkins participates in federal financial aid programs including Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study, Federal Subsidized Loans, Federal Unsubsidized Loans and Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students and private alternative loan programs. The college also participates in state grant and scholarship programs, which consist of the Tennessee Student Assistance Awards grant program and Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships. Watkins employs approximately 5% of its student body in part-time federal work-study positions. In addition, the college has a growing program of institutional aid, a variety of self-funded scholarships and grant programs.

Total Student Financial Aid of All Kinds Awarded

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<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
<td>$3,003,304</td>
<td>$3,966,084</td>
<td>$4,907,238</td>
<td>$5,056,458</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average financial aid award to those students who receive awards (82% of the total student body) is approximately $17,445. On average, approximately 66% of that figure comes from federal programs, 9% from state programs, 20% from institutional aid, and 5% from other programs. Since 2006-2007, institutional aid as compared to all tuition and fees has increased from 8% to 18%, in order to be more competitive in attracting and retaining students.

Financial aid is essential for Watkins because the institution historically attracts many students who are interested in pursuing the arts, but have limited financial resources. The average annual income for Watkins students who are independent (24 years old or older) is $14,178. The average annual family income for students under 24 years of age and still receiving family support is $77,595. The pool of students in the institution’s primary area of service has significant financial needs. For many students, major programs of financial aid will be necessary if they are to have higher education opportunities. Thus, the growth in student financial aid is a positive development for the college and is helpful in addressing recruitment, retention and service to students in Tennessee and beyond.

Despite the positive trend in the availability of aid at Watkins, financial needs remain high, and limited financial resources play a major role in the determination to attend a private college and in retention. As noted above, 82% of students (2013-2014) received some form of merit- and/or need-based aid. It is also worthy of note that data from the National Center for Education Statistics, which compares Watkins with approximately 25
peer institutions, suggests that Watkins students receive less in federal grants and student loans than students at other comparable institutions.

While carefully trying to avoid giving students serious debt repayment burdens, Watkins needs to continue expanding its participation in federal grant, work-study and loan programs. Whereas data from the Department of Education shows that student loan default rates continue to rise, the loan default rate for Watkins students remains relatively low at 8%, showing that the financial aid staff has been judicious in its awards and proactive in counseling students about the dangers of unlimited borrowing. (A student default rate of 25% to 40% over one to three years is considered unacceptable by the Federal government.) Every effort will continue to be made to increase financial aid opportunities for students while maintaining a reasonable tuition rate, given the continuing challenging economy and resulting enrollment projections.

**Tuition**

The cost for attending a four-year private undergraduate college grows each year. The average annual cost per student (tuition, fees, books, supplies, food, housing, transportation and other expenses) is $42,224 (College Board, “College Cost Calculator,” 2014). By and large, Watkins has limited tuition increases and has maintained a reasonable cost for attendance at $35,136. In addition, the college has expanded its own institutional aid (tuition discounting) program to make an art, design and film education more accessible for students.

In the fall of 2007, new merit- and need-based scholarships, including focused minority scholarships, were developed for incoming freshmen and upper classmen. This institutional aid for the entire student body has grown to 18% today. By comparison, the discount rate for students in 2006-2007 was 8%. Also see page 88, benchmarks for projected tuition and scholarships and financial aid.

**Student Life**

Since 2004, the Office of Student Life has evolved in response to student needs. Staffing for the office currently includes a full-time director, a half-time career services coordinator and a half-time housing operations manager. Progress in developing student programs and in encouraging students to take a more active role in college life is constant. Goals reinforce the emphasis on students' transition to college, persistence while here, wellness and professional development. Current priorities focus upon physical health, stress management, identity development and careers in the arts.

Academic year 2013-2014 saw continued effort toward the reinstatement of a Student Government Association through a student forum, a flexible attendance model based on that of Oregon College of Art and Craft, which allows intermittent student participation in weekly meetings without commitment to ongoing leadership responsibilities. The student forum created the positions of facilitator, scribe, treasurer and committee representatives for the Safety and Security Committee and Retention Committee. This non-hierarchical structure allowed freer participation and a shorter, one semester commitment. Fall 2013 was a success overall with meeting attendance typically at ten students. Forum-initiated results included extended building hours, the addition of a community refrigerator in the
student center, mid-term course/faculty evaluations and a town hall-type meeting with the president and vice president for academic affairs.

During Spring 2014, however, there was notably less participation with the exception of the representatives to the Safety and Security Committee and the Retention Committee. Thus, forum participants moved to a model that alternated student outreach, which included social activities, with regular meetings. While these activities were engaging, they lacked the focus of the fall semester. Although limited in its success overall in 2013-2014, this flexible model engaged more student participation than in prior years and will continue in Fall 2014.

Students regularly participate in health and wellness programming including alcohol education and abuse prevention, sexual health and wellness including sexual assault prevention, healthy eating initiatives and stress management workshops. In response to requests, Student Life will offer additional support around identity development in the coming year. Student utilization of off-campus counseling services continues at approximately 25 sessions per year.

A YMCA student-membership discount is in place with students benefitting from the recent renovation of the closest facility. Student Life continues to host a number of community-building programs including late-night breakfast during finals, the Thanksgiving potluck, game nights and field days. These are well attended and students are appreciative.

The Cecy Reed Student Center, a significant addition to the campus in Fall 2010, gives students a recreational space to gather outside of the classroom—to work on projects, read, play games or have a meal. Also, for the first time with the completion of this addition, the college utilizes its urban lake setting with a boardwalk and lakeside outdoor seating. Student usage of the center has been high and feedback very positive. The café in the student center provides hot meals, sandwiches, salads and more. A meal-plan system is currently being considered for students.

Students are encouraged by Student Life and periodically required by faculty to attend “free days” at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, multiple free film screenings throughout the year as passes are available, and other gallery openings and artist lectures as they occur. The academic programs sponsor events each semester including films, workshops and lectures with prominent writers, artists, designers and filmmakers, which are publicized by the Office of Student Life as part of students’ professional development. Students are also regularly offered opportunities to contribute to the community, as the college believes service is a meaningful part of an artist’s development.

Career Services
The Office of Career Services launched in Fall 2008 to assist students, as well as alumni, with career planning from resume preparation to presentations by community leaders on the business aspects of the visual arts. This position was streamlined within the Office of Student Life in July 2009. The career services coordinator works with
professionals in the community to provide students with information about available internships and career opportunities through a weekly online newsletter. The coordinator also connects students directly with career and volunteer opportunities in Nashville and beyond. Successful artists and entrepreneur presentations, resume workshops, grant writing, artistic integrity and legal aspects of the visual arts will creatively continue as part of ongoing workshops and lectures. Alumni are invited to attend all events hosted by the office, which also manages the annual alumni survey.

The Fall 2013 Alumni Survey was deployed in October to 502 recipients (up from 2012’s 338). Multiple reminders yielded 83 unique responses for an overall response rate of 17%. The survey indicated that 86% of responding graduates report adequate employment with employers including Relativity Media, Warner Bros/Sony Pictures, Third Man Records, elementary and secondary schools, Fiberweb, Nashville Lifestyles Magazine, Storyville Post, Nelson Mazda, TakePart Live, Dovetail Design Works, Beth Haley Design, MMA Creative, Anderson Design Group, The Dave Ramsey Show, Country Music Association, Willow Branch Upholstery, 4th Leaf Design Studio, Skyline Exhibitor Source and Oasis Center. To continually update the alumni list and alumni success, in addition to the annual survey, career services will regularly track new graduates through social media, as begun by the Office of Admissions in 2012-2013.

Alumni remain engaged and have begun to form an alumni association. 2013-2014 outreach efforts culminated in a February 2014 internship fair that featured 17 employers and was attended by roughly 80 students. Considered a success, the internship fair will continue in 2014-2015.

**Student Housing**
The first of two residence halls, Hawkins Hall, opened in August 2005 and an identical second hall, Turner Hall, opened in August 2008. Both halls contain twelve apartment-style suites, each with four single-person bedrooms, two baths and a living room/dining room/kitchen combination. Together the residence halls house 96 students. The apartments are furnished. Each bedroom has high-speed Internet access, cable television and all utilities at no additional cost. Rents are comparable to those of similar facilities at other institutions in the area.

Following the initial institutional financial investment in the housing units, they were designed to be self-sustaining and, in fact, have been so. In Fall 2008, occupancy was 88%, a remarkable achievement in the first year of having both residence halls on line. In the fall of 2009, occupancy climbed to 95% and since that time, the college has been over capacity, housing from six to twelve students off-campus in nearby apartments.

Two additional housing units are envisioned in the next decade, with a master plan completed accordingly in 2011. (See IX. Facilities.) The concept for student housing on campus is to create a visual arts village in which students live, study and create. The director of student life, with a new housing operations manager and student resident advisors, have implemented policies and procedures, events and programs to establish a positive, productive and secure living environment. The college anticipates having the residence halls over capacity in Fall 2014 and will also house 13 students off-campus.
Student Satisfaction
In general, students appear to be satisfied with most aspects of the college. For over ten years, Watkins has used a nationally normed evaluation instrument to measure students' general satisfaction with academic programs, faculty, instruction, advising, equipment, security, administrative procedures and other aspects of campus life. The results have been in line with national norms and generally very positive, especially given limited resources. One hundred and fifty-three students (40% of the student body) participated in the 2013 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). Results showed that the institution received favorable ratings and met many of its important commitments to provide a safe, secure, student-centered environment and a quality program of instruction. Overall, the survey showed that the following areas were judged by students to be areas of strength for the institution.

- My advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements.
- My academic advisor is approachable.
- Advising staff care about students as individuals.
- The school is safe and secure for all students.
- Students are made to feel welcome at this school.
- The school staff are caring and helpful.
- Faculty care about me as an individual.
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.
- Faculty are interested in my academic success.
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here.
- Nearly all classes deal with practical experiences and applications.

On the other hand, students indicated in some areas that the college’s performance did not meet their expectations. There are some inexplicable contradictions with several of the strengths listed above. Perhaps most importantly, there are within the 2010 (184 respondents), 2011 (209 respondents), 2012 (93 respondents) and 2013 (153 respondents) results, some concerns expressed by students that have appeared regularly about class scheduling, registration, career guidance, internships and providing students more timely feedback about their performance in class as the semester progresses. Administrative and academic areas have been actively addressing these with improvements made. In August 2012, a mandatory advising workshop for faculty occurred to review and clarify responsibilities. With the spring semester 2013, the college instituted online registration for the first time. Processes have been reviewed and improved in 2013-2014 to ensure a smooth registration process. The college established the Office of Career Services in 2008, which has resulted in generally positive outcomes from 2010 through 2014. Financial aid monies have increased every year; however, financing college education remains a challenge for many students and their families. In addition, as many students hold part-time positions, scheduled classes/course prerequisites do not necessarily meet their time requirements.
Below are areas where the 2013 survey suggested that the institution faces certain challenges with student satisfaction.

- Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
- Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.
- The school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals.
- Internships or practical experiences are provided in my degree/certificate program.
- The school shows concerns for students as individuals.
- The quality of instruction in the academic programs is excellent.
- There is a good variety of courses provided at this school.
- On the whole, the school is well maintained.
- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class.

These outcomes were distributed to academic chairs and directors for their analysis and determination of improvements to be made. The 2014 survey was not deployed as intended due to a change in personnel, and thus the results reflected an unusually small sample of the student body. Since then, the Office of Academic Affairs has planned what it believes will be an effective administration of the SSI in 2014-2015. In addition, the registrar and director of student life are currently researching how the surveys can be done online by students and, at the same time, achieve an effective response rate.

The Office of Student Life coordinates student surveys addressing student participation in and satisfaction with programming and staff, including sections related to the director’s oversight and overall student programming, housing and residential education, and career services. In 2014, responses were by and large representative of the broad population with students reporting general satisfaction with events and services. These surveys, along with the graduate exit interview, are shared with relevant departments and committees and continually inform planning. Policies and procedures, including student grievance processes, harassment, disability accommodations and housing, are regularly revised for clarity, functionality, and compliance with applicable federal standards.

**Campus Security and Safety**

Security is regularly addressed in an effort to ensure that students attend the college in a safe environment. Already in a relatively safe area of the city, the college has seen improvements in the crime rate in recent years. The low crime rate in the MetroCenter area has continued to decline further since 2007. Of the 35 council districts in Davidson County, only 4.3% of the county’s total incidents occurred in the district in which the college is located (Uniform Crime Report, Metro Nashville Police Department, 2013).

Watkins is proud of its record in this area. To date, the college has experienced only a small number of minor thefts at its current location, and there is no record of any violent
crime in the institution’s 129-year history. The institution maintains regular contact with officials at the nearby North Precinct of the Metro Police Department and receives weekly email alerts from the precinct. The vice president for finance and operations also meets throughout the year with the MetroCenter Advisory Group and annually with the MetroCenter owners’ association where crime is regularly monitored and discussed.

The above having been said, the administration at Watkins knows that no area of the city or the college is immune from violent crime. Watkins has published safety guidelines designed to address numerous emergency situations, including personal injury accidents, emergency building evacuation, bomb threats, toxic substance contamination, severe weather situations and other kinds of potential disasters.

There are security camera systems inside and outside of all of the buildings on campus, as well as door alarms. Outside security lighting is provided throughout the campus. The front desk in the academic building is staffed at all times. An unarmed, uniformed security guard is on duty at the front desk and patrols the parking lot and the housing area throughout the night. The guard is instructed to be proactive in walking students to their cars in the evening and in spotting unauthorized visitors to campus. Flyers are given to students each semester, which outline specific steps and precautions they should take to maintain their safety and security. The Office of Student Life has reasonable procedures in place to address mental health problems that can create safety issues for the campus. In addition, flu policies and procedures addressing education, prevention and outbreak were put in place in 2009.

Student orientation each semester addresses safety and security which mirrors that of the student handbook. An officer from the North Precinct presents general safety workshops to residence life and facilities staff annually. One all-resident meeting is held each semester with on-campus residents to discuss safety procedures that are specific to the residence halls, including reporting to resident advisors, door safety, and residence halls policies and procedures. Additional communication and programming by the college’s Safety and Security Committee occurs as necessary. Since the fall of 2010, Watkins has provided mandatory sexual assault prevention to all students via StudentSuccess online modules and in-person education provided by the director of student life semi-annually or more often as deemed helpful.

