



Dear Colleagues,



Each winter the provost is invited to deliver an address to the University Senate. Traditionally, the address has been an update on the decisions, actions, and outcomes that defined the state of academic affairs during the previous year. In 2010, I departed from that model, focusing instead on a number of issues that I believed would shape our institution for the coming five years.

This year, I continued that use of my time with the Senate to start what I hope will be an ongoing conversation about institutional accountability. Let me begin this number of *keyNotes* with comments on this issue because it is increasingly important—not just for our university but for all of American higher education.

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University Accountability: An Issue for Higher Education

Accountability has always been a value of American higher education. A reading of Jonathan Cole's *The Great American University* or any other history of the development of higher education in the United States will show that institutional success has been achieved where difficult choices were made—and the reactions of students, donors, and other supporters verified the success of those choices. Indeed, distinction cannot be achieved when a university goes its own way with little accountability beyond its campus. True distinction has been achieved only by those universities whose leaders have set bold objectives, identified and implemented

clear strategies to generate resources, and then held achievement up for all to see.

The issue, then, is not whether universities are accountable, but the demand, generated mostly by forces outside higher education, for measures of accountability that are more quantifiable, more consistent, and more independently assessed

than the abstract assertions of value that are sometimes put forward as proof of an institution's "accountability." Up to now, many universities have simply asserted that if they have invested heavily to attract students and faculty, then they must be effective. The message to students is: "Trust us. Twenty years after you graduate, you will see that we provided what you needed."

As we all know, there is a widespread belief in the Academy that what we teach, and the effectiveness of what we teach, cannot be measured. That belief goes hand in hand with the traditional rhetoric of university life, which implies that every proposed activity can and should be supported, for everything has an inherent value independent of market value. But this rhetoric alone has never constituted a sustainable model for any university—much less one that believes in distinction. What is crucial is assessing the scale and scope for investments where there are insufficient market returns to warrant continuation. While universities have long operated on a principle of internal reallocation, they have tended to do so *sub rosa*, with resources quietly redirected from profitable programs to those programs believed essential but incapable of becoming self-funding or generating enough revenue for growth. The move to greater accountability, then, is really a call for

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making such reallocation decisions more visible and more structured.

Here are the steps required by a more structured environment—which I believe, moreover, will define the future of American higher education.

1. We have to be thoughtful, systematic, and transparent about what we are attempting to do.
2. We must accept the reality that no matter how specific or metric driven we are, there will always be some imprecision in our performance measures. But the more we rely on undocumented assertions about our performance, the more difficult it will be to secure support for our institutional goals.
3. We must view the university and its missions in a holistic sense that supports innovation and investment in important scholarship, teaching, and engagement. Those activities capable of generating net resources will continue to be asked to subsidize others, and those being subsidized will have to operate as efficiently as possible and find new ways of generating resources to contain future subsidies.
4. University leadership will have to be both more nuanced in approach and more willing to be guided by data.
5. Faculty members will need to forego the age-old “winners / losers” defensive response. They will also have to be more flexible in resolving tensions among commitments to discipline, profession, and institution.
6. The search for multiple paths to goals must lie at the heart of these discussions. We must abandon the notion that “the only way to be great is to grow,” and we must learn how to reach across boundaries, both within and between universities, without creating bureaucratic self-defeating barriers.
7. Finally, we must never abandon the need for values-driven judgments in making decisions. Providing support and opportunities for innovative programs and scholarship is essential in our mix of activities.

I should add that all these steps need to be taken within an environment of civility in discourse and debate that has sometimes been missing as universities have adjusted to change.

I do not believe that greater accountability—and the culture changes that go along with it—will alter the fundamental nature of universities. Our character can, should, and *will* remain the same, even as we move from a less structured to a more structured environment.

At Ohio State, we are uniquely positioned to succeed in the face of this change because the principles of transparency and aligning actions with consequences are firmly held institutional values. Our colleges have strategic plans for achieving their goals, which, in turn, support institutional objectives. We are committed to the efficient and effective uses of resources to drive success. And we are determined to assess outcomes as transparently as possible. Because of these planning principles, accountability has not been an enemy to our progress as a university. If we at Ohio State hold fast to these principles, we will be able to continue our passionate pursuit of ever-greater discovery, learning, and engagement.

The text of the address is available at oaa.osu.edu/775.html.

