Jackson State University, a coeducational institution, is supported by the State of Mississippi. It is controlled by the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning which is appointed by the Governor. The University is also funded through legislative appropriations which are supplemented by student fees and federal and private grants.

Jackson State University is located in Jackson, Mississippi, the capital and largest city of the state. Jackson is the geographic, political, industrial and cultural center of the state. The metropolitan area consists of a growing population presently estimated at 400,000. The location of the University in the densely populated section of central Mississippi is such that nearly one-half of the students come from within a fifty-mile radius of the institution; however, the population includes students from every county in the state. A significant number of students also come from outside the state, including major urban centers like Detroit, St. Louis and Chicago as well as several foreign countries.

The campus is a scenic one hundred and fifty-acre tract situated one mile west of downtown Jackson and is easily accessible from U. S. Highways 80, 49 and 51 and Interstates 20, 220 and 55. A modern airport with direct connections to major cities - - north, south, east, and west - - is about fifteen minutes away.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Jackson State University, founded in 1877 at Natchez, Mississippi by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, had as its purpose providing the intellectual, moral and religious education which would enable its graduates to assume positions of leadership in a free society.

The college was soon relocated in Jackson, Mississippi. In 1940, the state assumed support of the institution; named Jackson State College in 1956, the institution expanded to include programs in education, liberal arts and the sciences as well as in graduate studies. Elevated to university status in 1974, the University in 1979 was designated the Urban University of the state.

Jackson State University is a public, coeducational institution offering degrees at the baccalaureate, master’s specialist and doctoral degree levels. The University, therefore, has a particular mission to instruct a largely urbanized student body drawn from the state, and from many parts of the nation and the world, to conduct research aimed at solving urban problems; and to provide educational services, including technical assistance, workshops, training programs and both degree and non-degree offerings, which allow the University to extend its human, cultural and physical resources into the surrounding urban community. It provides students with a general, liberal and professional education which prepares them to initiate careers and to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the state, the nation and the world.

The following desired outcomes for student growth are implicit in the general statement of purpose:

1. The ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;
2. An understanding of the nature of one’s physical and social environment, thereby, strengthening human relationships;
3. The ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas and data using logic;
4. An understanding and acceptance of the maturing self;
5. An understanding of one’s own ethnic and cultural heritage, along with a better understanding and appreciation of the similarities and differences inherent in a multicultural society;
6. A social consciousness which will enable one to assume responsibility, to think critically about moral, economic, cultural and political problems, and to contribute to the improvement of society; and
7. Marketable skills and ability to demonstrate them successfully for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining rewarding employment.
HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY

In 1877, Jackson State University opened its doors in Natchez, Mississippi, operating as Natchez Seminary, a private school, under the auspices of the American Baptist Home Mission Society of New York. Its purpose was to educate newly freed slaves between Memphis and Mississippi Gulf Coast. Serving primarily as an educational institution to train ministers and teachers, the school enrolled 20 students.

Dr. Charles Ayer, a trained theologian, served as the first president and the school prospered and grew. In November of 1882, the Society moved the school to Jackson, the site where Millsaps College now stands. A part of this transition was the renaming of the school to Jackson College in recognition of the institution’s new, central location in the city of Jackson. At the close of the 1894 school year, Dr. Ayer resigned and Dr. Luther G. Barrett, the second president was appointed to fill the vacancy. Jackson College relocated from its original site in north Jackson to a tract of land in the southwest section of the city. Construction on the new site began in 1902 and the University remains on this site today.

Dr. Zachary Taylor Hubert was appointed to the presidency on May 8, 1911. During his administration, the course of study was broadened, departments were organized and a second building program began.

On October 1, 1927, Dr. B. Baldwin Dansby was appointed the fourth president of Jackson College. During this period, the major educational activities were directed toward teacher education for in-service teachers. When the American Baptist Home Mission Society withdrew its support from the institution in 1934, it became apparent that state support was needed to sustain the school. A hallmark of the Dansby Administration was the transferal of the school from the private control of the church to the state education system.