The Safety and Security Committee, which meets during the academic year, developed the following recommendations in the spring of 2007 for enhanced security, which were approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2007:

- Faculty and staff participation in a training program to assist them in identifying troubled students and in facilitating counseling for those students
- The installation of a new computer program that can be added to an anticipated new phone system that will allow for immediate emergency messages sent to all office phones and in-house loud speakers in all classrooms, studio and public places
- The installation of “panic” buttons on all office phones
• The installation of emergency phones in corridors in student housing
• The installation of a call-forwarding system for the reception desk to cell phones carried by reception desk personnel and security personnel
• New door locks on classrooms and studios that permit locking from the inside
• Upgraded exterior security cameras that provide “night” vision
• The development of new protocols to address serious emergency situations that are not currently listed in the safety manual.

All of the above enhancements have been addressed, annually reviewed and upgraded as appropriate. In addition, new fire and lockdown procedures were approved and put in place in 2011-2012. In 2012-2013, the Safety and Security Committee adopted a protest and demonstration policy. Nine new security cameras were added, and additional training was given to the reception desk staff and resident advisers. Thirty-eight new classroom door locks were purchased and installed, and panic buttons for the reception desks at both entrances are now in place. Photo ID cards have been issued to all staff, faculty and students, and visitors must sign in and receive visitor badges.

Emergency policies, procedures and processes were tested during the flood of May 2010 from the closing of the institution and the relocation of the web server and expensive equipment to the evacuation of residence hall students to a hotel and the addressing of academic issues and grading at the end of the spring term. All proceeded remarkably well with the full and coordinated oversight of the administration and staff. Since then, all fire, safety and lockdown procedures have been updated, are online and are in the current Student Handbook. New in 2013-2014 was a text alert system for emergency notifications of faculty, staff and students, along with the purchase of ten additional high-definition security cameras. Additional protocols for emergency situations and changes to the safety manual are annually executed to comply with the federal Clery Act, originally known as the Campus Security Act.

In regard to the academic program, safety is an essential consideration in the operations of various studios, especially in the fine art and photography programs. Extensive training and supervision are provided in studios, so that students learn correct procedures in using equipment, materials and chemicals. Particular efforts have been regularly made to improve air quality in the photography and fine art studios (2008-2009, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014). In addition, three shops were equipped with eye wash stations, first aid kits and instructional signage and an automatic external defibrillator was installed on campus several years ago. Panic hardware was installed in the theatre and outdoor sculpture area in 2012-2013.

The Cecy Reed Student Center, which opened in August 2010, is equipped with three security cameras inside and two cameras outside. There is a reception desk that is staffed 54 hours during the week and the doors are locked from the inside when the desk is not staffed. When the building is closed, there are door alarms and motion sensors in the Student Center.
In summary, Watkins takes its commitment to provide a safe and secure learning and living environment very seriously.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

A small, highly committed and talented student body presents Watkins with an opportunity to continue, improve upon and expand its service as a quality undergraduate visual arts institution, carrying out its mission in visual arts education while making an important cultural impact locally, regionally and nationally. The majority of Watkins' students are committed to attending the institution full-time and to the pursuit of the BFA and BA degree programs.

Students for the most part are pleased with the college, and many are successful with an annual graduation of approximately 56 students in the last five years. Classes are small, allowing for significant interaction between instructor and student. Tuition remains comparatively low, which makes up in part for limited funding for scholarships. Nevertheless, funding for scholarships and other forms of financial aid has grown substantially in recent years and is an important factor in the ability of many students to attend the college. Emphasis on the cultivation of a campus community is shown by the attention given to student life programs and concerns.

In addition to opportunities, Watkins recognizes challenges. More attention is focused upon student preparedness for college-level work and in measuring and addressing weaknesses in writing abilities. A Writing Center was established in 2008-2009 to meet these challenges. In 2009-2010, a manager was hired in the Writing Center to tutor students, as well as update the website and policies. Since then, students and faculty have regularly taken advantage of the center with new goals set annually. Watkins will address the concept of a first-year preparedness program, including writing and critical thinking abilities, with its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on Foundations, as discussed in I. Academic Programs.

Racial and ethnic diversity among the Watkins student body has increased in the past three years, particularly for the African American population, 12% in 2013-2014, and Hispanic population, 5% in 2013-2014, as compared to 6% and 2% respectively in 2009-2010. Nevertheless, diversity remains a challenge and a goal in recruitment. Increases in institutional scholarships have been substantial for all students in recent years with a 165% increase, from $382,198 in 2007-2008 to $1,012,735 in 2013-2014. Moderate increases are expected to occur in the years ahead in both need-based and merit financial assistance to further a diverse student body.

Retention issues will continue to be studied, measured and addressed. Small classes have advantages, but can also place a financial burden on the institution. Class sizes should increase in courses where it can be done: 1) without sacrificing the effectiveness of instruction, 2) for pedagogical effectiveness and 3) for institutional efficiency.
To ensure that all the institution's programs remain strong in quality and instruction, actions will continue to be taken to promote greater enrollment across the college. With the restructuring and addition of personnel in the admissions office, the institution has seen a steady growth of new full-time enrollments until very recently (January 2013). The continuing challenging economy has affected the college, as more students in Watkins' prospect pool have enrolled in community and state colleges at lesser expense. With an 8% decline in enrollment in 2013-2014 and a planned 6% loss in 2014-2015, the college projects gradually increasing enrollment for the next five years, due to targeted admissions efforts, retention management and curricular additions.

With lower enrollments since Spring 2013, an analysis of new enrollments by major has been under review. For the first time since January 2013, the college is projecting an increase in new students (Fall 2014), which with continuing enrollment increases will enable curricular growth and additional resources.

Substantial improvements in Student Life have been made with the opening of the Cecy Reed Student Center and an updated website as well as an Office of Career Services, which assists students and alumni with internship and job opportunities. Retention and general academic performance are better measured and addressed. Campus safety and security is reviewed and addressed with significant improvements made annually.

While retention and graduation are important, ongoing goals, the institution is also concerned with determining success for alumni after graduation. Annual alumni surveys have been instituted with relatively positive results. In 2012-2013, efforts were made (with achieved results) to learn about the specific work of alumni through a variety of social media vehicles. The Office of Career Services will continue this process and give the results to the academic departments in order to assist the faculty in the evolution of the curriculum, as it relates to student learning and identified outcomes.

**III. Faculty**

Watkins College of Art, Design & Film has been largely successful in its efforts to locate, employ and retain qualified faculty members. Since 2003, national searches have been used as part of the standard hiring process. A review of faculty credentials, professional activities, teaching activities, public and professional service, and community service demonstrates that the institution has been successful in assembling a strong faculty, as affirmed by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in their accreditation reports.

**Full-Time Faculty: Number**
The full-time faculty have increased by 125% from eight in Fall 1999 to 18 in Fall 2013. Over this period of time, the institution has also added five administrators with appropriate academic credentials for part-time teaching assignments. In addition, five technicians and lab assistants provide classroom, studio and technical support to the faculty. Seven of the full-time faculty are women and 11 are men. There is no discernable ethnic diversity among the full-time faculty. In all new employment searches, assertive efforts must be made to diversify the faculty further.
Factoring in adjuncts, the FTE faculty have grown from 17 in 1999 to 29.5 in Fall 2013, or a growth of 74%. Overall, these figures show a substantial increase in faculty compared to a more modest growth in enrollment. The department chairs and the academic vice president must continue to manage enrollment so as to offer fewer undersubscribed courses, while meeting the needs of students. Success requires that the academic leadership continue to provide a judicious approach to class scheduling, advising and staffing to limit the number of undersubscribed courses. At the same time, the institution will look toward stable enrollment, modest tuition increases and expanded fundraising to offset the costs of needed financial aid, equipment, facilities maintenance, salaries and benefits.

Full-time faculty within each academic program for fall of 2013 follow. Priorities within the past five years included a full-time faculty addition in the general education program and new positions in film and graphic design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>General Education</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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*Includes two full-time visiting faculty members.

**Adjunct Faculty: Number**

Each year, Watkins employs approximately 40 part-time adjunct instructors. Based on FTE faculty (12 credit hours taught equals one faculty member), the adjunct faculty in the fall of 2013 were 11.5. Distribution for each program in the fall of 2013 was as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>General Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.25</td>
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</table>

While the institution’s commitment to have the majority of its classes taught by full-time faculty, the college highly values its part-time teaching staff. Adjunct faculty add an important marketplace, “real world” factor to the institution’s teaching. Some have been at Watkins for many years and have given excellent service to the institution as knowledgeable and talented instructors. Efforts have been made in recent years to improve salaries, involve adjuncts more directly in institutional governance and provide them with shared office facilities. In the fall of 2013, approximately 43% of classes were staffed by adjunct faculty (57% by full-time) and approximately 47% of credit hours were delivered by adjunct faculty (53% by full-time).

**Credentials**

Of the full-time faculty, 13 hold terminal degrees in their fields while two hold graduate degrees in their fields that are not considered terminal degrees. Three faculty members have alternative credentials. Degrees according to discipline and/or department for the fall of 2013 were as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2013 Full-time Faculty</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>General Education</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminal Degree in</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field
Graduate Degree in Field  1  1  2
Alternative Credentials  2  1  3

Credentials for the adjunct faculty based on those employed in the fall semester of 2013 were as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2013 Adjunct Faculty</th>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Fine Art</th>
<th>Graphic Design</th>
<th>Interior Design</th>
<th>Photography</th>
<th>General Education</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminal Degree in Field</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree in Field</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Grad Hours in Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative Credentials</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
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**Full-Time Faculty Salaries**

With the college’s achievement of membership in the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) in Fall 2010, Watkins has had the opportunity to utilize direct, up-to-date comparative salary information for faculty at rank. In 2010-2011, upon a request from the Faculty Senate, the president agreed to review all full-time faculty salaries for: 1) internal equity and 2) external competitiveness based upon AICAD data.

The review was completed in 2011-2012 based upon the following compensation goal: Watkins should be a leader among similarly sized colleges of art and design and that the overall compensation should reflect this position. The college first compared internal equity at rank and then compared Watkins faculty salaries at rank against benchmarked data provided by AICAD, utilizing similarly sized schools in terms of student population. The market for specific curricular areas played a role, albeit a limited one. The college also considered years of service, academic credentials, professional accomplishments, market forces and performance and Nashville’s cost of living, but determined not to include these as part of the decision-making process. Benefits, accounting for 26% of total compensation, were also not included in this study. An external human resources professional reviewed the process and all data.

Based upon internal equity and external competitiveness with other similarly sized AICAD institutions, an across-the-board 3.5% salary increase was given and additional dollars were set aside for individual adjustments in 2011-2012. With these adjustments, Watkins ranked as follows when comparing the ratio to the median salary at other AICAD institutions: professor-112%, associate professor-112%, assistant professor-97%, and instructor-100%. In 2012-2013, the college improved the ratio to median AICAD salaries for the rank of assistant professor. Watkins also provides annual across-the-board salary increases and/or one-time stipends, as enrollment and revenues permit. In conclusion, while salaries within the field of education are generally limited, Watkins
pays fairly and will continue to focus upon its recent goal of being a leader among similarly sized colleges of art and design across the country.

**Full-Time Faculty Contracts**
The institution does not have a tenure system. Initial hiring contracts for full-time faculty in the first two years of their employment are for a period of one year with the renewal for the second year determined at the sole discretion of the college. For year three, a contract may be offered for one or two years. Full-time faculty who have been employed at the institution in a full-time capacity for a minimum of three years may be offered two-year contracts. Contracts for faculty and department chairs were reduced several years ago from twelve months to nine or ten months respectively with no decrease in annual compensation. This decision was based on the need to provide faculty with more time to pursue professional interests and development.

**Full-Time Faculty Benefits**
Benefits are competitive for faculty and staff. The institution provides a retirement program through TIAA-CREF with a match of the employee’s contribution up to six percent of his or her salary. A health care program and a term life insurance program are provided at no cost to the employee at a time when employers across the nation have cut back substantially on benefits and transferred more costs to employees. Nevertheless, health care coverage for dependents requires premium payments, which can be relatively high based on age and family size. Moreover, the entire system for health care insurance is undergoing major changes and reform. The college will continue to monitor and revise its health care benefits as needed.

A number of other standard benefits are also provided including generous leave time. Faculty are generally provided some department-level funds for professional development including limited support for travel, conferences, specialized equipment and use of studios. However, the institution recognizes that the levels of support are minimal and ebb and flow depending upon institutional revenues. As the college grows and continues to mature, a sabbatical policy should be put in place.

**Adjunct Faculty Stipends**
Prior to 2006-2007, Watkins had an inconsistent system for per-course adjunct stipends that was loosely related to discipline, credentials, demand and availability in the Nashville area. In the summer of 2006, a qualifications/payment policy for adjunct faculty was put in place and implemented in January 2007. The guidelines gave the institution a consistent, equitable pay scale that meets accreditation standards. In Fall 2010, upon the recommendation of the Chairs Council and the vice president for academic affairs and the approval of the president, adjunct faculty received a one-time bonus. In 2011-2012, adjuncts received an across-the-board 3.5% increase and in 2014-2015, they will receive an across-the-board 3% increase.

**Teaching Load Assignment**
Load assignments reflect general practices across the nation at undergraduate teaching institutions and fall within the standards provided by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. A typical load per semester for a full-time faculty member is three studio courses with three hours credit each or four lecture courses with three hours credit each. The teaching load for department chairs is reduced by one course.

**Rank and Promotion**

In 2004-2005, the Board of Trustees approved a peer-review system for faculty rank and promotion. Prior to that time, rank and promotion had been largely discretionary and lacked uniformity. In 2006-2007, the approved system was fully implemented. In Fall 2008, with a recommendation from the president, the Board of Trustees formally approved a provision of salary increases that recognized faculty promotions. Beginning in 2009-2010, the president implemented systematic increases for promotion at rank.

**Participation in Governance**

Faculty participate in governance in a variety of ways. At the departmental level, faculty formulate curricular and other decisions relating to each academic program, and recommendations are then forwarded to the Curriculum Committee chaired by the vice president for academic affairs. The academic vice president encourages universal faculty participation in curricular decisions and has achieved success according to indicators.

Faculty are also involved in governance through a system of standing committees adopted in 2005-2006. Standing committees include the Curriculum Committee, Promotions Review Committee, Admissions Committee, General Education Committee, Retention Committee, and Safety and Security Committee. All of these committees have formal written guidelines, charges and specified membership requirements. In addition, there are formal provisions for ad hoc committees as needs arise.