Community College Partners: A New Model for Collaboration

The Ohio State University and Columbus State Community College have a long history of partnership. At present, our two institutions collaborate in at least a dozen initiatives, from a program that supports a language learner's transition from high school to postsecondary foreign language instruction, to a pathway to guide more community college students to medical school and other health care professions, to an effort to increase the quality and quantity of students with disabilities who earn postsecondary degrees in the STEM disciplines, to collaborations in public safety, wellness, and adult and experiential learning.

Starting in autumn 2011, our list of joint initiatives will be expanded by the addition of a unique program that may well become a model for Ohio State collaborations with other community college partners.

Next September, selected Ohio State courses will begin to be offered by Ohio State faculty on Columbus State's new Delaware campus. These courses will

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include classes in such areas as business, psychology, communication, sociology, and English. Many of them will be intermediate and upper-level classes, augmenting Columbus State's curriculum so as to provide its students with a seamless transition to an Ohio State baccalaureate degree.

In establishing a presence on Columbus State's Delaware campus, Ohio State will be moving courses from its Delaware Center, currently operated by Ohio State Marion. The center, established in 2001, is now located in close proximity to Columbus State in Delaware. Though the center will close in September, its past decade of increasing enrollments has demonstrated Delaware's desirability as an entry point to higher education for students in northern Franklin and southern Delaware Counties. The Ohio State-Columbus State collaboration in Delaware will serve this growing student base, while creating course and program partnerships that will result in efficiencies for both institutions.

This new collaboration thus establishes a model for institutional cooperation, with Ohio State and Columbus State setting the pace in fulfilling Ohio's expectations of higher education.

Globalizing Ohio State

Just as Ohio State's local partnerships are expanding, so are our international connections.

Vice Provost for Global Strategies and International Affairs William Brustein discussed our institution's broadening global presence with the Ohio State Board of Trustees in February, explaining that our plan for globalizing the university is founded in two

overarching international strategies: global gateways and the internationalization of the student experience.

The gateways, planned to open first in Shanghai, Mumbai, and São Paulo, will enable Ohio State to build upon faculty research partnerships, scout locations for study abroad, recruit international students, establish executive training programs, network with alumni, and partner with Ohio-based companies.

The China Gateway in Shanghai is now well established and poised to launch a number of revenue-generating programs. Based on our experience there, we will make plans for those to follow.

As William said to the trustees, globalization must simultaneously take place here on campus with the further internationalization of the student experience. Accordingly, the international content of many courses is being expanded, and new courses on global issues are being developed. Students' opportunities for education abroad are being widened to incorporate discipline-based study abroad programs and collaborative degrees with foreign institutions. The coming semester-based May term will open still further possibilities for international experiences. A global option certificate program, which would provide global enrichment within the major, is under consideration and review. To qualify for the global option certificate, students would need to meet specific academic and language requirements, participate in an education abroad program, and engage in cultural interaction.

The primary goal of all such opportunities is to ensure that when our students graduate from Ohio State, they are familiar with the major currents of global change and the issues they raise. They are aware of and adaptable to diverse cultures, perceptions, and approaches. They are able to communicate effectively across cultural and linguistic boundaries. They are conversant with the international dimension of their field of study and fully prepared to work in an international setting. In short, we want to ensure that Ohio State's students leave us as globally competent citizens.

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 opening minds, and
 opening opportunities*

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**A New Identity for a
 Time-Honored Office**

Let me close this issue of *keyNotes* by highlighting our Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Known for 40 years as Minority Affairs, that office was renamed in October to more accurately take account of its expansive role. Since its inception in 1970, the office has grown to embrace many expressions of difference, including race and ethnicity, socioeconomic condition, disability, and gender.

As noted just above, Ohio State is committed to preparing students to live, work, and lead in a global, hence diverse, community. The name of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion now appropriately reflects that commitment.

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We are fortunate that Vice Provost Valerie Lee has agreed to lead this office. Valerie describes herself as having been active in advancing a diversity agenda throughout her professional life. She was the first African American woman to be granted tenure as a professor at Denison University. Later on, she was the first woman and the first African American to chair our Department of English. With her leadership, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will help Ohio State set the national agenda for discussions about the challenges and rewards of celebrating diversity in the 21st century.

Sincerely,
 Joseph A. Alutto
 Executive Vice President and Provost