Dr. Jacob L. Reddix took office in 1940 and was the first president to serve under the mandate of the state. Initially, the school had been specifically designated by the state to train rural and elementary teachers. The curriculum was reorganized to suit that purpose and subsequently granted two years of college work. In 1942, the Board of Trustees raised the curriculum to a full four-year teacher education program, culminating in the Bachelor of Science Degree in Education. The first four-year graduating class under state support received their degrees in May 1944. A Division of Graduate Students was organized during the Summer of 1953 and the program of Liberal Arts started in the fall of that year.

Dr. John A. Peoples, Jr. was appointed as the sixth president of Jackson College on March 2, 1967. He was the first alumnus to serve in this capacity and embodied a new spirit of pride and freedom for the students and faculty. This spirit resonated through the new institutional motto: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Under Dr. Peoples’ administration, the academic program of Jackson College was greatly expanded and strengthened. The entire
curriculum was reorganized and the Schools of Liberal Studies, Education, Science and Technology, Business and Economics and The Graduate School were established. Dr. Peoples enhanced the faculty in quality and quantity. By the conclusion of his 17-year tenure, the faculty tripled in size and the faculty members with graduate degrees increased eightfold in ten years.

One of the most profound accomplishments of the Peoples administration was the designation of Jackson College to Jackson State University on March 15, 1974. Through a legislative act signed into law by Governor William Waller, Jackson College gained university status in accordance with the expanded breadth and quality of its academic programs. In 1979, the University was officially deemed the state’s Urban University by the Board of Trustees, State Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi.

On May 1, 1984, Dr. James A. Hefner became the seventh president of Jackson State University, serving until April 1, 1991. Upon assuming the presidency, Dr. Hefner launched a five-year, $10 million capital campaign that ended a year ahead of schedule and generated $11.2 million. His administration was characterized by an overall enrichment of the school and its surrounding community including the expansion of the school’s scholarship program and new programs in the Division of Continuing Education and the University Center; the establishment of the Community Development Corporation to improve blighted housing around the campus; the organization of a Staff Senate; the creation of a Center for Professional Development and the Center for Technology Transfer.

Dr. Herman B. Smith, Jr., served as interim president of Jackson State University in April 1991. His administration reduced University debt and improved fiscal management practices. Dr. Smith was committed to refurbishing the campus environment through the efforts of the University community. He launched a beautification campaign that included the campus and its surrounding area and improved campus security measures.

Dr. James E. Lyons, Sr., assumed the presidency of Jackson State University on July 1, 1992. He developed a Campus Master Plan that projected the growth of the University into the 21st century. Part of Dr. Lyons’ legacy persists in many of the impressive edifices that now adorn today’s campus including the magnificent $13.5 million expansion of the H. T. Sampson Library which doubled the capacity of the original structure; and a $2 million restoration of Ayer Hall, the only remaining original structures from the early campus. Dr. Lyons also pioneered the $17.2 million construction of the new School of Liberal Arts that is now complete and will be occupied in the spring.

In addition to the structural expansion to the University, Dr. Lyons broadened the University’s academic profile as well. Under his leadership, 15 new graduate and undergraduate programs evolved: the bachelor’s in child care and family education, educational technology, foreign languages and healthcare administration; the master in science in communicative disorders,
Hazardous Waste Management, Systems Management and the master of arts in teaching and Urban and Regional Planning and doctoral programs in business administration, chemistry, clinical psychology, public administration, urban and regional planning and social work. These academic achievements were bolstered by the establishment of the School of Social Work, the formation of the School of Engineering, the expansion of the Master’s Program in Public Policy and Administration to departmental status making it the only such department in Mississippi’s higher education system and the Fall 1998 opening of the School of Allied Health Services. The School of Business received its accreditation by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) under Dr. Lyons’ administration.

