



Dear Colleagues,

The 2008-09 academic year has been uncommonly busy, punctuated by major university initiatives and tempered by a global economy that nonetheless is propelling us to new efficiencies, new synergies, and new successes. Let me do a quick review of those initiatives. Then, let us look ahead to some of next year's issues of note.

Doctoral Program Review: A One-Year Progress Report

This year our university-wide doctoral program review posted its first results.

As you will recall, in April 2008, the Graduate School released the Doctoral Program Assessment and Plan, the most comprehensive review of doctoral programs ever undertaken by a university the size and stature of Ohio State. The plan assigned one of six classifications to each of our roughly 90 doctoral programs. Twelve were rated as high quality on the basis of their planning, focus, and potential to enhance the standing of the university. Another 17 were categorized as strong—that is, programs of substance and potential but having issues of focus or structure. Sixteen more programs were identified as good, and 11 could not be assessed because they were too recent or in a state of transition. The report also named 29 programs as needing reassessment or restructuring, and five others were cited as candidates for disinvestment or elimination because they are inactive or no longer a college priority.

The review also identified a number of broader issues. For example, it called for an assessment of efforts in the biological and life sciences and in earth and environmental sciences; and it identified the need to increase stipends and the number of multi-year funding packages for students.

Here is an overview of year-one progress on the report's recommendations.

With the cooperation of the colleges, action is being taken on all programs in both the reassess/restructure and disinvest/eliminate categories. Within the reassess/restructure category, the review catalyzed a major reorganization within the College of Biological Sciences, and a reorganization of the College of Engineering is in the planning stages. Within the disinvest/eliminate category, the program in Comprehensive Vocational Education has been deactivated, the tracks in Rehabilitation Services and Technology Education have been closed, Soil Science has been converted to a track in Environment and Natural Resources, and Welding Engineering is joining Materials Science and Engineering.

In addition, task forces were formed to consider optimal configurations for efforts in the biological/life sciences and the earth/environmental sciences. These task forces have been meeting since autumn quarter and are developing their recommendations, which include:

- eliminating administrative and budget barriers between departmental and interdisciplinary graduate programs;
- working with deans, chairs, and faculty to improve understanding and support for these programs;
- enhancing external funding opportunities;
- strengthening existing interdisciplinary graduate programs and nurturing new interdisciplinary teams;
- increasing the visibility of Ohio State research efforts and academic programs through web-based portals; and
- utilizing improved networking and knowledge management tools.

Finally, stipends for University Fellowship winners in high-quality and strong programs have been increased by \$3,000 a year for four years. This recommendation of the doctoral review makes Ohio State more competitive for the well-prepared students we want to attract to our best programs.

All of the steps taken to date bode well for the increased visibility and national recognition of doctoral education at Ohio State.

The Arts and Sciences: Coming New Leadership and Ongoing Restructuring

I am simply delighted to announce that Professor Joseph E. Steinmetz has agreed to become Ohio State's executive dean of arts and sciences and vice provost. Pending approval by the Board of Trustees, Joe's appointment will commence on July 1.

He comes to us from the University of Kansas, where he was dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for three years and, at the time of his appointment here, was concurrently serving as Kansas' interim provost. He previously served for 19 years at Indiana University, where he was executive associate dean for the College of Arts and Sciences and chair of the Department of Psychology. A nationally respected behavioral neuroscientist, he was recognized in 1996 by the National Academy of Science for his contributions to the fields of experimental psychology and neuroscience.

A full profile of Joe will appear in the next issue of *keyNotes*. Meanwhile I would like to update you on the ongoing restructuring of the arts and sciences.

By way of quick background, let me note that, for most of their existence, many of the arts and sciences disciplines at Ohio State were organized in a College of Arts and Sciences. In 1968, those disciplines, and some newly added ones, were divided among five colleges: the Arts, Biological Sciences, Humanities, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. In 2003, these colleges were organized into a federation, each retaining its own dean with an executive dean in the coordinating role. Last year's mandated review of the federation led to recommendations that the arts and sciences be more tightly integrated and that they have a more effective and visible administrative center.

In light of these recommendations, last spring we established the position of executive dean of arts and sciences and vice provost. Responsibilities of this officer included strategic planning, budgeting and allocating resources, providing advice and counsel to the provost on promotion and tenure within the arts and sciences, and representing the interests of the arts and sciences within and outside the university. We have been fortunate that Joan Leitzel agreed to serve in this position on an interim basis during this academic year.