In 2005, the Faculty Senate was formally established. By-laws were drafted and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Senate is made up of full-time and adjunct faculty from all academic programs. Staff, administrators and department chairs may not serve on the Senate with the exception of the vice president for academic affairs, who serves in an ex officio capacity. The Senate reports directly to the president. Over the past eight years, the Senate has made important contributions to the college particularly in the areas of the establishment of the BA program, policies on intellectual property rights, gallery policies, the policy on salary increases linked to promotion at rank, faculty salaries broadly, and a variety of curricular issues from program to evaluation. In the spring of 2013, the Senate proposed non-substantive changes to their by-laws, which were approved by the faculty and the president in the early fall of 2013. All of the faculty governance structures are important to the operations of the institution.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

Faculty are the strongest asset for the institution, demonstrating extraordinary commitment to the college, its mission, and particularly its students. Both full- and part-time faculty benefit the institution with a shared vision, special expertise and professional accomplishments as artists, designers and filmmakers, as well as a commitment to
outstanding classroom and studio instruction. Administrative leadership regularly
observes that faculty tend to be task-oriented and work well beyond the normal
workweek. Numerous full-time and adjunct faculty have served Watkins for many years.
Adjunct faculty make important contributions to the instructional program, bringing an
important marketplace dimension to the college. Salaries for full-time faculty have been
reviewed. Benefits are competitive. Load assignments are in line with other similar
institutions. A workable rank and promotion system created with faculty participation and
approved by the Board is in place. Salaries for adjunct instructors seem low and should
be reviewed within the next two years. An equitable and consistent system for paying
adjuncts has been adopted.

The majority of faculty hold terminal degrees and is also qualified by outstanding
professional accomplishments. The ratio of faculty to students provides the opportunity
for significant instructional interaction among instructors and students.

Faculty have ample opportunities to participate in governance, particularly in the past
eight years. The vice president for academic affairs has encouraged faculty to use these
structures to participate more actively in institutional deliberations and decision-making.

There are challenges in the faculty area for the institution. Although full-time faculty staff
the majority of courses and the institution has a positive ratio of full-time faculty to the
number of FTE students, there is a commitment to increase the number of full-time
faculty as the curriculum evolves and enrollment growth permits. In the past five years,
full-time positions have been added in general education and film, and a web designer
joined the Department of Graphic Design.

Support for faculty development is a challenge. Some support is regularly provided, as
budget permits; however at present there is no sabbatical policy in place. Benefits, while
strong, may become a problem in future years, particularly health benefits. On a positive
note, in 2009-2010, the college did institute systematic salary increases with promotions
at rank. And in 2011-2012, the institution addressed internal salary equity and external
salary competitiveness, and made adjustments where appropriate. The study and
subsequent actions resulted in a positive ratio to median AICAD salaries at rank when
compared to similarly sized institutions.

IV. Community Education
Watkins has a long and proud legacy of community service. Today, that legacy
continues not only through service learning projects in the degree program, but also and
importantly through Community Education (CE), which provides on-site and outreach
programs in the visual arts. The program is staffed by a director and coordinator and is
organized under institutional advancement. Courses, workshops and other enrichment
experiences are designed for young children and teenagers (Young Artists Program—
YAP) and adults (Adult Community Education Program—ACE). The programs adhere to
high academic standards in the commitment to quality content and quality instruction.
The Young Artists Program strives to meet and exceed state Department of Education
standards for arts education and offers a graduated, age-appropriate, integrated
curriculum for 5- to 18-year olds.
The program, attended by the community at large, receives support from local and state granting agencies including The Memorial Foundation, Tennessee Arts Commission and Metro Nashville Arts Commission. Comparison data on participation in the past five years show a recent, significant increase for ACE and a gradual decline in enrollment for YAP classes. The director of Community Education is assessing the program and how it can best address the community’s needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<td>2008-2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
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<td>271</td>
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<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>219 (ACE only)</td>
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<td>811</td>
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<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>922</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>402</td>
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</table>

Due to low enrollment during the fall sessions in the Young Artists Program over the last few years, the decision to forgo the YAP program during that time period had been made. However, Community Education was able to run a Spring Intersession Camp that matched with Metro Public School’s calendar. With the availability of free arts programs for youth throughout Nashville and the innumerable extracurricular activities for this age group, it has been difficult to maintain viability during the school year. At present, the department continues to concentrate on developing creative experiences for youth, ages 5-13, with week-long camps during the month of June and one and two day workshops for teens, ages 14-18.

A three-week, intensive pre-college program for highly motivated high school students was initiated in Summer 2009 with majors in fine art and film. In 2011, college credit was given for the first time to students for participation in the program. In Summer 2012, this program expanded to include graphic design. While enrollment grew in 2014 to 26 students, it is the intention for the program to increase in size and majors to include interior design and photography. The director will continue to evaluate the pre-college program from both programmatic and marketing perspectives.

Since 2012-2013, initiatives have included strengthening adult course offerings via foundational options in most topics, implementing a course proposal system for instructors, strengthening the community of instructors through pre-term meetings, restructuring youth camps and programs, and hiring a work-study student to staff the office in the evenings when adult classes are in session. In 2013-2014, the department also focused on new marketing techniques including partnerships with local markets and
organizations that would spread the CE brand to a wider audience. To date, the changes in ACE have resulted in larger enrollments and a significant increase in revenues.

Community Education’s outreach efforts have also been extended over the past several years with off-site programs at several new places in the Metro Nashville area. Programs have been offered at two regional libraries that primarily serve minority populations, several FiftyForward senior centers and the Oasis Center for at-risk youth. Additional initiatives have included hosting workshops for non-profit institutions, teaching in school aftercare programs, and representing the college at various festivals and youth programs around the city. Additionally, Community Education, in conjunction with the Library, has focused on expanding and improving the Handmade & Bound Nashville Festival through community workshops.

Community Education shares facilities with the degree program for teaching studios and classrooms. This provides the Community Education program and the broader community with sophisticated college-level facilities and makes efficient use of the institution’s physical plant. However, this environment creates challenges as well. It can be difficult to schedule community education classes during the fall and spring semesters. Creative solutions will need to be found to accommodate increased community participation in non-credit programs.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

Community Education gives the institution a critical dimension of outreach in the arts and establishes an important bridge to the community at large. The roots of the institution are based in the community’s educational needs and interests, and the college believes that this program is a vital component of Watkins and its mission today.

A major challenge, as already noted, is to find additional space/meeting times for the community programs. Efforts will be made to expand the program and schedule creatively around the degree program and possibly place programs at off-site locations. In addition, Community Education should re-evaluate its decision to have youth classes (YAP) offered only during the summer months and not during the year. Finally, cooperation between the degree program and Community Education is essential, as exemplified by the initiated interior design program offerings in Spring 2012 and CE’s marketing of the new Certificate in Interior Design program in 2013-2014.

V. Administration and Staff

Currently Watkins is served by a staff of 33 full-time and five part-time individuals. In 2000-2001, the institution had 21 full-time and four part-time staff. The increase in staff has been by and large in academic support. In terms of administrative work outside of academic support areas, there has been only a small increase in positions during this timeframe, primarily in the Office of Admissions. Of the 33 full-time staff members, 19 are women and 14 are men. There are five African Americans, two Asian Americans and one Hispanic.

**Administrative Organization**
The president is delegated authority by the Board of Trustees to oversee the academic and administrative affairs of the institution. Reporting to the president are the vice president for academic affairs, vice president for institutional advancement, vice president for finance and operations and the director of admissions. With the change to a full-time (vs. part-time) director of admissions in January 2009, the president shares administrative support with the vice president for institutional advancement for approximately 30% of this staff person’s time and contracts with others, as needed.

The addition of three new full-time staff positions and a regional admissions recruiter in the fall of 2008 and an admissions specialist in the fall of 2009 was a move in the right direction to serve the student body well. Except in limited instances, such as in the institutional advancement office, there is no support staff. The organizational chart for the institution follows.
Duties and Responsibilities of Administrators

The president oversees all educational and administrative areas and interacts directly with the Board of Trustees. The vice presidents and director of admissions meet weekly with the president as the President’s Council. In the fall of 2008, the president’s executive assistant, who since 2006 oversaw the admissions office, was appointed as a full-time director of admissions. Many of the administrative duties associated with the executive assistant have been transferred to other staff members.

The vice president for academic affairs is the chief academic officer. This office oversees all academic departments and related issues and policies, faculty, the library, the media center, the registrar, student life, the institutional effectiveness program and accreditation.

The vice president for finance and operations oversees the budget and processes all financial and personnel transactions, including all internal issues related to auditing, insurance, benefits, capital expansion, maintenance, banking and investments, loans and debts, payroll coordination and oversight, student fees, and day-to-day business operations. In addition, the vice president oversees all personnel matters including benefits and insurance, and other operations dealing with maintenance, security, equipment, facilities, information technology and financial aid.

During the 2008-09 year, the Office of Admissions was reorganized, with the current director of admissions working full-time in that capacity. The director of admissions provides leadership in the planning and implementation of the recruitment program including: an annual marketing and communications plan, the development of recruitment publications, applicant evaluations, pre-student counseling, financial aid leveraging, preliminary enrollment and statistical analyses of all applicants for admissions, and the achievement of enrollment goals. Staffing changes in the Office of Admissions reflect a more assertive recruitment direction with increased database marketing.

The institutional advancement office includes all annual and capital fundraising, grant applications, and external communication functions with donors, alumni and the media. This office oversees and coordinates several major fundraising and celebratory college events per year. Community Education is organized under this vice presidency.

All of these administrative offices have multiple responsibilities and generally work with each other in a team effort to accomplish institutional goals. The vice presidents also regularly serve as liaisons to applicable Board of Trustees’ committees.

Opportunities and Challenges

Administrative staff is modest in size with many individuals having multiple duties and little or no clerical support. However, the modest size and heavy workload create a strong and bonding culture in which everyone is willing to take on multiple tasks and to help each other when needed. There is a shared vision and commitment to see that the institution prospers, improves and, above all, serves students with quality programs. For
the most part, morale is good, and every staff member seems to go out of his or her way to accommodate students, particularly in those offices that interact with students on a daily basis. Nevertheless, additional staff will be needed as the institution grows.

Additional full- or part-time staff positions are envisioned in student life (particularly housing), academic affairs, the business office and the president’s office. Marketing of the institution will need a consistent branding effort and thus, a full-time communications staff person who works in tandem with admissions and other offices.

Given the institution’s interest in enrollment expansion in order to achieve critical mass for all academic programs and to achieve efficiency in staffing, increased recruitment efforts are critical to the institution’s future. Changes in the admissions office with the appointment of a full-time director of admissions and additional recruiters should achieve the desired results in time. While awareness of the institution has increased regionally and nationally in the last few years, recognition remains a challenge, as does the effect of the current economy on higher education, specifically for small, single-purposed colleges.

VI. Commissioners and Board of Trustees
The authority of the Commissioners and Board of Trustees was discussed in an earlier section of this document. The Commissioners and Board of Trustees in 2013-2014 consisted of 30 voting members, including 18 men and 12 women. There were three African Americans among the voting membership, and one Asian American. In addition to the 30 voting members, the Board had three ex officio members: the Governor, the Attorney General of Tennessee and the president of the college, and three trustee emeriti.

All voting members of the Board serve on at least one committee with most serving on two. The standing committees are: Executive, Development, Educational Affairs, Facilities, Finance, and Membership and Board Operations. Each committee has specific duties and structures with meetings scheduled throughout the year.

The full Board meets five times per year on regularly scheduled dates. The Executive Committee, which can act on behalf of the Board on matters within Board policy, is scheduled to meet monthly. The full Board and the committees address major policy issues and generally refrain from involvement in the day-to-day operations of the institution.

Attendance at and participation in Board and committee meetings and other responsibilities vary among the membership. Attendance at full Board meetings has typically been at 60%. The Board and its committees have carried out their responsibilities effectively over the past years and assisted the institution with important initiatives.
Opportunities and Challenges
As the institution has developed and changed in positive ways over the last five years, the Board has been supportive of the leadership, while at the same time avoiding intrusion into the day-to-day operations of the college. The Board appears to understand its role as the policy-making body for the institution.

The Board, including the Commissioners, increased its activities for and commitment to the institution in recent years. The committee structure allows the Board to more effectively carry out its oversight responsibilities through lengthier discussion and analysis than is possible at full Board meetings. Most committees meet regularly. While female membership at 40% has improved, racial and ethnic diversity at 13% has decreased. The Board should make every effort to increase this diversity.

Beginning in 2008-2009, several meetings were scheduled at the end of the workday vs. lunchtime, thus allowing time for a newly added educational component and for Board members to socialize. The latter was requested by individual board members in their meetings with the president. It appears that greater participation in the educational program has strengthened the Board’s engagement with the institution and with each other.

In the last five years, all five Board meetings began at 4:00 pm with educational components and Board receptions. Although attendance has been at times lower than expected, the Board has done a remarkably good job in supporting the growth and development of the college into a much stronger and higher quality institution. Recent discussion and action within several committees have focused upon greater community involvement, the nominating process and new facilities. These topics indicate an opportunity for continued board review and development in the next several years.

VII. Institutional Diversity
Watkins is committed to a creative learning community of individuals with racial, ethnic, cultural, age and gender diversity. A significant degree of diversity broadens the educational experience for students and faculty and reflects the rich cultural variety that makes up the mid-state region and beyond. In addition, there is a substantial African American and Hispanic/Latino minority population in Tennessee. Also, given Watkins’ geographical location within an urban area located near a historically rich African-American neighborhood, there is an additional imperative for the institution to seek out and serve this minority community through scholarships and community service.

Racial and ethnic representation at Watkins is always shifting, thus percentages are approximate. All segments of the Watkins population appear to be reasonably diverse in age and gender. Limitations are found in race and ethnicity. Among the Commissioners and Board of Trustees, 13% are minority populations; 60% are male and 40% are female. There are currently no Hispanic members, although there has been in the past.

Of the 33 staff members, 15% are African American, 6% are Asian American and 3% are Hispanic. Fifty-eight percent are women and 42% are men. The faculty have no
apparent racial and ethnic diversity. Of the 18 full-time faculty, 61% are men and 39% are women and of the 36 adjunct faculty, 58% are female and 42% are male. Instructors in Community Education in the Fall 2013 term included one African-American and one Hispanic instructor; 55% were male and 45% were female.