By the unanimous consent of the Board of Trustees, State Institutions of Higher Learning, Dr. Bettye Ward Fletcher was named Interim President of Jackson State University on April 15, 1999. During her tenure, the University received two of the largest monetary awards in its history - a $2 million donation to the JSU Development Foundation from alumnus Attorney Frederick B. Clarke and his wife, Margaret; and a $12.9 million research grant from the National Institutes of Health and the Center for Disease Control for its role as the coordinating center for the Jackson Heart Study.

The legacy of social awareness and exemplary leadership at Jackson State University continues with the February 1, 2000 appointment of Ronald Mason, Jr., Esquire as the ninth president. In addition to his extensive experience in higher education, institutional management and community development, Dr. Mason has invested the presidency with a renewed spirit of advancement and excellence that will propel Jackson State University to unprecedented heights in the New Millennium. He christened his administration with an innovative financial plan that maintained current levels of fiscal operation in spite of state mandated budget cuts. He has also launched The Faith Fund - an alumni-driven campaign to reconnect alumni with the university - and has set into action plans for the Payton Family Student and Athletic Complex which will be dedicated on November 1, 2000 in memory of Jackson State alumnus, Walter “Sweetness” Payton.

Dr. Mason recognizes the University’s unique opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the region, not only in producing effective, competent graduates, but also in furthering the overall economic prosperity of the region. His administration is dedicated to focusing on community service, fortifying technological infrastructure, furthering the diversification of the student population and solidifying Jackson State University’s role in the advancement of the City of Jackson and the State of Mississippi.

Today, with an enrollment of approximately 6,800 undergraduate and graduate students, Jackson State provides traditional and non-traditional students of diverse backgrounds academic opportunities to develop knowledge and skills that will empower them to succeed in an increasingly complex and technologically advanced world. Students are also afforded the opportunity to excel.
in areas beyond academic disciplines including art, culture, music and numerous intercollegiate sports and championship competitions. Long-term cooperative projects, corporate partnerships and community initiatives strengthen the University’s service to public schools, business and industry, the West Jackson community, the city, the state, the nation and several international countries.
Jackson State University has reached a significant number of milestones in the last five years. It is acknowledged that many notable achievements have been made by many individual members of the student body, faculty, staff, and administration. The following chronology presents only some of the most noteworthy milestones of the University in programmatic, student development, and facilities related areas. Also included are individual and group achievements of national or worldwide acclaim.

**1996-97**

- The Mass Communications Department of Jackson State University is re-accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.
- Becoming a Responsible Teen (BART) an HIV/AIDS information program developed at Jackson State University through its Community Health Program is selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC/DASH) as a national model to reduce the incidence of the disease in African American youth.
- The Jackson State University Home Ownership Opportunities Program (Project HOOP) has generated more than $1.5 million in external funding and matching funds.
- The Mississippi Urban Research Center (MURC) at Jackson State University receives a grant to work with the Foundation for Medical Care to help ensure a milder flu season for elderly African American Medicare beneficiaries.

**1997-98**

- The Jackson State University Margaret Walker Alexander Research Center has received grants totaling $37,900 to exhibit the works of renowned 20th century African American artist Jacob Lawrence.
- Jackson State University receives two grants totaling $2,555,570 from the U. S. Department of Education.
- In recognition of the Horizons project, a statewide flu awareness effort run by Jackson State University and the foundation for Health Care, Mayor Harvey Johnson declares October as Flue Awareness Month.
- Jackson State University’s Development foundation begins a drive to build a $1 million endowment to fund presidential scholarships for academically talented students.
1997-98

- Jackson State University’s department of physics, atmospheric sciences and general science is awarded a two-year $360,000 NASA grant to fund scholarships for minority students interested in studying meteorology and physics.
- Jackson State University participates in a pilot project to develop and test new distance learning technology in the area of World Wide Web programming. The project is a joint effort with Syracuse University in New York to enhance Department of Defense training. The project will allow JSU junior and senior computer science students to participate in a “virtual university” Internet learning program.

