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University Update - March 6, 2014

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Otterbein University

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Recommended Citation

Krendl, Kathy, "University Update - March 6, 2014" (2014). *University Updates & Communications from the University President*. 20.

https://digitalcommons.otterbein.edu/university_updates/20

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Otterbein University Update
President Kathy A. Krendl
March 6, 2014

We are looking forward to welcoming members of the Otterbein University Board of Trustees to campus for their winter meeting this Friday and Saturday. Board committees will meet throughout the day on Friday, March 7, in various locations in Roush Hall. Trustees will also participate in the Sabbatical Showcase during the lunch hour to hear about the great work accomplished by several faculty members during recent sabbaticals. Most trustees and their guests will attend the Theatre Department's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* directed by Faculty Trustee **Professor Christina Kirk** on Friday evening. The regular Board of Trustees meeting begins at 8:30 am on Saturday, March 8, in the Roush Hall Board Room. In addition to receiving updates from various Board committees, they will be taking action on a number of items including the award of honorary degrees to undergraduate commencement speakers Senator Sherrod Brown and Pulitzer-prize winning author and journalist Connie Schultz, approval of 2014-15 sabbatical leave requests, and the award of emeritus status for retiring faculty. Information on the Master Plan feasibility studies, campaign theme, and accreditation process will also be presented to the Board of Trustees.

Enrollment and Operating Budget Update

We wanted to provide you with an enrollment and operating budget update for Fiscal Year 2014. New undergraduate student retention from fall to spring semester increased by 1.2% for freshmen and 4.7% for transfer students. Continuing undergraduate student retention fell by 2.1% (to 91.4%), but this number was impacted by 30 more graduates in December 2013 than we saw in 2012. The good news is that students finished their degrees contributing to the institutional priority of enhancing student success, but it did lead to smaller numbers which resulted in a reduction in undergraduate tuition revenue for second semester.

On a positive note, more students have confirmed their enrollment at this time than had by this date last year. We've invested in significant additional communications and expect to see a very similar number of students attend our array of admitted visit opportunities as in 2013. A **special thank you goes to faculty callers** who contacted more students and parents than last year. As we learned last year, your effort does make a difference in producing a higher yield for next fall's entering class.

Equally important to informing our fall enrollment count and revenue is what happens with our current undergraduate population. Identifying non-graduating students who are at risk of leaving and directing them to the offices that can support them is critical. We want our students to be academically successful and to persist to graduation here at Otterbein. Everyone here can impact retention. Enrollment Management and Institutional Research will continue to gather data to support such efforts.

A more detailed enrollment and budget update will be provided by **Jefferson Blackburn-Smith**, Vice President for Enrollment Management, and **Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings**, Vice President for Business Affairs, at the upcoming **University Summit** which is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 11, 2014 from 3:30 – 4:30 pm** in **Battelle Hall's Riley Auditorium**.

Tuition and Fees for the 2014-15 Academic Year

At the March 7-8 meeting of the Board of Trustees, we will discuss student tuition and fees for the 2014-15 Academic Year. In consideration of affordability and the marketing of competitor colleges and universities that are either holding fees flat or decreasing fees, Otterbein will submit a proposal to hold tuition rates at the 2013-14 levels. The University will also introduce a new student financial aid award to help offset the costs of housing, an award that will enhance affordability, enrollment and retention. A new Student Life Fee will enhance wellness programs in addition to providing funding for more and higher quality student programming.

As the University has modeled potential impacts of the proposed flat tuition rates on FY 2015 revenues, there are projected shortfalls ranging from \$2 million to \$10 million. This **modeling**, which is driven by various enrollment scenarios and areas of investment, is for planning purposes and will be refined as information becomes available. The scenarios do not reflect budget decisions and should not be interpreted as such. The Budget Committee has not yet developed its recommendations for operating budget priorities, nor identified areas where there are savings opportunities. Over the next few months, the Budget Committee and other planning groups will be asked to inform priorities for the FY 2015 Operating Budget. Concerted effort will be made to reflect strategic institutional priorities and to identify areas of possible cost reduction.

Accreditation Update

We encourage all members of the community to help the Accreditation Steering Committee tell Otterbein's story to our accreditation peer reviewers. The Higher Learning Commission (our accrediting organization) asks institutions to provide evidence that they meet five different "Assurance Criteria." The criteria cover (1) Institutional Mission and Vision; (2) Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct; (3) Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support; (4) Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement; and (5) Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. Right now, the Steering Committee has divided into five working groups, each one of which is addressing one of the criteria -- deciding what evidence exists at Otterbein that demonstrates how we meet the criterion, and crafting a narrative to explain that evidence.

We would love to hear your thoughts about what is "distinctively Otterbein" about each of these criteria. To share, log on to our Digication e-portfolio website: https://otterbein.digication.com/tell_otterbeins_story.

The site includes a section for each criterion. The core components of the criterion are listed there, along with the working group members assigned to the criterion. The website has the commenting function activated so you can share examples of how you think Otterbein meets the Criterion. You can post questions in the comment box. Comments must be approved before they appear. A form will also be available for downloading from the e-portfolio if you prefer to print it, write out your comments, and submit anonymously. Alternatively, share your feedback at the series of "Join the Conversation" lunches that will address each Criterion, to be scheduled this Spring semester.

The Graduate School's Adapted Physical Education Endorsement Approved

Otterbein launched a new Adapted Physical Education (APE) endorsement this spring for teachers who hold a Physical Education license. The four-course, 12-hour

endorsement is offered by the Department of Health and Sport Sciences and is fully online. In an innovation partnership with Youngstown State University, each year approximately 10 YSU students will attend to earn this endorsement. The endorsement is under the direction of **Dr. Ann-Catherine Sullivan**.

Please Join Your Colleagues in Donating to Otterbein's United Way Campaign

Once a year, each of us has a chance to make a difference in the lives of people in our community through Otterbein University's United Way campaign. Otterbein has a longstanding tradition of support for the United Way and your contribution, no matter how large or small, will make a difference. This year's campaign runs March 3-14. Please consider making a donation today.

As always, if you have questions about information contained within this University Update, please feel free to contact me or a member of Cabinet.

Sincerely,

President Krendl

Dr. Kathy A. Krendl
President
Otterbein University

Otterbein University Vision

Otterbein University will be nationally recognized as a model community of educators, leaders, and learners who set the pace for higher education and contribute to the common good.

Otterbein University Mission

Otterbein University is an inclusive community dedicated to educating the whole person in the context of humane values. Our mission is to prepare graduates to think deeply and broadly, to engage locally and globally, and to advance their professions and communities. An Otterbein education is distinguished by the intentional blending of the liberal arts and professional studies, combined with a unique approach to integrating direct experience into all learning.