The student body is 74% Caucasian (as compared to 76% in 2012-2013), 12% African American, 5% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Asian, 5% two or more races, less than 1% Native American and 2% unspecified. Students in the Community Education (CE) program in the Fall 2013 term had these approximate percentages of race and ethnicity: 65% Caucasian, 4% African American, 1% Asian American, 1% mixed heritage and .5% Hispanic. Twenty-eight percent of the CE students did not respond to the survey. Scholarships in both the degree program and the Community Education program have been developed to attract more minority students.

Opportunities and Challenges
The college does have some degree of diversity. However, the level of diversity throughout the institution—Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students—should be improved for a rich reflection of the local and regional populations. Strong efforts in every area must be made through recruitment efforts and position searches.

VIII. Publications
The college publishes a catalog, faculty handbook, student handbook, recruitment materials, newsletters and various program brochures. In addition, electronic documents are maintained with a website, a policies and procedures manual, departmental policies and procedures, a strategic plan, the by-laws of the Board of Trustees, and other miscellaneous documents. These documents, publications and the website are reviewed and updated regularly by the appropriate departmental administrators to ensure accuracy, clarity and up-to-date information. All documents are available to students, prospective students, faculty, staff and board members either electronically or in hard copy. In Spring 2014, a new, more user-friendly website was unveiled, reflecting greater sophistication in design and technology.

Since 2008-2009, the institution has been called “Watkins College of Art, Design & Film” or “Watkins”, with new marketing materials reflecting such. Prior to this time, the college had been referenced by various names on letterhead, in publications and the like. In Spring 2010, the college officially changed its operating name to Watkins College of Art, Design & Film, as approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees, unanimously by the Commissioners and the State of Tennessee and as reflected in the By-Laws of the Trustees. The official operating name of the institution has been implemented with consistency in all publications, the website and on letterhead.

In 2012-2013, the institution undertook and completed an overhaul of the “G” Drive, the internal electronic information system available to all faculty and staff. In addition, all staff reviewed their departmental operation manuals and updates were made to the Operations Manual. In the fall of 2013, this manual was reviewed and updated in its entirety.
Opportunities and Challenges

By and large, the institution benefits from accurate and well-prepared publications. Every effort is made to make all publications available to those who need them. In Fall 2009, business affairs and facilities manuals were completed. Also, beginning in Fall 2009, admissions publications attained an increased level of sophistication, appropriate for the academic programs. As of 2010-2011, all marketing materials and internal documents utilize the official operating name of the institution, “Watkins College of Art, Design & Film” or “Watkins” with consistency. In fall of 2013, the institution completed the update of its Operations Manual to ensure accuracy of information for policies and procedures throughout the institution. In Spring 2014, the college’s website was overhauled to provide better and easier access to information.

IX. Facilities, Technology, Equipment and the Library

Campus and Facilities
Watkins is located in a park-like setting approximately two miles north of Nashville’s central business district and is easily accessible through the city’s interstate system. The administrative and instructional facility is a 63,000-square-foot building located beside a lake that is part of an inland water system connected to the Cumberland River. The institution sits on 13.5 acres of land. In 2011-2012, a new campus master plan was created and includes long-range plans for additional academic and residential buildings. Ample free parking is available to students, faculty, staff and visitors.

In the fall of 2005, the first student residence hall opened. A second hall opened in the fall of 2008, giving the college the ability to house a total of 96 students on campus. In recent years, the residence halls have been at capacity with additional students housed off campus in nearby apartments. Planning for a third residence hall is underway.

With state grants and private contributions, the facade of the academic building was redesigned and areas were landscaped for greater student usage and a more positive sense of arrival for both students and visitors in 2007. Additional landscaping around the lake occurred from 2008 to 2010 through the leadership of the Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees. The exterior appearance of the building has been greatly improved.

The interior of the academic building was completely renovated in 2002 and substantial improvements have been made annually since that date. Relying on participation by faculty and staff, the initial renovation and subsequent improvements have produced a highly functional and attractive facility.

Dedicated space within the academic building is allocated in approximate percentages as follows.
In addition, the Department of Fine Art has constructed facilities under open-air shelters in the back of the main building. Mostly through scheduling and some minor changes in how specific spaces are used, efforts are made regularly to make the most efficient use of the facilities. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and conclude in the late evening. However, most classes are scheduled Mondays through Thursdays. Many times the facilities appear to be underutilized on Fridays and weekends. Scheduling, especially on Fridays, should be reviewed for optimum space utilization and times of offerings.

Ongoing maintenance and improvements in classrooms, studios and residence halls, in instructional equipment and furnishings, in ventilation and the electrical system, and in landscaping services occur regularly with the support of individuals, foundations, and at times the State of Tennessee. Notably, the college received $300,000 from the State for a new roof, which was installed in Fall 2010. Parking lots were resurfaced in Spring 2011. In 2013, the college was awarded a State grant once again in the amount of $200,000.

In 2013-2014, State monies enabled the college to provide necessary mechanical, plumbing and electrical replacements and upgrades (HVAC system and individual units, high-capacity exhaust fans for studio areas, sewer-line repair beneath the library), interior upgrades and replacements (video surveillance system, gallery and interior design floors, lighting studio renovation), and landscaping. The HVAC system-wide updates are expected to reduce heating and cooling expenses significantly.

Student satisfaction surveys show that there has been improvement from 2011-2012 through 2013-2014 in facilities-related issues of safety and security.

The academic building and the residence halls meet or exceed all fire and safety codes and are compliant with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Watkins maintains extensive and full insurance coverage on its buildings, furnishings and equipment, including its technical equipment and computer resources. Additional coverage was added in 2009 for earthquake and flood damage.

**Cecy Reed Student Center**

In the spring of 2008, the institution undertook a study of current space usage with the
intention of predicting needs in the immediate and near-term future. A task force representing all academic and non-academic units made recommendations for more efficient use of existing space and for additional space that would meet the institution’s needs over the next three to five years. Concurrently, the Board of Trustees launched a capital campaign to fund an addition to the academic facility.

In the fall of 2008, the president held meetings with the Board, faculty, staff and students to discuss enhancing and expanding the campus based on the recommendations of the task force. The discussion focused upon additional square footage that would provide the quantity and quality of academic space critical to attracting art and design students and of common spaces where community would be fostered. To assist in this process, the architect for the addition was asked to interview a broad representation of the faculty, administration, staff and students in order to develop a detailed, user-based Facilities Program for the addition, along with renovations to the existing facility.

The Facilities Program added 4,500 square feet—an increase of 8%—renovated 5,400 square feet of the existing building and provided a usable campus lakeside. The plans were as follows: double the present capacity for individual studios for fine arts students; create an additional wet media studio/classroom; create an additional digital lab; add a multi-use, reconfigurable space for a liberal arts classroom, large group meetings, events, receptions and the like; provide a student/community center with wireless access that incorporates a café, game room and lounge, and add an outdoor seating area and “boardwalk” to take advantage of the college’s urban lake campus. The addition created a more direct and second entry for students living on campus and tied the residence halls more closely to the academic building with better lighting, sidewalks and landscaping.

The $800,000 capital campaign was achieved raising $822,520 for the new facilities, and the institution broke ground in Spring 2010. The new Cecy Reed Student Center and renovated facilities opened August 15, 2010. With the grand opening of the Cecy Reed Student Center, the college dedicated its first piece of public art "Circle Canoe," by artist James Darr. Students, faculty and staff agree that the addition has made a remarkably positive change to the campus and continues today as the place to gather on campus.

Ten-Year Plan for Expansion and Growth
In 2011-2012, Gresham, Smith & Partners architects worked with the president, administration and Board of Trustees to develop a three-phased campus master plan that would: 1) continue the reorientation of the campus around the lake; 2) expand both the residential and academic facilities in tandem with an enrollment growth of 20% over five years and up to a maximum of 600 students in the long-term; 3) create a campus commons along the lake; 4) enhance landscaping and hardscaping throughout, and 5) create an identifiable entrance from Great Circle Road.

Phase one would provide the hinge pin for all future buildings as Watkins establishes
the campus center lakeside. In this initial phase, a four-story structure, Albert Hadley Hall, would be completed adjacent to the existing two residence halls and the lake. The 21,000-square-foot structure would initially allow for an additional 32 students to be housed on the top two floors and for expanded academic facilities on floors one and two. Eventually, all four floors would have residential occupancy for a total of 64 students.

The second phase of the campus master plan would provide the addition of a 30,000-square-foot, four-story academic building on the lakeside with a boardwalk connecting this facility to the existing campus and boardwalk. Phase three would provide a fourth residence hall for 80 students and a two-story, 44,000-square-foot academic building on the west side of the current academic building. Enhancements to green spaces would continue as Watkins grows.

In 2012, with full support of the Board of Trustees, the college undertook the quiet phase of fundraising for phase one of the campus master plan and raised $1.5 million. However, the downturn in the economy and its slow improvement, particularly for the college’s student demographic, negatively impacted enrollment beginning in the spring of 2013. With the incoming class of Fall 2014, it appears that the college is turning a corner and thus anticipating an increase in new enrollments. In the fall, the Board of Trustees will determine the next steps, which include the resumption of the capital campaign.

### Technology and Equipment
The institution is committed to providing appropriate instructional and studio equipment and information technology software and hardware for all of its academic and non-academic programs and operations. Funding allocated to this commitment generally demonstrates this institutional priority.

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<tr>
<td>$189,100</td>
<td>$296,565</td>
<td>$126,759</td>
<td>$286,500</td>
<td>$294,700</td>
<td>$213,150*</td>
<td>$224,500</td>
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*Significant additional funds are allocated to the Film School due to its designated film fee revenues.

A major step forward in technology occurred in the 2005-2006 academic year when the institution acquired and implemented a new institution-wide software system for integrating all student information functions, an investment of over $100,000. Under the leadership of the director of information technology and equipment services, the Empower system went live in the summer of 2006. While there have been continual problems preventing the successful implementation of all modules due to corrupt data in the Registrar’s Office, those issues were resolved in the 2011-2012 academic year. This resolution has allowed focus to shift to implementing new features and assisting other departments in 2012-2013. Evaluation of these office modules has been accomplished, addressing tasks and timelines.

In the spring of 2013, the institution was awarded a grant from the Frist Foundation to provide greatly needed and updated training on campus for all employees who use the Empower software system (25 staff in seven departments). Empower personnel visited
the campus in 2013-2014, meeting with each department to review modules, address issues and answer questions to ensure a clear understanding of how the system operates for a seamless flow of information among areas. The admissions, financial aid, registrar and student housing offices are now functioning properly. The business office and student billing are expected to be fully operational within the Empower system in 2014-2015, thus providing efficient movement of student information throughout the college.

Equipment and technology needs are assessed, prioritized and purchased annually, based on budget priorities and available funding. During 2013-2014, a new text and email-based campus-alert system was designed and implemented, a backup and recovery manual was completed, and a campus-wide computer inventory was realized. While most academic leaders report their equipment meets instructional and studio needs with annual purchases, the Film School had presented regular and significant equipment challenges. In 2011-2012, increased fees for film majors addressed this, ensuring up-to-date and ample equipment going forward. It is noteworthy that the increased film fees remain below those of competitive schools.

Information Technology and Equipment Services conducted the 2014 annual satisfaction survey of staff, faculty and students. Thirty-one responses yielded results similar to those in previous years. In the area of communication, 90% of respondents were satisfied, 93% were satisfied with response time, and 90% were satisfied with the effectiveness of the department.

Library
The institution has made substantial progress in recent years in the provision of learning resources. This is particularly true with regard to computer labs, studio and classroom instructional equipment and the film library. In addition, the book and periodical holdings have substantially increased over the past five years. In 2000, the library had 5,000 volumes, while today its holdings are at 17,000 volumes, with ongoing collection development and de-accession policies and processes in place. The library continues its strong art, design and film focus and adds special collections, such as artists’ books, zines and graphic novels, which further support the school’s curriculum.

As noted, the library’s holdings are intentionally streamlined and focused on art, design, film and related subjects. The library annually renews the agreement begun in 2005-2006 with The John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library at nearby Fisk University, which gives Watkins students complete access to its extensive library and allows Fisk students complete access to Watkins’ more focused, in-depth collection in art, design and film. This arrangement with Fisk provides faculty and student access to an additional 200,000 books and periodicals. The library is also a member of TENN-SHARE, a network of 400 libraries in the state of Tennessee with free interlibrary loan privileges through its subscription to OCLC, an online computer library.

Major improvements in library services have been made since 2007-2008. E-books were added to the library’s holdings. Of particular note was the addition of the Netlibrary, which made available digitally to faculty and students thousands of e-books,
expanding the institution’s holdings. During the academic years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, further improvements, in part due to an onsite consultancy with the library directors of Rhode Island School of Design and Cleveland Institute of Art, included major collection development initiatives, augmentation of general patron services and a complete remodeling of the library in Summer 2009.

The “new” library opened in Fall 2009. A marketing campaign achieved with the assistance of a talented graphic design student re-branded the library as a hip place to study and relax. New policies regarding circulation, library instruction and service have made the library a more active member of the Watkins community in general. The library added a writing center in cooperation with the general education department. The website was improved and continues to offer a wide selection of well-organized pages for instruction and research, the writing center, reserve and purchase request forms, announcements and the promotion of new materials. In 2011-2012, the website began offering an evolving selection of subscription databases and added “Libguides,” user-friendly subject guide and teaching tools. This has proven to be a great way to have the library as an active partner in the classroom.

Outreach services have included a film series, zine-making workshop, book sales, free coffee and the introduction of a handmade zine and book arts festival, Handmade and Bound Nashville, in Fall 2011 with 300 in attendance. A second festival occurred in 2012 with 650 attending. The third festival in October 2013 saw 600 in attendance and a change of direction with the community education department leading workshops in Nashville community centers and exhibiting these students’ work in a gallery show. The fourth festival will again be held the first weekend of October and will include a similar gallery exhibition, demonstrations and workshops. Overall, major efforts have been made to see that the library is a dynamic learning resource for students, faculty, staff and the community.

Opportunities and Challenges
Watkins has made substantial improvements in recent years in its facilities and operations. The college has an attractive campus with up-to-date academic facilities and instructional equipment. These assets support the students’ work and have brought positive attention to the institution. Through outside funding, important technology upgrades, landscaping and facade improvements have been completed. A new residence hall opened in the fall of 2008, and an extensive landscaping project was finished in January 2009, with repair and replacement work completed in 2010-2011. Major renovations of existing academic and administrative space, providing increased space and greater efficiencies, were in place by Fall 2010. The library has also undergone significant changes in appearance, furnishings, collection development and processes. The capital campaign for an addition and renovation was completed in 2008-2009, with groundbreaking occurring in Spring 2010. The student center addition (4,500 square feet) and academic and administrative renovation (5,400 square feet) opened in the fall of 2010.

