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KCUE Announces Results of 2026 Survey of University Presidents (I)

Key Tasks for Enhancing Competitiveness: Generative AI, Faculty, and Internationalization

- The Korean Council for University Education (KCUE, Chairman Yang O-bong) released the results of the “2026 Survey of University Presidents (I)” to mark the 2026 General Assembly.
- The survey was held from Jan 7 to Feb 6, 2026, with 140 out of 192 member universities* participating (72.9% response rate).

* Excludes 5 specialized academies (Military, Naval, Air Force, Nursing, and Police) due to survey nature.

- The following are the key findings from the survey:

[Key Findings]

▶ Primary Interests of University Presidents

- Top Interests: **Government and local financial support projects** ranked first at 72.9% (102 schools), followed by **international student recruitment and education** at 63.6% (89 schools).
- Interest in “Expansion and Improvement of Educational Facilities” surged by 14.3%p (from 26.4% to 40.7%), entering the top 5. This reflects a growing focus on strengthening educational infrastructure.

▶ Generative AI Policy and Evaluation Reliability

- Generative AI policies, such as usage guidelines, have been **adopted** by **40.0% (56**

schools) of the universities surveyed.

- Another 40.0% (56 schools) are currently considering establishing such policies. This indicates a growing trend toward institutionalizing AI use, compared to the 30 schools that had adopted policies during the 2024 Survey of University Presidents II.

- To enhance the reliability of student assessments in a generative AI environment, **“clarifying assessment criteria”** and **“process-oriented evaluation”** were **tied for first place** (weighted total of 199 points). This indicates a strong demand for ensuring fairness and credibility.

▶ Faculty Competitiveness and Performance Compensation

- To strengthen faculty competitiveness, the top priority for investment was **“improving recruitment conditions for outstanding faculty”** (weighted total of 239 points).
- Regarding differential compensation or performance-based pay systems, **“currently operating and needs full expansion”** and **“not operating but planning for future introduction”** both recorded the highest response rate at 29.3% (41 schools). However, the **“limited availability of financial resources for performance pay and treatment improvement”** (weighted total of 252 points) was identified as the biggest obstacle to system reform.

▶ University Internationalization and International Student Education

- To ensure the success of the government’s **“Study Korea 300K Project,”** universities identified **“improving the visa system for international students”** as their top priority (weighted total of 214 points), followed by **“community connection and residency support.”**
- In terms of future internationalization focus areas, **“expanding international student recruitment (long-term: degree programs, etc.)”** ranked first (weighted total of 344 points), followed by **“joint/dual degree programs and twinning programs with overseas universities.”**
- Regarding the expansion of overseas education programs and the establishment of international campuses (95 out of 140 schools responding), **“legal and institutional regulations”** (such as establishment limits, visa restrictions, and budget execution constraints; 48 schools) and **“financial shortages”** (operating costs and labor costs; 46 schools) were cited as the first and second biggest challenges. This suggests that both institutional and financial conditions are key

constraints to advancing internationalization.

- Chairman Yang O-bong stated, “The focus of universities is shifting from quantitative growth to qualitative excellence. To support this digital and global leap, urgent strategic investment and deregulation by the government are essential, as these are core tasks for enhancing national competitiveness.”

Attachment:

1. Response Status - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (I)
2. Survey Results - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (I)
(Attached separately)
3. Questionnaire - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (I)
(Attached separately)

[Attachment 1]

2026 Survey of University Presidents(I) Response

1. Purpose: Collecting field opinions from presidents of 4-year universities nationwide.
2. Period: Jan 7 – Feb 6, 2026
3. Method: Web-based survey
4. Target: 140 out of 192 member universities responded (72.9%).

* Of the 197 member universities, five institutions established under special laws (Korea Armed Forces Nursing Academy, Korea Air Force Academy, Korea Military Academy, Korea Naval Academy, and Korean National Police University) were excluded from the survey due to the specific nature of the questions.

<2026 Survey of University Presidents(I) Response>

Category		Member Univ. Status*		Respondent Profile	
		No. of Universities	Composition (%)	No. of respondents	Response rate (%)
Total		192	100.0	140	72.9
Founding Type	National / Public	41	21.4	31	75.6
	Private	151	78.6	109	72.2
Region	Seoul Metro Area	73	38.0	52	71.2
	Metropolitan Cities	38	19.8	25	65.8
	Other Provinces/Cities	81	42.2	63	77.8
Size**	Large	52	27.1	41	78.8
	Mid	59	30.7	47	79.7
	Small	81	42.2	52	64.2

* Excludes 5 universities established under special laws.

** Note: Small (under 5,000), Medium (5,000-10,000), and Large (over 10,000) based on enrollment.