

Dean's Statement
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In a year of significant fiscal challenges brought on by the current recession, the faculty, staff and students once again worked together to bring the College to new heights. This was well summarized this year by the Chair of the Ohio Senate Education Committee who wrote about the College:

“In a time when it seems too many educators are doing only the necessary work to keep their heads above water, you and the other outstanding educators at OU-COM are serving as proof that Ohio can stand on the forefront of research and education and can be an example of how a college should function to not only the rest of the nation, but throughout the world.”

In 2008-2009 the college once again posted significant achievements in its academic, research, and service missions. This is particularly significant in view of the a progressively more difficult environment. Even as State contributions to medical education shrink, national competition for research funding grows more competitive. With the increased numbers of medical schools and larger class sizes, competition for the best students has grown. Similarly, State funding for community service programs is shrinking while costs escalate.

Despite these challenges, OU-COM's faculty, staff, and students have continued to excel in every area, and the future of the College is exciting. I am pleased to report on their many successes.

OU-COM Accomplishments in 2008-2009

Admissions

The growing reputation of the College and the hard work of our Admissions Office have been reflected in the increasing quality of applicants. This year we were approved by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation for an increase in class size. Increasing our new students from 108 to 117 could be expected to negatively impact the entering class, but this was not the case. Record highs for OU-COM were achieved in science GPA (3.56), non-science GPA (3.71), overall GPA (3.63), and composite MCAT (8.62). MCAT scores were 8.58 verbal, 8.10 physical science and 9.17 biological sciences.

To date, our 2009 admissions data show 3440 applications, a 7.57% increase over last years numbers.

In addition to enhancing our entering class profile, we continue to emphasize special programs that ensure a more diverse student body. Twenty-six percent of this year's entering class was composed of minority students.

Research and Grants

Excitement about research at OU-COM has grown in response to the Academic and Research Center and exceptional new faculty members. Many of our experienced faculty members have developed new areas of research and had significant success in obtaining external funding (despite increasing national competition for federal grants).

The ARC building is on schedule with expected occupancy in Fall Quarter 2009. There was a funding shortfall due to the decline in the stock market and its effect on endowments in the Russ College of Engineering. Through strict budgeting the College of Osteopathic Medicine was able to supply an additional \$1.5M to keep the building on schedule. While now fully funded, development efforts continue to provide funding for equipment.

Highlights of research and grant activity for 2008 include:

- 42 active external research grants totaling \$2,234,969
- 68 new grant proposals totaling \$11,110,887
- 57 active external program grants totaling \$3,790,378
- 37 new program grant proposals totaling \$10,519,611
- This year a Center of Excellence self-study showed that over the past five years Group 1 faculty at OU-COM had:
 - Given 564 presentations
 - Given 386 invited presentations
 - Published 401 articles
 - Written 47 chapters and books

Research Day 2008 was a tremendous success and had the most participation in the history of the program. Fifty-four posters were exhibited including participation by 41 medical students. In addition, the Research and Scholarly Advancement Fellowship had participation by 14 students. A new relationship with Riverside Methodist Hospital in Columbus also provided research experience for medical students.

A growing relationship with OhioHealth has resulted in new research collaborations. A joint meeting between OU-COM researchers and OhioHealth researchers was held in Columbus, with a number of collaborations resulting. Similarly, there is a growing research relationship with Mt. Carmel Medical Center and other CORE member hospitals.

Adding to the research support this year were royalties from Somavert, invented by Dr. John Kopchick. Ohio University has realized \$9.2M from this medication, placing it fourth in the nation in return on investment. OU-COM is using 100% of its share of the royalties to support research programs such as the Research and Scholarly Advancement Fellowship.

Diversity

Despite major cutbacks in State and National Funding for diversity programs, OU-COM continues to maintain the highest percentage of culturally diverse students in Ohio University. Twenty-six percent of the students in the 2008 entering class were minority students.

This year OU-COM provided its first full-ride scholarship for an exceptional minority student entering the DO-PhD program.