With the addition and renovation, the institution has adequate academic space to meet its mission. However, increased space would improve the quality of space for students,
e.g., individual artists’ studios. Class scheduling should be reviewed for the most effective use of existing space. The institution will continue its commitment to instructional equipment and technology.

With the ten-year plan for expansion and growth completed in 2011-2012, there are opportunities and challenges in both enrollment and fundraising, given a sluggish economy. In 2012, the college began the quiet phase of fundraising, achieving $1.5 million for a third residence hall and expanded academic facilities, as identified in phase one of the campus master plan. However, the 2008 downturn in the economy continues to impact higher education in general and the college specifically. Watkins should move forward in this building project with caution. The Board of Trustees will review and determine the pace for facilities expansion in 2014-2015.

X. **Budget, Finance and Institutional Advancement**

The goals of the Office of Finance and Operations are to ensure and enhance Watkins’ ability to meet its educational mission, to make the most efficient use of its available resources through a process of appropriate short- and long-range planning, careful management and proper oversight, and to safeguard, preserve and grow the institution’s assets.

**Budget**

The Board of Trustees has fiduciary responsibility for the institution and its assets. Five times a year, oversight of financial operations (expenditures, investments and the like) is provided by the Board Finance Committee, which is chaired by a trustee with significant financial management experience. A well-respected accounting firm audits the institution annually. The results of the audit are provided in hard copy or electronically to all members of the Board of Trustees, the office of the Governor of Tennessee, the office of the Secretary of State of Tennessee and to the appropriate governmental oversight committees of the state’s Senate and House of Representatives. All recommendations from each year’s audit are implemented. All audits have provided unqualified or unmodified independent auditor report opinions.

The Office for Finance and Operations manages the day-to-day financial and business operations of the college. All business and personnel operations go through this department. The vice president gives reports regularly throughout the year to the president and Board Finance Committee that show the status of income and expenditures for the current year and provide comparisons with the itemized budget for the current year and previous years, along with reports that give an up-to-date summary of the institution’s overall financial position.

The vice president for finance and operations also directs the financial planning process each year. In conjunction with the president and administrative leaders, she holds budget meetings with all academic and non-academic departments. Based on projections of earned and raised revenues for the forthcoming year, together with departmental and institutional priorities associated with the institution’s mission, strategic plan and planning process, the vice president develops a specific budget proposal in the late spring for the forthcoming year.
With the review and approval of the president, this budget is then presented to the Board Finance Committee. With its approval and any recommended changes, the budget then is presented in June to the full Board of Trustees for its approval. Once approved, the budget becomes the financial operating standard for the next fiscal year. The following chart shows financial overviews for fiscal years 2007 through 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6/30/07</th>
<th>6/30/08</th>
<th>6/30/09</th>
<th>6/30/10</th>
<th>6/30/11</th>
<th>6/30/12</th>
<th>6/30/13</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition &amp; Fees</td>
<td>$3,983,092</td>
<td>$4,296,662</td>
<td>$4,692,763</td>
<td>$5,044,815</td>
<td>$4,902,608</td>
<td>$4,982,158</td>
<td>$4,862,517</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$1,515,691</td>
<td>$1,739,994</td>
<td>$1,041,240</td>
<td>$993,584</td>
<td>$1,123,968</td>
<td>$1,097,832</td>
<td>$1,110,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Operating Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
<td>$1,739,761</td>
<td>$2,003,187</td>
<td>$2,199,226</td>
<td>$2,341,195</td>
<td>$2,189,658</td>
<td>$2,346,723</td>
<td>$2,308,574</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$6,943,476</td>
<td>$7,884,634</td>
<td>$8,168,286</td>
<td>$8,498,165</td>
<td>$9,577,559</td>
<td>$10,495,026</td>
<td>$1,148,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments—Fair Value</td>
<td>$1,530,948</td>
<td>$1,460,443</td>
<td>$1,699,645</td>
<td>$1,434,533</td>
<td>$1,848,144</td>
<td>$2,271,107</td>
<td>$2,595,015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notes Payable</td>
<td>$2,142,183</td>
<td>$3,913,555</td>
<td>$3,768,166</td>
<td>$3,582,610</td>
<td>$3,161,900</td>
<td>$2,838,290</td>
<td>$2,588,249</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A five-year budget plan is also presented in conjunction with the five-year strategic plan. The projected budgets are based on reasonable, general assumptions about growth in enrollment and revenues and corresponding requirements for increases in personnel, equipment, maintenance, classrooms and studios. The five-year budget plan follows.
# Five-Year Budget Plan 2014-2019

## REVENUES

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition &amp; Fees</strong></td>
<td>4,486,000</td>
<td>4,683,000</td>
<td>4,994,500</td>
<td>5,489,500</td>
<td>6,432,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Income</strong></td>
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<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fundraising - Annual Fund</strong></td>
<td>243,000</td>
<td>267,300</td>
<td>294,000</td>
<td>323,400</td>
<td>355,700</td>
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<td><strong>Fundraising - Grants</strong></td>
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<td>160,000</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>160,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fundraising - Temp Rest</strong></td>
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<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Endowment and Interest Income</strong></td>
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<td>65,000</td>
<td>67,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Housing</strong></td>
<td>653,800</td>
<td>661,000</td>
<td>661,000</td>
<td>678,000</td>
<td>678,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating Revenue</strong></td>
<td>5,682,800</td>
<td>5,914,300</td>
<td>6,256,500</td>
<td>6,800,900</td>
<td>7,780,700</td>
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## EXPENSES

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel</strong></td>
<td>3,552,600</td>
<td>3,694,700</td>
<td>3,842,400</td>
<td>3,996,000</td>
<td>4,155,800</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Operating</strong></td>
<td>2,130,200</td>
<td>2,219,600</td>
<td>2,414,100</td>
<td>2,804,900</td>
<td>3,624,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td>5,682,800</td>
<td>5,914,300</td>
<td>6,256,500</td>
<td>6,800,900</td>
<td>7,780,700</td>
</tr>
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## Assumptions

- *2014-15 307 FTES (103 new) $695/credit hour, 3% annual tuition increase.*
- *2015-16 308 FTES (113 new) $715/credit hour, 3% annual tuition increase.*
- *2016-17 319 FTES (123 new) $740/credit hour, 3% annual tuition increase.*
- *2017-18 339 FTES (135 new) $765/credit hour, 3% annual tuition increase.*
- *2018-19 367 FTES (150 new) $790/credit hour, 3% annual tuition increase.*

Personnel includes 3% raises and a 10% increase in health insurance annually.

Annual Fund Increases 10% annually.

Housing fees are $6,500 for 2016 and 2017 and $6,700 for 2018 and 2019.

Housing is based on 96 beds on campus and 4 apartments at the Parc.

The projections above are based on those in the Strategic Plan, Strategic Objectives & Benchmarks, Goal 2, Evaluation and Improvement of Financial Health and Stability.
Tuition and Institutional Aid

As the figures above indicate, the institution is reliant on tuition and fees for approximately 67% of revenues, based on unaudited financials in 2013-2014. The institution planned conservatively given economic and enrollment indicators. Tuition revenues were on target with the budget at year’s end. The institution has again planned conservatively regarding enrollment for 2014-2015. Tuition will increase to $695 per credit hour.

The following figures show the tuition increases over the past six years.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition Per</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Credit Hour</strong></td>
<td>$550</td>
<td>$575</td>
<td>$598</td>
<td>$630</td>
<td>$655</td>
<td>$675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Annually</strong></td>
<td>$16,500*</td>
<td>$17,250</td>
<td>$17,940</td>
<td>$18,900</td>
<td>$19,650</td>
<td>$20,250</td>
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</table>

Despite the increases, a recent survey of tuition charged by schools in the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design shows that Watkins’ tuition annually for full-time students is the second lowest in the nation, as compared to these 43 institutions. On the other hand, institutional aid or tuition discounting as widely practiced across the country makes these figures unreliable for accurate comparisons. Watkins’ leadership believes that to remain affordable in comparison to regional and peer institutions, the college needs to increase merit- and need-based institutional aid (discounting) to attract students, as it increases tuition. Although institutional aid and tuition will remain relatively low when compared to other institutions, Watkins substantially increased its aid in 2007-2008 with a new system of merit- and need-based grants and scholarships and further increased those rates in 2008-2009 and 2009-2010. The college greatly increased institutional aid in 2010-2011, particularly for new students, as the challenging economy and high unemployment made it difficult for prospective students in the Watkins cohort to attend private colleges. Beginning in 2013, this economic difficulty for low- and middle-income families appears more pronounced. From 2009-2010 to 2013-2014, the college increased actual merit- and need-based monies by 77%, with the institutional aid (discounting) rate increasing from 10% to 18%. Moving forward, Watkins expects to maintain this rate for the next five years.

With a small student body, the institution can achieve only limited economies of scale for providing a full range of programs, equipment and services. To achieve greater economies of scale in the long term, the institution should increase enrollment. However, with the continuing difficult economy and specifically for Watkins’ demographic, the enrollment goals for the college have been revised to reflect the broader environment, returning to a growth mode in three years. For the long term, the institution believes that its mission, programs, faculty, facilities and instructional equipment offer an attractive opportunity to students interested in the professions of art, design and film. With the college’s ability to provide strong, up-to-date curricular offerings, to market its program effectively, and to ensure reasonable tuition and aid, the institution should maintain its current enrollment from 2014-2015 through 2016-2017 and grow in the subsequent years.

With other priorities for faculty, equipment and facilities, the institution had not made a strong commitment to strategic admissions marketing until 2008-2009. In the past six years, significant progress has been made with improved marketing materials and a revamped website. In 2008-2009, the office became a fully operational department through
the appointment of a full-time admissions director, along with additional admissions personnel. While enrollment increases have declined since Spring 2013, there is a notable boost in the number of full-time attending students.

Institutional Advancement
As a young baccalaureate college, Watkins has a very small endowment and a small alumni base. The endowment, with successful investment strategies in recent years, has usually produced a modest annual income. And while alumni giving is a program that is developing, it does not offer immediate potential. The college has begun to systematically engage its alumni in the last several years through events, professional workshops, e-newsletters and the website. Most recently, there have been discussions to form an Alumni Council in 2014-2015.

For fundraising, the institution primarily relies on granting agencies (city and state), area foundations and private citizens. By and large, fundraising has shown substantial success with excellent state and city support, which recognizes Watkins’ role in the community and generous giving by a number of individuals.

All unrestricted and restricted fundraising including annual, capital, endowment, gifts in-kind and federal college work-study follows. For audit purposes, special event and capital fundraising is net of expenses.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$838,202</td>
<td>$684,436</td>
<td>$724,982*</td>
<td>$1,337,043*</td>
<td>$933,175**</td>
<td>$602,323***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes a $300,000 state grant for a new roof.
** Includes a $1,000,000 capital campaign pledge.
*** Includes a $500,000 capital campaign pledge/gift.
**** Unaudited figures. Also includes a $200,000 grant from the State of Tennessee.

Unrestricted annual fundraising only during the same time period follows. These figures are revenues only and do not include associated expenses.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$398,597</td>
<td>$354,432</td>
<td>$411,261</td>
<td>$437,476</td>
<td>$432,747</td>
<td>$454,778</td>
<td>$494,885*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Unaudited figures.

The Annual Fund has regularly achieved its goal. In 2013-2014, $494,885 was raised on a goal of $437,000, 13% above budget. It is important to note that the college is heavily dependent upon state and city arts funding—at $160,000 in 2013-2014. In addition to seeking greater government funding whenever possible, the college will consider how it can continually improve its results at the individual, foundation and corporate level.

A successful 2014 pARTy, the college’s single fundraising event, brought in $182,394 in gross revenues ($89,833 net, as compared to $71,718 in 2012-2013), which balanced lower government grants. This event accounted for 37% of the annual fund, with individual and corporate gifts accounting for 25%, government grants contributing 33%, and foundations contributing 5%. Board of Trustee participation for the 2013-2014 Annual Fund campaign resulted in 100% participation for the fourth time in the college’s history, with 77% of the board members giving at the Samuel Watkins Society level or above.
In the coming years, Watkins will continue to capitalize further upon its annual fundraising event. Increased cultivation and engagement with corporations should occur. Also, the college understands that having achieved regional accreditation, it is now eligible for grants through certain national foundations and began to pursue these in 2013-2014.

Capital fundraising has achieved particular success in the last several years, notably for the two residence halls in fiscal years 2005 and 2008. Then in 2008-2009, the capital campaign for the building addition and renovation was successfully completed raising $822,520 on a goal of $800,000 for both academic and student life space. The renovated academic spaces and the newly constructed student center opened in early Fall 2010, with pledges to the capital campaign to fund this project completed in 2013-2014. In 2011-2012, an anonymous donor pledged a $1 million gift for Albert Hadley Hall, initiating the next capital campaign to construct the first phase of a ten-year expansion plan for the campus. In 2012-2013, another generous donor gave $500,000 for this purpose. In the fall of 2014, the Board of Trustees will determine the next steps. (See IX. Facilities, Technology, Equipment and the Library.)

Overall, in its relatively brief history as a baccalaureate college, Watkins' fundraising has been successful. In moving forward, Watkins will need to expand its base of support with individuals, corporations and visual arts industries, and continue to have Board participation at 100%, with increased individual contributions.

Finally and importantly, the college recognizes that to continue to build a strong fundraising effort, it must focus upon increased recognition—as a baccalaureate college in the local community and with broader awareness regionally and nationally. Within the Office of Institutional Advancement, and with limited staffing and financial resources, external relations have been successful in the implementation of electronic newsletters and news and feature story placements. This office also serves to maintain the brand identity of the institution. Within the next several years, external relations should continue to increase the position of the college for both stronger fundraising and increased admissions regionally and nationally.

Opportunities and Challenges
Watkins has managed its financial resources remarkably well. With careful budget planning and practices, maximum use has been made of available revenues throughout the institution. This stewardship has given the opportunity for the college to improve its educational programs substantially and wisely. These practices will continue as the institution addresses priorities in the near future. Continued careful management of resources together with increases in tuition and fundraising, complemented with successful marketing and recruitment, will be required to fund the institution’s priorities as they are determined among needs for additional instructional and studio space, expansion of equipment and learning resources, a continuing commitment to state-of-the-art technology, additional full-time faculty and staff, additional student housing and an improved campus.