1998-99

- The Jackson State University master of public policy and administration degree program is re-accredited by the Commission on Peer review and Accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA). The program is one of two in the state to be granted NASPAA accreditation.
- Jackson State University Alumnus Frederick and Margaret Clark donate $2 million. The money will go toward need-based scholarships and new JSU programs.
- The Jackson State University golf team captured its 11 straight SWAC title.
- The Jackson State University department of Mathematics in the School of Science and Technology receives a $600,000 grant from NASA to increase the number of African American students who become certified as middle school mathematics teachers.
- Dr. Bettye Ward Fletcher is named interim president of Jackson State University. She is the first woman and first sitting campus administrator to be named to the top position.
- Jackson State University is among three Mississippi institutions that will share $32 million over the next five years as participants in the world’s largest ever heart study for African Americans.
MILESTONES (Con’t)

1999-00

- The Jackson State University department of Mathematics in the School of Science and Technology receives a $600,000 grant from NASA to increase the number of African American students who become certified as middle school mathematics teachers.
- Construction of the new Liberal Arts building is completed.
- A Blue Ribbon Commission consisting of scholars, businessmen, government officials and local representatives is appointed by the President.
- Dr. Ronald Mason is inaugurated as the ninth president of Jackson State University.
- Construction begins on Transitional Dormitory. Free laundry facilities provided for students.
- Jackson State University launches a new School of Engineering.
- The University receives a certificate of achievement for 100% physical verification of all inventory on campus.
- Delphi Automotive Corporation and the Office of Naval Research sign Memoranda of Understanding with Jackson State to enlist the support of faculty and students to meet their research needs.
- The Walter Payton Athletic Complex, a $13 million facility consisting of new athletic fields and a community fitness center, is dedicated.

2000-01

- JSU has generated nearly $32 million dollars in sponsored research and contracts including the $1.97 million Jackson Heart Study and the $12.4 million for the School of Science and Technology.
- Two nationally renowned research and service centers are housed at Jackson State University: the Jackson Heart Study and the Mississippi Urban Research Center.
- The Army High Performance Computing Research Center (AHPCRC) houses two advanced state-of-the-art computational laboratories at JSU.
- The JSU Office of International Programs is noted for several international partnerships including the Memorandum of Agreement between Jackson State University and Guangxi Provincial University of the Peoples Republic of China.
- JSU’s Mississippi Urban Research Center (MURC) has been designated a national Census Information Center (CIC) by the U.S. Census Bureau and will offer technical assistance and consultation along with Census 2000 data to non-profit organizations.
Unique partnership with the Office of Naval Research (ONR).
ACCREDITATIONS

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Jackson State University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number 404-679-4501) to award the bachelor’s, master’s, education specialist, Doctor of Education, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications
American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business
American Chemical Society
Council on Rehabilitation Education
Council on Social Work Education (Baccalaureate Level)
Joint Designation Committee of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards and the
National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology (ASPPB/NR)
National Association of Industrial Technology
National Association of Schools of Art and Design
National Association of Schools of Music
National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
The National Association of Public Affairs and Administration
MEMBERSHIPS

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officer
American Business Communication Association
American Council on Education
American Society for Engineering Education
Assembly of the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business
Associated Schools of Construction
Association of American Colleges
Association of Department of English
Association of Departments of Foreign Languages
Association of State Colleges and Universities
Conference of Deans of Black Graduate Schools
Conference of Southern Graduate Deans
Cooperative Education Association
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences
Council of Graduate Schools in the United States
Institute of International Education
Midwest Association of Graduate Schools
Mississippi Academy of Sciences
Mississippi Association of Colleges
Mississippi Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
Mississippi Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions
Mississippi Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences
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National Association of Veterans Programs Administrators
National Center for Public Service Internship Program
National Collegiate Honors Council
National Commission on Accrediting
National Council for Small Business Management Development
National Student Exchange
Southern Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions
Southern Business Administration Association