

12-31-2012

University Update - 2012 End of Year Message

Otterbein University

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Recommended Citation

Otterbein University, "University Update - 2012 End of Year Message" (2012). *University Updates & Communications from the University President*. 4.

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December 31, 2012

Dear Faculty and Staff:

As the beginning of 2013 approaches, it's worth taking a moment to review our accomplishments during the past few years. The rhythm of semesters has become the norm. Most of our undergraduates can recite the Five Cardinal Experiences and how they are planning to fulfill them. Annual giving and alumni involvement are increasing despite the slow economic recovery. We are consistently recognized as a member of the President's Honor Roll as a community-engaged institution. And Otterbein continues to hold a regular spot in the *Washington Monthly* annual rankings as one of the top institutions whose alumni "give back" to their communities and their professions.

In fact, Otterbein was cited as one of the factors contributing to the recent naming of Westerville as the Number Five Friendliest Town in the country by *Forbes Magazine*. (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/morganbrennan/2012/12/19/americas-friendliest-towns/>). Our engagement in the life of the community makes Westerville a great place to be. We enjoy a high quality of life here in Westerville.

We have much to be thankful for, but we also have much work that remains to be done. In the midst of our many accomplishments, we continue to focus our planning and strengthening the institution on the four priorities we identified in 2010:

- Invest in Human Resources
- Develop and Implement a Strategic Enrollment Plan
- Expand Graduate and Adult Programs
- Improve Financial Strength

We are monitoring our progress on each priority in full recognition that success in each area is critical to strengthen the institution. Realizing the goals associated with these priorities will position Otterbein to thrive as a distinctive and competitive institution in an increasingly competitive higher education environment.

Invest in Human Resources

We cannot afford to neglect investments in human resources. While we have worked to address the most significant salary compression and internal equity issues, we continue to fall behind the average of the 60th percentile in our Carnegie classification. Ninety-one individual employees received salary adjustments in addition to across-the-board increases the last two years, but increased investment is needed. The Budget Committee and Total Compensation Committee are coordinating to develop a multi-year plan to achieve the University's salary goals by the 2015-2016 academic year. Discussions of preliminary calculations are set for

January and February at upcoming Budget Committee and Total Compensation Committee meetings.

I have directed both committees to make investing in human resources the most critical consideration in our budget planning effort this year. The Budget Committee recommendations will inform the Administrative Council and Cabinet discussions as we prepare the final plan to present to the Board of Trustees as part of the FY 2014 operating budget.

Develop and Implement a Strategic Enrollment Plan

The purpose of the Strategic Enrollment Plan is to assure that we are bringing students to Otterbein who will succeed here. Development and implementation of the plan will result in improvements in our recruitment and retention, and ultimately in higher graduation rates. The plan will be presented to our Board of Trustees this spring at the March meeting.

Expand Graduate and Adult Programs

With the launch of our first doctoral program, the Doctorate in Nursing Practice, the expansion of our masters programs in Nurse Anesthesia, Allied Health, and Educational Mathematics, as well as a renewed focus on adult degree-completion options, we are making good progress on expanding graduate and adult-programs. The continued development of such programs in targeted areas allows Otterbein to enhance and affirm our identity as a comprehensive institution offering a wealth of opportunities in both undergraduate and graduate studies.

Improve Financial Strength

Our Business and Advancement staffs have been working closely to strengthen our financial resources through careful budget planning, debt management, and increased fund-raising. Careful, integrated budget planning and implementation of more efficient business practices will ensure that we are investing our resources to meet our core institutional goals. We continue to focus on expanding our donor base and are experiencing a 25 percent increase in the number of alumni who have made a gift this year. This has resulted in a 22 percent increase in alumni giving, and we have doubled the number of new, major gift commitments during the same period as last year. These efforts will give us increased budgetary flexibility in the coming years.

The New Year will bring new possibilities for Otterbein. While we must remain nimble and pursue strategic opportunities as they present themselves, I assure you that my focus remains on meeting the goals we have established within our institutional priorities. Please accept my thanks for your great work in 2012. I look forward to your continued involvement in making 2013 yet another successful year for our dear Otterbein.

Happy New Year!
President Krendl