

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON



LUIS M. PROENZA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 30, 2011

Members of the University Community

I am pleased, Dear Colleagues . . .

. . . to forward for your information a summary of actions approved by The University of Akron's Board of Trustees at its regular meeting on August 3, 2011.

Presentation to the Board

The presentation was titled—Ohio Campus Compact VISTA Impact Report: The University of Akron, Veterans' Academic Programs and Services. Bridget A. Ludwa, Veterans' Service Coordinator/ AmeriCorps VISTA, was the speaker. She said that an Impact Report is presented yearly to outline a VISTA participant's goals and accomplishments. Ms. Ludwa's term with the University is 2009-2012.

Finance & Administration Committee

1. FY2011-2012 General Fund and Auxiliary Budgets for Akron and Wayne

The Board passed a \$391-million budget for the current fiscal year that includes new investments that will help more students graduate and will accommodate increases in enrollment.

The new investments, totaling \$20 million, have been categorized in three priority areas:

- **Capacity and excellence assurance.** The budget includes funding for compensation increases, with the dollars coming from an anticipated increase in student enrollment. The University also will invest in the new extended-campus locations in Brunswick and Lakewood. Lakewood will open once we receive Higher Learning Commission approval.

- **Strategic investments.** More tenure-track faculty will be hired, and more start-up funds will be available, enabling the additional faculty to attract new research funding to the University. To improve persistence and progress toward degree, the University will create a new scholarship fund for Pell-eligible continuing students who were ineligible for general scholarships upon admission but since have earned a cumulative 3.0 grade-point average after two semesters of a full course load. In addition, scholarships now will be awarded to select new freshmen with an ACT of 21 and a high school GPA of 3.0 or better. Further, the funds in the general scholarship pool will increase 3.5 percent, in proportion to the tuition increase approved in June 2011. The new investments in faculty and scholarships will be supported with funding generated by the tuition increase.
- **Fiscal integrity.** The new budget maintains the University's stable financial position by setting aside dollars to strengthen the reserve fund. The University also will create a fund for future maintenance and enhancement of facilities, because it is unlikely that capital expenditure funding from the state will be forthcoming.

The budget also reflects a \$15-million reduction in state support. The reduction will be covered by strategically lowering departmental budgets (weighted more heavily on academic-support units than on the colleges) and by moving funds budgeted but not spent in FY2011 to the current FY2012 budget. The use of FY2011 funds in the current fiscal year essentially enables the University to absorb the reduction in state appropriations over two budget years, thus permitting investment in talent development and in a stronger student profile while a well-designed plan is created to meet the challenges of the future. A summary of the budget presentation is available at www.uakron.edu/information/docs/budget-fy2012.pdf.

2. Revised Course Fees

Revised course fees were proposed by the College of Business Administration and Summit College. Those proposed revisions for Summit College were not available when the Board reviewed proposed FY2012 course and miscellaneous fees for all other units on June 15, 2011. The revisions for the College of Business reduce the fees for the new weekend MBA program that were approved in June. The fees approved in June were overstated because they did not take into account the 3.5-percent tuition increase that also was approved then.

3. Master Banking and Signatory Resolutions

Due to changes in personnel, two resolutions and a signature certificate were proposed for banking and securities transactions purposes. The resolutions and certificate reflect recent personnel changes and the addition of a new bank account to accommodate the University's self-insurance health care plan. The updates, which were required simply for the purpose of identifying as a matter of record current signatory authority, do not represent any deviation from approved banking and investment practices. Following Board approval of the resolutions and signature certificate, signed copies were to be filed with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., the University's master depository bank of record, and all other custodial banks holding University assets.

4. Approved Purchases for more than \$350,000
 - \$546,975 to B&B Microscopes Limited for an Olympus FluoView FV1000MPE multi-photon laser scanning microscope and accessories
 - \$1,589,492 to Oracle Corporation for annual support and license fees for PeopleSoft enterprise resource software
 - \$526,959 to Oracle Corporation for software including PeopleSoft Campus Solutions Enterprise Performance Management software and the OBIEE business-intelligence product

5. Cumulative Gift and Grant Income Report for July 2010-June 2011

For July 2010-June 2011, total giving was \$46.7 million, a new record high that is 14 percent more than the \$40.8 million received for FY2010 and 27 percent more than the five-year average of \$36.6 million. The number of gifts decreased from 21,911 for July 2009-June 2010 to 21,121 gifts for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

6. Personnel Actions

The personnel transactions approved by Trustees as amended are posted online at <http://www.uakron.edu/president/docs/Personnel-transactions-August2011.pdf>.

Academic Issues & Student Success Committee

1. Tentative Graduation List and Statistics for Summer 2011

Candidates for a tentative total of 1,151 degrees were eligible to participate in the University's summer 2011 commencement ceremonies, pending completion of requirements and verification. The total included candidates for 48 doctoral, 398 master's, 559 baccalaureate and 146 associate degrees.