In addition, last spring we also appointed three interim deans: John Roberts, who leads the Arts and Humanities; Matt Platz, who leads the Biological, Mathematical, and Physical Sciences; and Giff Weary, who leads the Social and Behavioral Sciences. These deans also have responsibilities for the arts and sciences as a whole.

Because it brings together all the faculty, resources, and programs within the arts and sciences, this administrative structure provides several advantages. It ensures a unified, effective voice for the arts and sciences. It supports the continued strengthening of graduate education, the undergraduate curriculum, and undergraduate advising. It offers new interdisciplinary opportunities for faculty and students and promotes collaborative relationships that strengthen both individual units and the arts and sciences as a whole. It also provides for efficiencies that enable resources to be redirected to academic programs.

This year Joan and her colleagues have worked toward three primary goals:

- strengthening academic programs through program and unit realignments and expanded international and interdisciplinary opportunities;
- positioning the arts and sciences for leadership within the university by broadening cross-college collaborations and, through the task forces on the biological and life sciences and the environmental and earth sciences, working to bring greater cohesion to these programs; and
- creating an administrative structure that is efficient, effective, and less costly.

Steps taken to accomplish the latter goal include reducing staff within the executive dean and deans' offices and, following the recommendations of an external consultant, redesigning the fiscal and human resource business processes across the arts and sciences. To be implemented over the next several months, this reorganization is estimated to save at least \$9 million over five years. Other work in progress includes developing a centralized budget model and providing more budget flexibility.

Comprising 1,000 faculty members, or roughly one-third of all faculty at Ohio State, and providing 70 percent of undergraduate student credit hours and almost 60 percent of all student credit hours, the arts and sciences are central to education throughout all of the university. Eager students and increasing enrollments attest to the effectiveness of our arts and sciences in delivering on that responsibility. With a renewed administrative structure, and thanks to an eminent and engaged faculty, experienced and positive deans, and accomplished and effective staff members, Ohio State's arts and sciences are assuming the voice and visibility—on campus, as well as nationally and internationally—that are fitting, enabling, and essential to this academic heart of the university.

Looking Ahead: Moving from Quarters to Semesters

At its April 2009 meeting, the Board of Trustees voted on the following resolution:

WHEREAS the University System of Ohio's Strategic Plan for Higher Education, 2008–2017, calls for a move to a common academic calendar across all Ohio universities; and

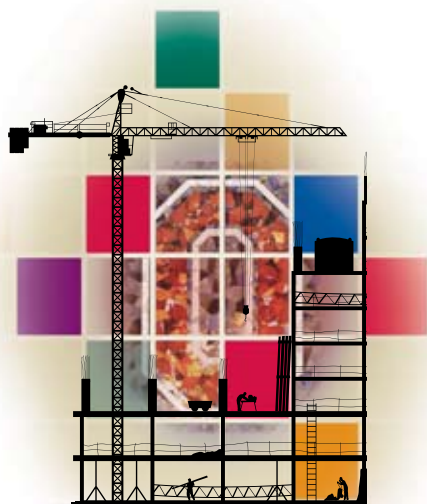
WHEREAS The Ohio State University supports an integrated system of higher education in Ohio; and

WHEREAS a semester calendar facilitates employment opportunities for graduating students as well as student research, international study, internships, service learning, and other specialized learning experiences for undergraduate and graduate students:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that The Ohio State University adopt a semester calendar with no fewer than 65 and, with the

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keyNotes



Spring 2009

The key in the *keyNotes* nameplate dates from the early days of the university. Though “R & E” originally referred to the key manufacturer, today those letters might stand for “research” and “education”—two keystones of Ohio State’s original mission. The key symbolizes the university’s foundational commitment to research and education. And it celebrates our rich tradition of opening doors, opening minds, and opening opportunities.

Key courtesy of the Department of Facilities Operations and Development, Key/Card Control Center.

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Organizational Changes: Promoting the Academic Mission of the University

In March, President Gee announced a number of changes within Ohio State’s leadership structure. In that reconfigured structure, both the Arts Initiative and the Office of Student Life have become part of the Office of Academic Affairs.