XI. Accreditation
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is a private, independent, not-for-profit institution dedicated to providing education in the visual arts. Founded in 1885, Watkins has strived to meet the educational goals set forth in the last will and testament of its founder and the subsequent quality and operational provisions mandated by the State of Tennessee. In the
20th century, as requirements for educational institutions have become more formalized, Watkins met and exceeded the operational and financial standards and requirements set forth by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. The institution began its transition toward an institution of higher education in the late 1970s when it was first authorized by the state to offer associate degree programs. By the early 1990s, the institution began to focus exclusively on education in the visual arts.

In the fall of 1992, Watkins’ interior design program received accreditation for its associate degree and certificate programs by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA). When the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in interior design was added, that program also received CIDA accreditation. On July 24, 2010, the Accreditation Commission of the Council for Interior Design Accreditation voted to grant accreditation once again for a term of six years.

In 1996, Watkins became an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. NASAD is the national accrediting agency for art and design art and design-related disciplines recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. Re-affirmation of accreditation has been accomplished several times with NASAD, most recently in 2008 for a ten-year period.

Following action taken at the December 2008 Annual Meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Watkins College of Art, Design & Film became a candidate for accreditation with the Commission to award the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree, the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, the Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) degree and the Certificate in Film. In June 2010, the SACSCOC voted to award accreditation to Watkins effective retroactively to January 1, 2010, a landmark achievement for the college.

In addition, in 2009-2010, the president appeared before the Education Joint Subcommittee of the Tennessee House and Senate to show documentation that justified the continuation of the institution, a practice that has taken place every six years or so since 1981 at the “Sunset Hearings.” After Watkins’ presentation, it was determined that it would not be necessary for the institution to appear regularly before the Subcommittee again, and it would be highly unlikely that the college’s association with the State would ever sunset or end.

**Opportunities and Challenges**

With the achievement of SACSCOC accreditation in June 2010, a goal that was set by the Board of Trustees for the institution a decade ago, Watkins has made appropriate and thorough commitments to discipline-specific accreditation and broad-based institutional accreditation. Together, regional and national accreditation benefit the students in the assurance of excellence in educational programs with highly qualified faculty, appropriate facilities and equipment, fiscal soundness and strong governance. With this achievement, the college joined the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association (TICUA) and in Fall 2010 was accepted for membership in the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD), whose members include the leading 43 nonprofit colleges of art across the country and in Canada that have both regional and national
accreditation. Membership in TICUA and AICAD will place Watkins College of Art, Design & Film in partnerships and collaborations with institutions in Tennessee and throughout the country, as most recently occurred with Belmont University. (See II. Academic Programs.)

The faculty, administration and staff are confident that they have developed a quality undergraduate college of art, design and film that is student- and learning-centered and committed to ongoing assessment and improvement. In June 2015, the institution will come before SACSCOC for reaffirmation of accreditation.

XII. Planning and Accountability
Watkins has a long history of short- and long-range planning and concerns for accountability. With regard to budgetary operations and financial resources, the Board of Trustees has always fulfilled its fiduciary responsibilities by carefully monitoring the financial health of the institution. Through direct interactions with the administrative leadership and with regular outside audits of its resources and financial operations, the Board has shepherded the institution through difficult times in its long history, has safeguarded its often limited resources, and has grown its assets substantially in recent years. The processes for financial planning and accountability are discussed in more detail in X. Budget, Finance and Institutional Advancement.

Over the years, the institution has always complemented its financial stewardship with a substantial commitment to institutional planning for its academic programs and support services. Institutional planning has been organized by the president and administrative leadership of the institution, usually with Board, staff and faculty participation. Board and faculty retreats have occurred from time to time to facilitate this effort.

Planning for new degree programs or program changes has typically involved participation by faculty, staff and administrative leadership, along with Board members who serve on the Educational Affairs Committee. As academic programs grew from associate degree programs to bachelor degree programs, leadership at the departmental level worked with the chief academic officer and selected Board members to map out learning objectives, curricula, equipment needs, faculty, learning resource requirements and program growth plans.

The college is committed to using a five-year institutional plan that is updated annually, along with a multi-year budget plan that is revised annually. The Board of Trustees approves these plans each September.

The institution uses an outside, nationally normed testing instrument for measuring student satisfaction with most student-related aspects of the academic and non-academic operations. And, as a result of the college’s commitment to excellence in instruction and to meet SACSCOC, NASAD and CIDA expectations, Watkins formally assesses learning outcomes in its academic major programs. Since 2009, graduating seniors take the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test to evaluate skills in reading, writing and critical thinking.

In the past ten years, Watkins has established an academic culture committed to planning, evaluation and improvement. However, as staff and faculty became more aware of the
concepts, principles and practices for institutional effectiveness as these ideas have
developed in higher education over the past decade and as they are supported by member
institutions of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges,
they began to note weaknesses in the institution's effectiveness operations and
procedures. While a great deal of evaluative activity was taking place, there was no
integrated planning and assessment process that would guarantee ongoing institution-wide
improvement—the cornerstone of institutional effectiveness, as it has come to be
understood by Watkins faculty and staff.

To address these problems, the college adopted a new, integrated program for institutional
effectiveness. This program includes all aspects of the institution in a single plan and
timetable. Using a fiscal year calendar, the program specifies that particular assessments
must be concluded by certain dates, that specific personnel have responsibilities for the
assessments, that specific data are to be used, and that follow-up decisions and actions
must be made. Assessment falls under the direct purview of the vice president for
academic affairs.

The assessment calendar begins in the early fall with all academic and non-academic units
making necessary updates in their unit plans and objectives based on any changes the
Board of Trustees has made in the institutional mission, strategic plan and budget plan. As
information is assessed during the planning cycle, a wide variety of data is used. For
example, in the academic area, there is special emphasis on learning outcomes data,
retention data, graduation rates and other specified data. In non-academic unit
assessment, there is special emphasis on student survey data, alumni survey data and
data from instruments created uniquely for each unit. In August, administrative and faculty
leadership use all available data, program and unit plans to assess the institutional mission,
the five-year strategic plan and the multi-year budget plan. Based on the data, decisions
are made to improve the institution by recommending any change to the mission statement,
and by revising and updating the five-year strategic plan and five-year budget plan. The
Board of Trustees completes the annual planning cycle through review and final approval of
all plans and documents during the month of September. The planning cycle/ institutional
effectiveness calendar follows.
## Institutional Effectiveness Calendar

**Complete between September 1 and September 30**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessors</th>
<th>Available Data</th>
<th>Data-Based Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Units Adjust Annual Plans to Board Changes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Academic Departments and Administrative (Non-Academic) Units</td>
<td>Board revisions (if any) to the Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, and/or Budget Plan</td>
<td>Update all unit goals, objectives, and plans to reflect any changes by the Board of Trustees to the Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, and/or Budget Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Begin February 1 and Complete by June 15**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessors</th>
<th>Available Data</th>
<th>Data-Based Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget Planning for All Units</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Department Chairs, VPAA, VPFO, President</td>
<td>Budget Reports to date Staffing Assessments Enrollment Data Retention Data Projections</td>
<td>Budget planning, staff planning and scheduling for the next academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Administrative (Non-Academic) Unit Heads, VPFO, President</td>
<td>Budget Reports to date Staffing Assessments</td>
<td>Budget planning and staff planning for the next academic year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Begin March 15 and Complete by June 30**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessors</th>
<th>Available Data</th>
<th>Data-Based Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Evaluations of Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Supervisors of Staff</td>
<td>Self-evaluations Student Survey Data Alumni Survey Data Data from other instruments, surveys, etc. created by individual units</td>
<td>Evaluate individual job performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Evaluations of All Full- and Part-Time Faculty</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VPAA and Department Chairs</td>
<td>Faculty Portfolios and Self-Evaluations Course Evaluations Learning Outcomes Data Student Survey Data Alumni Survey Data Data from other instruments, surveys, etc. created by individual departments</td>
<td>Evaluate teaching and performance of individual instructors Contract renewal or non-renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin on January 15 and Complete by May 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Available Data</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data-Based Decisions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Program Evaluation, Decision-Making, and Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Department Chairs, VPAA, VPFO, President</td>
<td>Learning Outcomes Data Retention Data Graduation Rates Student Survey Data Data from other instruments, surveys, etc created by individual departments</td>
<td>Admission Requirements Curriculum Graduation Requirements Instructional Methods and Equipment Assess unit goals and objectives for the current year Set unit goals and objectives for the next year Changes in assessment instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Staff Unit Evaluation, Decision-Making, and Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Staff Units</td>
<td>Student Survey Data Alumni Surveys Data from other instruments, surveys, etc created by individual departments</td>
<td>Assess unit goals and objectives for the current year Review all practices and procedures Set unit goals and objectives for the next year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Strategic Plan, Decision-Making, and Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President, VPAA, VPFO, VPIA, Director of Admissions, Faculty and Staff Representatives</td>
<td>Budgetary Information Current Strategic Plan Current 5-Year Budget Plan All Units’ Goals and Objectives Assessments for the Current Year All Units’ Budget and Staffing Plans for the Next Year All Units’ Goals and Objectives for the Next Year Student Survey Data Alumni Survey Data Individual Evaluations Enrollment Data and Projections Retention and Graduation Rates Any Relevant Research Data</td>
<td>Assess 5-Year Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives Assess 5-Year Budget Plan Revise 5-Year Strategic Plan Revise 5-Year Budget Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Begin on September 1 and Complete by September 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessors</th>
<th>Available Data</th>
<th>Data-Based Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Mission Statement</td>
<td>Approve or Revise Mission Statement,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-Year Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Strategic Plan and Budget Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-Year Budget Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this process, the vice president for academic affairs provides consultation for faculty and staff and assists them in preparing reports and in using outcome data to improve programs.

The institutional effectiveness program, employing quantitative and qualitative measures, has now been in effect in some form for nine years. Every academic and non-academic unit has improved not only its operations, but also the process it uses for evaluation and improvement. Meeting deadlines on the assessment calendar has historically been a problem. Adjusted timelines/modifications to the calendar were made for 2013-2014, which have worked better for both the academic and non-academic units. The process is working and represents a critical institution-wide effort to see that constant improvement is made in providing a student- and learning-centered quality education.

Opportunities and Challenges
Positive growth and change at Watkins College of Art, Design & Film over the last decade have resulted largely from a commitment to planning and assessment. Nevertheless, the level and content of the planning and assessment programs were inadequate for the institution with its commitment to maintain high-quality programs and to see that those programs are carefully and regularly assessed and improved. Going to an integrated program of ongoing planning and assessment, complemented by ongoing data-based decision making for improvement, is giving the institution a roadmap for critical self-analysis and positive improvement. The challenges all center on maintaining a constant, positive commitment to the processes, in making certain that evaluation efforts are completed in a timely fashion, and in seeing that real, databased improvements are produced from the process.

XIII. Summary
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is an undergraduate college committed to excellence in visual arts education. Several milestones have occurred in the last several years including: the achievement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges regional accreditation and re-accreditation by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation; membership in the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association and Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design; the termination of regularly reporting to the State of Tennessee to justify Watkins’ existence, making it highly unlikely that the college’s association with the State will ever end; the official change of the name to Watkins College of Art, Design & Film to better reflect the institution’s disciplines; the opening of the Cecy Reed Student Center and the development of the campus lakeside; the establishment of an agreement with Belmont University that
benefits students at both institutions; the addition of academic concentrations, and the development of a ten-year master plan for expansion and growth.

The institution provides excellent programs in art, design and film and at the same time faces significant challenges. With a small enrollment of highly motivated students, the institution offers small classes; expanding student life programs, reasonable tuition rates with increased financial aid opportunities; student housing in a safe and secure learning environment; a diverse general education program; six well-structured academic majors with thoughtful curricula; experiential learning opportunities, and an instructional program delivered by excellent full-time and adjunct faculty who have distinguished themselves with appropriate degrees and professional activities. The institution complements its college-credit program with an historic community education program.

The college operates effectively. Though modest, salaries are competitive for faculty and staff, and benefits are above average. Faculty workloads meet acceptable standards. Faculty and staff have ample opportunities to participate in institutional governance. While small in numbers, the staff is committed to the institution, is student-friendly, and provides important support for the academic programs, such as information technology and equipment services.

Watkins operates on an attractively landscaped, centrally located campus with a well-designed and highly functional academic building and attractive student housing. The 2010 addition of the student center and renovation of studios and classrooms made a dramatic difference in the sense of community, while providing a moderate increase in space. Learning resources are excellent with a library that is focused primarily on a collection in art, design and film. Efforts have been made to increase the collection annually and to provide a significant online digital collection, and students have access to a larger general library collection at nearby Fisk University.

The institution has a long history of careful planning and responsible stewardship of its financial resources and other assets. The Board of Trustees understands its role, has been supportive of the campus leadership in developing the institution, avoids interference in day-to-day operations, and has been instrumental in the institution’s financial stability reflected by no operating deficits, successful fundraising, steady growth in net assets and favorable annual outside audits.

The college is also strongly committed to careful short-term and long-term planning in its academic programming and in its budgetary practices. Importantly, the institution maintains an historic commitment to excellence in providing quality educational experiences for its students. It has always met state educational standards and has effectively demonstrated its quality commitments to the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the Council for Interior Design Accreditation, and more recently the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Through an integrated system of assessment for all of its academic and non-academic units, Watkins regularly measures its effectiveness and uses data from those measurements in an ongoing commitment to improvement.
Along with its opportunities for excellence, Watkins has its share of challenges. Perhaps the largest challenge at this time is the current, difficult economy and its felt impact on student enrollment. In the near term, the college’s focus is maintaining enrollment. In the long term, the institution should grow its enrollment to have economies of scale that will allow it to more easily provide a range of courses, faculty, equipment, and classroom and studio facilities. Retention is also a challenge for the institution. The rate of persistence to graduation should be improved. Increasing financial aid opportunities will continue to be important for both growing enrollment and addressing retention. Other important challenges for growing enrollment and improving the overall institution in the coming years include: providing additional student housing and academic space; improving recognition of the college and its programs with local, regional and national audiences; evolving the curricula further; expanding student life programs; broadening career services and counseling, and attracting a more diverse Board of Trustees, student body, faculty and staff in terms of race, ethnicity and gender.