2. Research Grants and Sponsored Programs Report, June 2011

Annual combined research and sponsored program awards for the University and its Research Foundation exceeded \$50 million for the first time in University history, setting a new record at \$50.9 million during 2010-2011. For July 2010-June 2011, funding for externally funded research and other sponsored programs was \$50,902,802 for 491 projects. For July 2009-June 2010, funding was \$48,380,893 for 456 projects. For July 2010-June 2011, 10 patents were issued, 48 patent applications were filed, and 82 disclosures were submitted. For July 2009-June 2010, eight patents were issued, 26 patent applications were filed, and 38 disclosures were submitted.

Rules Committee

1. O.A.C. 3359-22-03, Contract Professionals Advisory Committee

The revisions to the Rule were proposed by the Contract Professional Advisory Committee (CPAC) in order to simplify the Rule. CPAC will create a procedural manual containing the specific operational details about this Committee and intends to post this information on the CPAC website.

New Business

1. Mutual Aid Agreement between The University of Akron and the City of Akron

The proposal was to renew the Mutual Aid Agreement between The University of Akron and the city of Akron to provide for the mutual assistance and interchange and the use of police resources.

Notes

1. President's Report

I began my report by reiterating to the Board that, as I mentioned at the Board meeting in June, the format of my report has been adjusted to focus more on addressing the key issues in higher education that Trustees may find useful to their deliberations and to the tasks of making The University of Akron the very best it can be. Although a smaller portion of my remarks will be devoted to University achievements and events, many of which already are known, I said, recognizing the good work of our faculty, staff and students is important, so I plan to continue highlighting a few examples at the conclusion of my remarks. I told Trustees I would welcome their suggestions or recommendations about key topics that they may wish to have him address in the future.

I then cited a statement often heard at national and international meetings – American universities are the best in the world. While agreeing in general with that statement, I have yet to meet a university that has a monopoly on green grass or on weeds.

I said that many claim the strength of American higher education lies in its diversity, while others simply state that our universities are the best in the world in a form of unexamined self-congratulations. Acknowledging that Trustees are aware of the many criticisms now being leveled at higher education, I reflected that history reveals a recurring tendency among external and internal constituencies of universities – indeed, of almost every large organization in our society – to be critical of their respective institutions in one form or another. Not so long ago, that tendency was reflected in works such as “The Hollow Men,” “Illiberal Education” or “Inside American Education,” among many others that have come and gone. In the last few years, the popular press has made much of such books as Richard Vedder’s “Going Broke by Degree,” Ron Ehrenberg’s “Tuition Rising,” or most recently, “Academically Adrift” by Richard Arum and Jospia Roksa. I noted that both Dr. Vedder and Dr. Arum have been guests at our campus.

I pointed out that, in the last few months, questions have been voiced about the very value of higher education, with one critic going so far as to offer \$100,000 to talented students to forego higher education entirely. In the case of truly extraordinary students, I would encourage them to take that offer, noting that such individuals may well become the next Bill Gates, Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg, none of whom had such an opportunity of gaining \$100,000 to forego Harvard or wherever they might have been. I have often said if an institution accepts only the very best students, that institution does not have to bear responsibility for the achievements of such students, because they will do it all for themselves. Those institutions can then claim the success without having done a thing about it.

I described an informal study done at the conclusion of commencement exercises at Harvard. When a group of graduates was asked a few simple questions that any baccalaureate-level educated person should have been able to answer, not one of those Harvard graduates could do so. In other words, even Harvard had not accomplished what most believe higher education should have provided. The point of this illustration is that higher education is in a state of flux, and no single critique is likely to be true of all universities or to tell the whole picture.

In fact, higher education critiques suffer from some of the same maladies affecting critiques of K-12 education, namely that education is a subject in which everyone proclaims that they are an expert, and yet no one takes the time to read the evidence or to do the research that would be necessary to have evidence on the subject. Indeed, this is not unlike medicine, where evidence-based medicine is suspect because physicians already believe they know everything there is to know.

I said that a more nuanced and balanced picture is needed, and I recommended a few more thoughtful and informative works, such as Jonathan Cole's "The Great American University," Donald Kennedy's "Academic Duty," Henry Rosovsky's "The University: An Owner's Manual" and the recent National Academy of Science's report "Rising Above the Gathering Storm Revisited."

I said that every industry is open to criticism, but what is true of one institution or one institution within an industry may be totally irrelevant to another. Some complaints are fully justified; others not at all. Like health care, higher education has not shown the major productivity gains of most other industries. It requires new business models to achieve better efficiencies and output. That is why The University of Akron's Vision 2020 Strategic Plan is built upon a framework of relevance, connectivity and productivity.

I told the Board that, if The University of Akron should become one of the enterprise universities envisioned by Chancellor Petro, its model must include entrepreneurial initiatives that yield alternative revenue streams and increase productivity. The strategies outlined in Vision 2020 seek to broaden our revenue base and increase our productivity through expanded initiatives, many of which have been discussed previously.

In addition, I said, the University must continue to leverage its strengths through collaborations that have strong growth potential, such as the Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron and the Corrosion and Reliability Engineering Program.