The Arts Initiative was created in spring 2008 to expand Ohio State’s community arts presence and broaden the university’s visibility nationally as a leader in arts outreach. Under the leadership of Associate Vice President Karen Bell, the Arts Initiative cultivates public and private partnerships with arts, cultural, and educational organizations. Just one example of such collaboration is that between Ohio State and the UK’s Royal Shakespeare Company, which promotes



literacy, drama education, and leadership in Ohio public schools through a three-year teacher education program. Spearheaded by the Arts Initiative, this partnership includes the Colleges of the Arts, Education and Human Ecology, and Humanities; the Wexner Center for the Arts; and the Metro High School and affiliated STEM schools. Ohio State students will be actively engaged in working with Royal Shakespeare Company actors and public school teachers.

If the Arts Initiative broadens our students’ academic experience, the Office of Student Life extends that academic experience beyond the classroom to living, social, and professional environments. Vice President Javaune Adams-Gaston—or “Dr. J.”, as she has already come to be known

by our students—became the leader of this important sector of the university in January 2009.

Responsible for such functions as campus dining services, career counseling, disability and student health services, recreational sports, and parent and family services, the Office of Student Life also oversees a host of student facilities, including the Multicultural Center, the Student Advocacy Center, the Ohio Union, and university housing, among many others.

A fine example of how Student Life promotes student success is the academic support, including tutoring and leadership opportunities, that it provides in the residence halls. Living/learning communities in the residences further connect in-class and out-of-class experiences. Some 6,000 students participate in Ohio State’s 45 living/learning communities.

Bringing the Arts Initiative and the Office of Student Life into the Office of Academic Affairs centralizes the responsibility for the entire student experience. This change will also facilitate information sharing and programming. Most importantly, it will enable us to better serve the university’s primary constituents—its students.

exception of professional colleges or academic disciplines whose accreditation standards require a longer term, no more than 70 days of instruction in each semester, to take effect no earlier than autumn 2012.

With the board’s affirmative vote on this resolution, it became official: Ohio State is moving to a semester calendar.

Many of you will remember that prior to this year’s investigation of such a conversion, there were university-wide discussions in 1990–91 and again in 2000–01 regarding the feasibility of moving from quarters to semesters. Today, by institutionalizing the conversion, we will bring our academic calendar in line with those of Ohio’s other colleges and universities and in this way integrate higher education efforts across the state.

The move from quarters to semesters will also have significant benefits for our students. For example, a semester calendar will facilitate undergraduate and graduate student research, international study, internships, service learning, and other specialized learning experiences. In addition, students will be able to compete for summer internships and job opportunities in ways that they cannot under the current quarter system calendar. Perhaps the most exciting prospect of the semester conversion, however, is its academic promise. This change provides us with an unparalleled opportunity to rethink our curricula

and programs and to refresh our approaches to course structure, lesson planning, and interactions with students.

That said, I am well aware that, along with these opportunities, the conversion will bring new—if temporary—burdens for the faculty. I also know that some of you are wondering how your research agenda may be affected by the calendar conversion. In response, I would underscore that this institution is Ohio’s national research university. Our academic calendar, whatever its configuration, must—and will—support our research mission.

The precise details of the new calendar will emerge over the coming months after appropriate consultation with faculty and administrative groups and will then be brought to the University Senate for review and approval. I will provide you with additional information as it becomes available.

Other Issues of Note for Next Year

In addition to establishing the semester calendar, next year’s academic agenda will include studying the possible expansion of our student housing folio, broadening Ohio State’s international opportunities, implementing the Centers for Innovation, and continuing the restructuring of the arts and sciences.

In thinking about next year, it is hard not to wonder how the economy may affect our plans and our efforts, given—as I noted at the outset—its tempering influence

this year. However, at Ohio State, we are fortunate to enjoy the continuing support of Governor Strickland and leaders from both parties in the Statehouse. This support comes at a time when massive budget cuts to higher education elsewhere are leading to unpaid furloughs, hiring freezes, and even reductions in wages.

This is a singular moment for Ohio State. Unlike many other institutions, we are continuing to recruit and retain an increasingly eminent faculty and ever more able students. We are moving ahead with exciting and promising research initiatives. We are addressing the needs of our physical plant. We are revitalizing our academic programs. I think we can all be optimistic about the Ohio State of the future. I look forward to working with you in shaping that institution.

Warmest wishes for a pleasant and productive summer.

Sincerely,
Joseph A. Alutto
Executive Vice President and Provost