Important challenges that address the institution’s commitment to quality overall include: ensuring that students continue to have access to up-to-date technology and equipment and excellent library and learning resources; refining the assessment program; adding full-time faculty and staff members as needed, and expanding the pool of donors and levels of support.
Goals, Objectives and Benchmarks
2014-2015 to 2018-2019

Institutional goals, objectives and benchmarks represent the college’s commitment to provide the highest quality student- and learning-centered visual arts education. This commitment is manifested through continuous efforts to improve the institution’s: 1) planning and evaluation processes; 2) financial resources; 3) curricula and complementary studio and classroom resources, student services and community outreach, and 4) operational, organizational and physical resources.

Goals

1. Watkins College of Art, Design & Film provides an educational environment committed to maintaining and cultivating a culture centered upon institution-wide quality and improvement, which includes: a) a regularly updated strategic plan designed to meet the institution’s mission; b) short-term and long-term planning geared toward quality and improvement and based on a decision-making process linked directly to assessment data, and c) all administrative and academic units regularly pursuing goals and objectives with appropriate assessment measures and ongoing improvement as their focus.

2. Watkins College of Art, Design & Film provides an educational environment with ongoing evaluation and improvement of its financial health and stability.

3. Watkins College of Art, Design & Film provides an educational environment with ongoing evaluation and improvement of its academic programs, student support services and community outreach efforts.

4. Watkins College of Art, Design & Film provides an educational environment with ongoing evaluation and improvement of its operational, organizational and physical resources.
Goals, Objectives and Benchmarks
2014-2015 to 2018-2019

Goal 1: A Culture-Centered Upon Institution-Wide Quality and Improvement

Objectives
- All units in the institution are committed to the mission, as reviewed and approved annually by the Board.
- A five-year strategic plan is updated and revised annually as a blueprint for guiding the institution in all of its efforts to meet its mission. The college’s annual institutional effectiveness plan and reports serve as its yearly operational plan.
- All academic and non-academic units in the college demonstrate positive commitment to the assessment data for ongoing planning and improvement and provide annual reports as per the target dates in the assessment calendar. Assessment data-based decisions for the improvement in all units are reviewed as part of the annual process for updating the strategic plan.
- Annual institutional effectiveness summaries, reports, supporting data and related documents are filed in a central location and are available to all campus personnel, Board members and representatives of accrediting associations.
- The offices of career services and institutional advancement maintain contact with alumni, track their employment in or out of fields related to their major program and assess periodically their ongoing satisfaction with their undergraduate or certificate education.

Benchmarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The institutional effectiveness files are updated annually with complete yearly reports from all units. Reports show quantitative and qualitative assessment data, data-based decisions for improvement and new or continuing goals and objectives as they relate to unit and institutional missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>With the assistance of the President’s Council, the vice president for academic affairs carries out assessment responsibilities by holding meetings annually to discuss the importance of assessment and improvement and to work with faculty and staff for the improvement of quantitative and qualitative assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Office of Institutional Advancement and the Office of Career Services continue to improve the system for tracking alumni and for assessing their ongoing professional and career success and their overall satisfaction with their undergraduate education. The Office of Career Services reports the findings annually to the academic department chairs, the vice president for academic affairs and the president. The Office of Institutional Advancement sends newsletters and other communications to alumni on a regular basis throughout the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The president presents to the Board of Trustees in early September the updated five-year strategic plan. The plan is then finalized based upon any suggestions or additions from the Board or other members of the campus community and approved at the late September Board of Trustees meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 2: Evaluation and Improvement of Financial Health and Stability

Objectives

- The institution follows the assessment calendar for the preparation of the annual budget and the subsequent, four-year budget projection.
- The institution makes budget decisions that reflect the strategic plan as it is updated annually.
- The institution makes moderate increases in tuition and fees while maintaining its competitiveness among colleges of art and design with increased scholarships, institutional aid and other financial aid.
- The institution regularly evaluates and improves its marketing and recruiting strategies using appropriate assessment measures.
- The institution maximizes its creative efforts to increase its enrollment in its undergraduate and community education programs.
- The institution maximizes its strategic efforts to increase the annual and capital fundraising programs and to grow the endowment.
- The institution effectively manages its financial resources.

Benchmarks

Projected Tuition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tuition</th>
<th>Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>$695 per credit hour</td>
<td>$55 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$20,850 per 30 credit hours annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$715 per credit hour</td>
<td>$60 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$21,450 per 30 credit hours annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$740 per credit hour</td>
<td>$60 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$22,200 per 30 credit hours annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>$765 per credit hour</td>
<td>$60 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$22,950 per 30 credit hours annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>$790 per credit hour</td>
<td>$65 per credit hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$23,700 per 30 credit hours annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scholarships and Financial Aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expand institutional aid (tuition discounting) with increases in tuition and fees. Specifically target financial need, merit and underserved segments of the population. Create and name additional new scholarship programs as needed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>The college maintains its percentage of institutional aid at 18% of tuition and fees, after significant yearly increases in aid from 10% in 2009-2010 to 18% in 2012-2013.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>-2% increase in budget for institutional aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>5% increase in budget for institutional aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>7% increase in budget for institutional aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>10% increase in budget for institutional aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>17% increase in budget for institutional aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marketing

2014-2019 The admissions marketing and media relations strategies focus upon: the visual arts, the quality of programs, faculty and facilities, the value of the education, a highly personalized, small college atmosphere and Watkins’ legacy.

2014-2019 The website, other online technologies and printed publications are used as major recruiting instruments, reflecting positively on the institution’s commitment to cutting-edge technology and quality instruction in the visual arts. At the same time, the admissions director and recruiters evaluate and strategically expand their territories to extend Watkins’ reach regionally and nationally with the “high touch” approach in high school classrooms and two-year community colleges.

2014-2015 Consistent branding and further development of the institutional identity takes place for all printed publications and online information.

2014-2016 A media relations plan results in annual placement of feature stories locally and regionally, along with a minimum of one news item or feature story nationally.

2014-2016 New initiatives are developed for programming and marketing to high school students and teachers in community education. Adult community education and youth programs are further developed.

Enrollment in the Degree Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>307 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>310 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>317 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>328 FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>334 FTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Size

2014-2019 The vice president for academic affairs and department chairs in consultation with the faculty regularly review the curriculum, advising records and course scheduling to ensure that the great majority of classes offered during any particular term are fully and/or appropriately subscribed.

Persistence to Graduation (Retention)

2014-2019 The Retention Committee rigorously reviews and evaluates retention of first-time and transfer students as they progress from first year to second year, second year to third year and so forth, based on analysis of data and surveys. A plan of action for increasing retention is annually reviewed and implemented.

2014-2015 A common definition of persistence to graduation is established at Watkins, based upon Federal guidelines.

2014-2015 Retention is increased by specific percentage goals, as determined by the Retention Committee with review of the vice president for academic affairs.

Enrollment in Community Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Total Participants</td>
<td>+20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>+25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Fundraising**
Annual fundraising (based upon budgeted revenues)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Capital Fundraising**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>Assess the quiet phase of the capital campaign for phase one of the new campus master plan, a ten-year plan for expansion and growth developed and approved in 2011-2012. Determine the next steps and timeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2019</td>
<td>Assess the need to initiate a capital campaign for phase two of the campus master plan, which would add another academic building and additional landscaping.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Fundraising Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Develop and carry out a structured alumni giving program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>Develop and implement a planned giving program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>100% of the Board of Trustees contributes to the Annual Fund, and 90% of the board members support the college at the Samuel Watkins Society level and above. There is a 20% increase in the Board's participation in contacting potential donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Continue to cultivate local foundations, corporations and major local donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Develop and execute a plan to cultivate “under 50” young professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Seek state appropriations and secure funding from the State for facilities as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Determine one new major grant source and submit a proposal each year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Manage Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Reduce long-term debt on facilities annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Maintain or exceed the debt ratio established by banks holding the institution’s notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Keep student loan default rate below 10%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Monitor and adjust as appropriate the investment strategy as approved by the Board of Trustees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 3: Evaluation and Improvement of Academic Programs, Student Support Services, Community Outreach and Public Service

Objectives

- The institution continues its commitment to the assessment calendar, assesses learning outcomes and other important aspects of each academic program and uses quantitative and qualitative assessment data for regular program improvements.
- The institution places appropriate emphasis on maintaining a high quality general education program, under which students master a core of competencies.
- The institution has a sufficient number of students majoring in each of its academic programs to support a comprehensive curriculum and sufficient full-time faculty.
- The institution adds highly qualified and experienced full-time faculty as needed and employs part-time faculty with appropriate graduate and professional credentials.
- The institution staffs the majority of its classes with full-time faculty.
- Each academic department strives to improve curriculum in ways that enhance the program’s uniqueness and increase its ability to compete for quality students, including experiential learning opportunities.
- The institution regularly evaluates the viability of its major programs and determines if existing programs should be modified, combined or eliminated, and if new programs should be added.
- The institution increases student services as funding permits and makes appropriate additions in studio and instructional equipment as needed.
- The institution makes appropriate commitments to the use of technology in its instructional and studio programs.
- The institution makes regular additions to its library holdings, maximizes student access to library resources and partners with other higher education institutions to share learning resource materials.
- The institution continues its efforts to achieve greater diversity among its Board, staff, faculty and students and in its outreach programs.
- The institution forms partnerships with other arts organizations and educational institutions.
- The institution continues its efforts with community outreach and public service, with a special emphasis on the northern sector of the city of Nashville.
- The institution reaffirms its accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, maintaining the highest quality in all educational programs and services.
- The institution reaffirms its accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.
- The institution reaffirms its accreditation with the Council for Interior Design Accreditation.
- The institution continues its institutional memberships in the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association and the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design.
## Benchmarks

### Institutional Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The six programs offering academic majors maintain years of learning outcomes data and use the data each year for improving their programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The general education program expands as needed, utilizing assessment data and procedures with nationally normed instruments to improve the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The registrar’s office tracks students and maintains complete records on retention and persistence to graduation. Reports at the end of each term are provided to departmental chairs, faculty advisers and pertinent staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sufficient Number of Majors in Each Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Film School</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 100 students majoring in the program as determined each Fall Semester and grows that number to 125 by 2019 (100 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The BA in Art</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 30 students pursuing the degree in and will expand to 35 students by 2019 (29 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Department of Fine Art</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 55 students majoring in the program or an SCH count of at least 1,200 in fine arts courses as determined each Fall Semester and grows majors to 65 students by 2019 (57 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Department of Graphic Design</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 70 students majoring in the program as determined each Fall semester and grows the headcount to 80 students by 2019 (73 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Department of Interior Design</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 30 students majoring in the program as determined each Fall semester and grows the headcount to 40 students by 2019 (27 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Department of Photography</td>
<td>Maintains a headcount of 50 students majoring in the program or an SCH count in Photography courses of at least 500 as determined each Fall semester and grows the headcount to 60 students by 2019 (47 in Fall 2013).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Full-Time Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Full-time faculty are added based on program need and enrollment growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Full-time faculty teach a majority of classes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Improved Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Through the annual student learning outcomes assessment process—in consultation with colleagues of other art and design institutions and with the use of alumni satisfaction data and marketing surveys—the faculty in each department annually examines the curriculum to look for ways to enhance its uniqueness and quality. In the general education program, communication and critical thinking skills are stressed in all courses and in specific across-the-curriculum initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The faculty in conjunction with the vice president for academic affairs and the president investigate opportunities for and implement programmatic expansion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2018</td>
<td>The faculty together with the vice president for academic affairs implements the Quality Enhancement Plan on Foundations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>The BA in Art degree program is revised and amended to reflect a more rigorous and focused study of the visual arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>The modified BA in Art degree is implemented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Student Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Retention Committee, chaired by the director of student life, meets regularly during the fall and spring semesters to address and to implement best practices for the retention of all students proactively. These practices engage students in their academic lives and in their lives outside of the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The director of student life, with the leadership of the vice president for academic affairs and the assistance of the Retention Committee, works with department advisors to improve retention. Special measures are taken to intervene with at-risk students including: providing academic support service/tutoring and providing an &quot;early warning system&quot; early in the semester for students having problems in their courses. These efforts are assessed, revised and improved as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The career services coordinator works with regional employers, department chairs and alumni to expand career counseling and internship services. Documentation of alumni employment is achieved through surveys, social media and other means annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Writing Center expands tutoring services with additional resources as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The student forum, the new student government model, increases student involvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Studio and Instructional Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Through the departmental assessment and planning process each year, department chairs under the direction of the vice president for academic affairs and in consultation with the director of information technology and equipment service (ITES) determine minimal and optimal equipment needs and incorporate those needs into the annual budgetary planning process. In consultation with the vice president for finance and operations, the vice president for academic affairs determines equipment priorities in the academic area as part of the budget submissions to the president.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Information Technology and Equipment Services**

| 2014-2019 | Under the direction of the appropriate vice presidents and department chairs, ITES personnel continually evaluate all aspects of their operations to determine ways of improving services. |
| 2014-2019 | Through the annual assessment and planning process, non-academic unit heads in consultation with the appropriate vice president and the director of ITES determine minimal and optimal technology needs and incorporate those needs into the annual budgetary planning process. See also Studio and Instructional Equipment. |

**Library**

| 2014-2019 | The library continues to develop user-friendly library instruction and improve services. |
| 2014-2019 | The website evolves, as does social networking to promote library services. |
| 2014-2019 | The library increases its hard copy and digital holdings by 20%. |
| 2014-2019 | The library annually reviews and renews the agreement with Fisk University library. |

**Instructional and Studio Space**

| 2014-2017 | The college undertakes planning for and execution of changed and/or additional academic space as part of the implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan on Foundations. |

**Diversity**

| 2014-2019 | The institution regularly reviews and increases diversity for the Board of Trustees, staff, faculty and students with Board leadership, administrative department heads and academic chairs. |
| 2014-2019 | Diversity is increased across all sectors based upon set goals. |

**Partnerships**

| 2014-2019 | The institution continues and expands its partnerships where possible with the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, the Nashville Film Festival, Belmont University and others. |
| 2014-2019 | The institution pursues revision and growth of the Fisk University partnership to include additional academic programs. |
| 2014-2016 | The institution develops partnerships with other area universities and establishes specific articulation agreements with community colleges in Tennessee and surrounding states that have art and design programs. |

**Outreach and Public Service**

| 2014-2019 | The institution maximizes its efforts to grow enrollment in the Community Education program with new programmatic efforts for high school teachers and students, as well as adults. |
The institution maintains its current level of outreach and public service through its six academic programs, and expands them as funding and staffing permit, with special emphasis on internships and experiential/service-learning projects for nonprofit organizations. All programs identify one major experiential/service-learning project annually.