Noting that we must focus on ways to achieve truly major productivity gains in higher education, I commended the governor and legislature for removing from the budget the requirement that faculty members teach one more course per year. The idea may be politically attractive but likely would yield modest productivity gains at best as the issue has been, and continues to be, addressed through appropriate benchmarking.

The needed approaches are those that will deliver ten-fold or greater increases in productivity. That is why the integrator/assessor model for higher education and public-private partnerships are being considered—because of their potential to yield truly substantial and sustained productivity gains.

In summary, I asked Trustees not to fall prey to every criticism but rather to understand that higher education is an industry in transition and that The University of Akron already has demonstrated

national leadership with innovative approaches. Our institution will benefit most by the Board's bringing forward the ideas that apply to the initiatives the University is taking.

I then shared some significant highlights:

- The University's development team under the leadership of Vice President LaGuardia and Associate Vice President DuFore reported a record-breaking fund raising year.
- Chancellor Jim Petro was finalizing his Enterprise University concept proposal to be delivered to the Inter-University Council on August 5 and presented in more detail at the Ohio Trustee Conference on August 11. The first phase is expected to give universities greater operational freedom by removing some present legislative "band-aids."
- During the summer, the University's athletics camps drew more than 4,800 youths to campus. Also, several of the colleges held academic-oriented programs, with many focused on the STEM disciplines, for hundreds— if not, thousands—of primary and secondary students.
- Brian Radesic, associate director of the nurse anesthesia program, was named the national 2011 Clinical Instructor of the Year by the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists.
- Wayne Watkins, associate vice president for research, presented the Akron Model at the annual meeting of Urban Serving Universities, which is a component of the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities.

I concluded my report by noting that I had just returned from the biannual Department of Defense Corrosion Conference, where I shared the Akron Model. Other colleagues in attendance were— Dean Haritos, who presented a significant paper on the University's Corrosion Engineering program; Sue Louscher, executive director, strategic partnerships and government programs; and a large contingent of UA sophomore students who impressively presented their research results to the rapt attention of many experts in the field.

2. Provost's Report

After adding his congratulations to Mr. LaGuardia, Mr. DuFore and Dr. Newkome for the outstanding performance of their areas, Dr. Sherman introduced his report as his "Ready, Set, Go" comments.

READY ...

Dr. Sherman said summer had set the stage for the activities planned for autumn. While summer enrollment was comparatively flat, he said, there have been significant interactions with the deans and others in the Office of Academic Affairs to develop some very interesting and innovative programming opportunities to further activate the campus in future summers.

During summer 2011, he said—(1) the Student Recreation and Wellness Center had the largest number of visits, approximately 22,000, more than in any previous summer; (2) Athletics engaged more than 4,800 students in youth sport camps; (3) the TRIO and STEP programs had more than 250 participants in summer bridge programs designed for successful transition to college life; and

(4) Akron Public Schools held programs on campus with various bridge programs that connected with 600 students.

Dr. Sherman pointed out that all of those activities provided opportunities for individuals to receive information about the University, to see and experience the campus, and to be recruited to the University.

SET ...

With regard to meeting the needs of students for fall classes, Dr. Sherman said only six classes remained without assigned locations at the time. He reminded Trustees that, at the same time last year, more than 38 classes were yet to be assigned locations. He said the significant improvement is due to cooperation of the department chairs, school directors, deans and faculty through discussions with administration about synchronizing class schedules within days and across days of the week to optimize efficiency of space utilization. There will be a report on this matter at a future meeting.

Dr. Sherman reported that 5,812 new students have participated in new student orientation, a 4 percent increase over the same time last year. He added that a record number of family members, approximately 4,400 or a 3 percent increase, have accompanied those students. Preliminary estimates suggest that total student headcount will be up 2.2 percent, and total credit hours will be up approximately 2.6 percent over the same time last year. Dr. Sherman said he anticipates that the objectives for total enrollment for autumn and spring will be met, although we will not know until the day of the official count. Within those numbers, he said, freshman admissions are up 2 percent, transfer admissions are up 14 percent, and other categories, such as Post-Secondary Educational Opportunity Program and post-baccalaureate, are up 22 percent. Graduate student headcount is down slightly, but law school headcount is up 6 percent.

GO.

Dr. Sherman described a new initiative to assist Trustees in making data-informed decisions by creating and providing them with a data source book comprised of Ohio higher education data, eventually also to include national normative data. He noted that standardized reports for higher education are available at the Ohio Board of Regents and many of the reports include data that have been tracked for over 10 years and are aggregated into five-, ten- and three-year time frames. Those data are available for comparison within various categories (such as student enrollment, degrees conferred, etc.) and are provided for all public higher education institutions in Ohio. Dr. Sherman said he envisions direct applications for the data both to inform the Board's metrics and to further advance evaluation of the University's progress on Vision 2020.

3. Next Regular Meeting

The Board's next regularly scheduled meeting will occur on Wednesday, September 21, 2011 in the Student Union, Board Room 339, with an executive session to begin at 7:30 a.m. and the public session to begin no earlier than 10 a.m. Board committee meetings are planned for Monday, September 12, 2011.

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