### Accrediting Associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2018</td>
<td>The college prepares for its ten-year reaffirmation of accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Art and Design in 2018.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Goal 4: Evaluation and Improvement of Operational, Organizational and Physical Resources

**Objectives**

- All units of the institution continue to make a positive commitment to the assessment calendar, regularly assess goals and use the assessment data for ongoing improvement.
- Faculty and staff regularly consult the Operations Manual, and participate in meaningful training opportunities to improve institutional professionalism, communication, security and problem solving.
- The institution follows the procedures outlined in its business office manual.
- The institution provides sufficient administrative and support staff.
- The institution maintains and improves as possible competitive faculty and staff salaries with peer institutions based on equity and rank.
- Through their supervisors, all personnel receive annual written evaluations of their job performance.
- The institution regularly evaluates and improves its marketing and recruiting efforts.
- The institution provides an adequate, user-friendly, integrated software program for all student and operational services.
- The institution provides adequate and dedicated space for instruction, studios, space and faculty offices, student housing and administrative support services.
- The institution benefits from careful policy-making and energetic fundraising by members of the Board of Trustees.
- The institution maintains a participatory system of governance with standing committees at all levels with appropriate representation by board members, faculty, staff and students.
- The institution provides a safe, secure, attractive and functional building and grounds.
### Benchmarks

**Assessment and Improvement Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>All units of the institution maintain and regularly evaluate a unit mission that reflects the institutional mission; that has goals and objectives related to the institutional strategic plan goals, objectives and benchmarks, and that has measurements for assessment and an ongoing process for using assessment data for improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Operations Manual**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>All new faculty and staff are required to certify that they have read the manual. Current faculty and staff are regularly asked by their supervisors to review the manual.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Business Office Manual**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The manual is updated annually and available on the G-Drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Business operations are reviewed annually to determine if all procedures in the manual are being followed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Administrative and Support Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-2019</td>
<td>Administrative assistance for senior administrators is added in keeping with enrollment growth and assigned as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2019</td>
<td>Additional full- or part-time support staff for faculty is added through student work-study or with additional new hires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2019</td>
<td>The Office of Student Life is expanded to include full-time staff in housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2019</td>
<td>A full-time communications officer is added.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Salaries and Benefits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The institution reviews and maintains competitive salaries with those at peer colleges of art. The institution plans for and makes adjustments in salaries as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The employee retirement plan is reviewed annually to ensure quality and compliance with Federal regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Health insurance benefits are evaluated annually. Explorations to form partnerships for health insurance with other nonprofit organizations are considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2019</td>
<td>The Board approves a new policy to provide initial and limited one-semester sabbaticals for faculty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Written Evaluations for All Personnel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The institution is in complete compliance with its system requiring written evaluations of all personnel every year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Centralized System for Technology and Equipment Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The Office of Information Technology and Equipment Services is consulted on all substantial purchases of equipment, software and supplies, and a centralized equipment purchase order form is used for all purchases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Campus and Grounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The institution reviews and implements its campus master plan for effective use of its property, creating an attractive, functional campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>A regularly scheduled grounds maintenance program is used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2017</td>
<td>In keeping with enrollment projections and housing needs, plans are reviewed and executed for a third residence hall and increased academic space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2017</td>
<td>Albert Hadley Hall, a third residence hall that includes temporary academic space, is opened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2019</td>
<td>Additional academic facilities are considered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Safety and Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Security policies, procedures and protocols are annually reviewed and enhanced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>HVAC units on the roof of the academic building are replaced as needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Governance and Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The college catalog, the student handbook, the faculty handbook, the operational policies and guidelines manual, the business office manual, the safety and security manual and all other major institutional publications are reviewed annually to ensure accuracy, clarity, consistency and thoroughness. All documents include policies that conform to the institutional operations manual and all state and federal policies, rules, regulations and laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Board committees, institutional standing committees, the Faculty Senate and the student government/student representation together provide a system of universal participation in institutional governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>All faculty and staff participate regularly in workshops and training addressing safety and security; safeguards against discrimination and harassment; collegiality and problem solving through open, honest communication, and the maintenance of professional distance and demeanor between faculty/staff and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>Student representatives are added to appropriate institutional committees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Board of Trustees’ Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>Educational programs, retreats or other activities are held in conjunction with board meetings and/or annually to update members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>70% of the members of the Board attend four out of the five annual meetings and committee meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2019</td>
<td>The By-Laws of the Board of Trustees are reviewed, enhanced or changed as needed and appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Facts

Commitments to a Learning-Centered and Student-Centered Institution

Governance
Mission
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film offers a studio-based curriculum, supported by a strong academic foundation. The faculty and staff are committed to a learning-centered environment that challenges the student to engage the mind, train the eye and cultivate talent and skill into an active realization of creative potential.

Campus
13-acre campus includes:

- 63,000-square-foot academic building.
- Hawkins Residence Hall, housing 48 students, opened in 2005.
- Turner Residence Hall, housing 48 students, opened in 2008.
- 10,000 square-foot addition/renovation featuring student center, café, computer lab, meeting rooms and individual studio space opened in Fall 2010.

Students (as of Fall 2013)
362 students are enrolled in the degree programs. Watkins students come from 25 US states and four other countries. Of the new students, 66% enrolled were directly from high school.

Faculty
The faculty is comprised of 18 full-time and approximately 40 adjunct members who are award-winning artists, designers, filmmakers, scholars and teachers. The student to faculty ratio is 10:1 in studio-based classes and 17:1 in liberal arts classes.

Tuition
2014-2015 annual tuition, based on 15 credit hours per semester, is $20,850 or $695 per credit hour.

Financial Aid
Watkins offers federal, state and institutional financial aid including Pell Grants and the Tennessee Lottery Hope Scholarship. There are also merit-based and need-based scholarships.

Accreditations/Memberships
- Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree, the Associate of Fine Arts degree, the Bachelor of Arts degree, and the Certificate in Film.
- Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and is also accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation for the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design.
- Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is authorized to offer undergraduate college degrees by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.
- Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is a member of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, representing 35 private, independent, nonprofit, regionally accredited colleges in Tennessee.
- Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design, a consortium of 43 leading visual arts colleges in the United States and Canada.
Degree Programs Offered

- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film—concentrations in producing, directing, screenwriting, cinematography and editing
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fine Art
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design—optional concentrations in illustration and web design
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design—optional concentration in sustainable design
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography
- Bachelor of Arts in Art—concentrations in photography, film and time-based media, painting and drawing, drawing and printmaking, ceramics and sculpture
- Certificate in Film—a 45-credit-hour program for those who already have a bachelor’s degree in another area of study.
- Certificate in Interior Design—a 24-credit-hour program that provides an introduction to the field of interior design.

All students are required to complete a Visual Arts Core/Fine Arts Foundation and a General Education Core with classes including art history, history, science, math, speech communication, anthropology and English.

Academic Partnerships

Watkins has established a 2+2 articulation agreement in film, graphic design and fine art with Columbia State Community College, 2+2 agreements in graphic design with Pellissippi State Technical Community College and Rend Lake College, and a 2+2 agreement in fine art with Georgia Perimeter College, allowing students to transfer to Watkins for the final two years of their degrees. In addition, the college participates in the Tennessee Transfer Pathway, enabling students at all two-year community colleges in Tennessee to transfer to Watkins with a maximum number of credits for degree completion. Watkins also has an academic partnership with Fisk University that allows students to earn minors in graphic design, film studies and interior design. Additionally, Watkins has a partnership with Belmont University that allows Belmont students to pursue a minor in film or take supplemental courses at Watkins and allows Watkins students to take courses in Belmont’s Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business or the Department of General Education.

Community Education

Each year, about 1,000 children, teens and adults enroll in community education classes and workshops. Taught by practicing artists, these unique studio-based programs enable students of all ages to express their artistic abilities and give them the tools to pursue a life of creativity. Since 2009, a three-week, intensive summer pre-college program was launched, offering college-like experiences in Watkins’ disciplines.

History

Watkins Institute began operations in 1885 through a $100,000 bequest and land donation by Samuel Watkins to be held in trust by the State of Tennessee and used for the educational benefit of Nashvillians. The transition to Watkins College of Art, Design & Film began in 1977, when approval was received through the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) to offer associate degrees in fine arts and interior design. Today, Watkins is an independent visual arts institution offering a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Arts, a professional certificate in film, and a certificate in interior design, as well as a wide variety of community education and outreach programs. In 2014, the college celebrates its 129th anniversary.
The 16 principles of a learning-centered institution created at California State University at Northridge, reported in About Campus in the September-October 2005 issue, and endorsed by the Watkins faculty and staff follow:

1. A large learning-centered university, such as Cal State Northridge, should compensate for scale by developing ways for people to interact and act in small groups. A small institution, like a learning-centered university, differentiates learning from teaching.

2. To this end, a learning-centered university advises faculty and staff on how to develop learning objectives.

3. A learning-centered university uses assessment to feed results back to faculty, staff and administrators so that they can re-plot what they are doing.

4. To this end, a learning-centered university measures its success by how well its students meet learning objectives set by faculty and staff and how its alumni excel.

5. A learning-centered university establishes learning outcomes for each of its programs, based on community needs, academic requirements and previous assessments of learning outcomes.

6. To the extent possible, a learning centered university adjusts what it teaches to the needs of the individual learner.

7. A learning-centered university prepares students to take charge of how they learn singly and in groups so that they can be creative and innovative.

8. A learning-centered university provides students with opportunities to apply what they learn—and learn from what they apply—in field experiences, community service, lab settings and other hands-on experiments such as studios, performances and investigative inquiries.

9. A learning-centered university examines seriously the linkages among credit hours, time in the classroom and learning objectives. Curricula that are modularized, self-paced or asynchronous recognize that students achieve learning objectives at different rates.

10. A learning-centered university deploys technology purposefully, so that it is not an add-on, but a set of tools for facilitating learning.

11. A learning-centered university takes account of who its students are as people, what the pressures are on its faculty and staff, and how its budget and plant are constructed.
Within this very real context, it identifies and then adjusts its variables to achieve intentional learning outcomes.

12. Outreach staff partner with academic departments to convey to prospects the campus’s high expectations for achievement.

13. A learning-centered university provides flexibly scheduled counseling, financial aid assistance, advising and tutoring services.

14. At Watkins, efforts should be made to sustain this advantage.

15. Crafting a learning-centered enterprise requires cooperative effort.

16. A learning-centered university rewards activities that advance these principles.

The ten student service expectations developed at Riverland Community College in Minnesota, reported in Student Affairs Today in the June 2006 issue, and endorsed by the Watkins faculty and staff follow:

1. Give students courteous and concerned attention to their needs. Value them.

2. Create or change the processes and rules of Student Services to assure that students are kept at the center of the institution.

3. Be clear, student-friendly and honest in all communications to students.

4. Remember students are never an inconvenience. They are not an interruption in your work. They are your work.

5. Remember that you need to do what’s right for a student even if someone else did a student a disservice.

6. Create a campus environment that students deserve—one that is neat, bright, welcoming, personalized and safe.

7. Have the mindset that students aren’t customers; they’re professional clients.

8. Recognize that students are not always right and neither are you.

9. Exceed student expectations. Satisfaction is not enough and never the goal.

10. Seek out the appropriate solution or resources until every problem is solved.
Governance

Watkins College of Art, Design & Film is a unique institution in many ways including its governance structure. While it operates as an independent institution, Watkins is held in trust by the State of Tennessee, in keeping with the wishes and the last will and testament of its founder, Samuel Watkins. A state commission fulfills the state’s role as trustee. Created by the Tennessee General Assembly (Section 49-50-701 of Tennessee Code Annotated), the Watkins Institute Commission is composed of three commissioners appointed by the Governor of Tennessee and approved by the Senate. Since the establishment of the institution in 1885, 34 distinguished citizens of Tennessee have served terms on the three-person Watkins Commission.

While representing the state’s oversight and statutory interest in the institution, the commissioners also serve as members of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, created when Watkins was established under the laws of Tennessee as a nonprofit corporation in 1974, forms the governing board for the institution.

The membership of the Board of Trustees is described in Trustees of Watkins Institute By-Laws:

The Corporation shall be governed by a Board of Trustees of not less than twenty-five (25) nor more than forty (40) persons in addition to any Trustees Emeriti. The Board of Trustees shall include the Chair, the Vice Chair and the three (3) Commissioners of Watkins Institute . . . The Governor, the Attorney General, and the President of Watkins College of Art & Design shall be ex officio members of the Board . . .

The three commissioners serve four year terms “and until the appointment and qualification of their successors, and they may succeed themselves in office.” Traditionally, commissioners have served multiple terms, and some have served from the date of their initial appointment until their death. In most respects, commissioners have no more power than any other member of the Board of Trustees. However, it is important to note that while all new members of the Board of Trustees are elected by a majority vote of existing members of the Board, all candidates for election to the Board must first be approved by the three commissioners (Trustees of Watkins Institute By Laws, Article III, Section 2).

Members of the Board of Trustees who are not commissioners serve three-year terms “and until their successors are elected, and they may succeed themselves in office.” The powers and duties of the Board of Trustees (including the commissioners) are described in Article III, Section 4 of Trustees of Watkins Institute By-Laws:
The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Trustees with the duty of improving the ability of Watkins Institute through Watkins College of Art, Design & Film to serve the community at large. The Board of Trustees shall perform all duties and functions ordinarily and customarily performed by trustees of educational institutions. The Trustees shall perform such duties and functions in compliance with Samuel Watkins’ Will and Applicable Law.

The chief executive officer of the college is the president who is appointed by the Board of Trustees (Trustees of Watkins Institute By-Laws, Article VI, Section 1). The president’s powers and duties are outlined in Article VIII of the By-Laws:

The president shall, as educational and administrative head of the college, exercise a general superintendence over all the affairs of the institution and bring such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed to meet its policy-making and supervisory responsibilities. The president shall have power, on behalf of the Trustees, to perform all acts and execute all documents to make effective the actions of the Board or its Executive Committee. Except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, the president shall be an ex officio member of all committees of the Board without the power to vote. The president will work closely with the Finance Committee to see that the Board is regularly informed of the financial status of the College and to see that the Board is presented in its annual June meeting with a financial report for the current year and a budget proposal for the forthcoming year; in addition, the president shall exercise general superintendence over and specifically approve all fundraising activities done in the name of the benefit of the institution.