This year senior administration from OhioHealth and OUCOM partnered to establish the Physician Diversity Scholarship Program. Selected minority students will be afforded mentorship, clinical experiences, and additional exposure to OhioHealth residency training. Additional benefits will be available if they train in OhioHealth residency programs.

Alumni

Thanks to the hard work of our alumni office, our Association of Alumni and Friends is the most engaged in our College's history. They have been integral to the College through teaching, mentoring, development (both personal and on behalf of the College), and serve as an advisory group to the Dean. Jeff Stanley, D.O., has been a dynamic President of the OU-COM Alumni Association. In addition, Tom Anderson, D.O., has been an integral member of the Ohio University Alumni Association Board of Trustees.

This year the Alumni Board established a new Alumni Research Board to promote research by alumni, encourage collaboration between alumni researchers, and create research linkages between hospitals and the College.

Development

Despite the severe downturn in the economy, our development activity has been extremely active this year. The dramatic fall in the stock market has, similar to almost all foundations, caused many of our endowments to lose value. We have been active in trying to raise funds to supplement those endowments, as well as money for scholarships, endowed chairs, and other endowed programs.

In 2007-2008 24 proposals were delivered for \$1,250,000. Over \$781,000 was funded which is 78% of the total requested. These arose out of 173 development visits.

In 2008-09 15 proposals were delivered for \$6,710,313. To date \$263,000 has been funded (many of these proposals are still in process). In the first six months of the fiscal year we have made 97 development visits.

From 2007 to date we have established 13 new scholarships and have established 26 named spaces in the Academic and Research Center totaling more than \$1,240,000. We have raised \$40,000 in gifts under \$1000. In total to date, 113 donors have contributed to this project. Many of these were first-time donors with gifts in excess of \$30,000, \$50,000, and \$100,000.

In 2008-09, OU-COM proposals accounted for 26% of the total Ohio University “asks”.

Political Activity

With the approach of the new biennial budget, I have been very active at the State level.

I continue to be active in the Ohio Council of Medical School Deans. In early January, I was selected by the other medical deans to give a presentation to Chancellor Eric Fingerhut regarding the economic benefits of Ohio medical schools and the impending physician shortage. That presentations and the meeting that followed were pivotal in the State’s decision to decrease a cut of the Clinical Teaching Subsidy and other College lines. I continue to meet with numerous State representatives, including recently with the new House Majority Leader, to educate them regarding medical school funding and the importance of medical education.

University

With the significant budget challenges facing the University this year, I have been active with the President, Provost, Deans and Vice Presidents developing strategies for dealing with the projected deficits. I served on three committees that developed cost saving strategies ranging from academic reorganization to Intercollegiate Athletics.

In addition, I chaired the search committee for the new Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations.

Board Participation

I serve on the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Osteopathic Association and the Ohio Osteopathic Foundation. This year I was appointed to the Board of Trustees for the New Albany Surgery Hospital Foundation in Columbus. I continue to sit on the Boards of University Medical Associates and the Appalachian Rural Health Institute.

Facilities

This year there was a significant upgrade in the Clinical Teaching and Assessment Center. New cameras can be remotely controlled by faculty, and video recordings are now digitally maintained. Development plans for a new Clinical Teaching and Assessment Center are progressing.

The Academic and Research Center is progressing and on track to open this Fall.

Name badges initiated this year will increase security and heighten the professional atmosphere in the College. New doors have been installed to allow keyless entry after working hours.

CORE Growth

This year we made efforts to strategically bring new partners into the CORE. Negotiations with another osteopathic college to develop a CORE site in Cincinnati are nearing completion. Mt. Carmel Medical Center is taking their first class of students this year as a Participating Member

of the CORE. Agreements were signed with Riverside Methodist Hospital and the Adena Health System.

This year the percent of graduating OU-COM students entering Family Medicine went up 9%, Internal Medicine 5%, and Pediatrics 1%. The percentage of students entering osteopathic GME programs (primarily the CORE) went up 9%.

Women at OU-COM

This year I appointed two new department chairs, both of them outstanding female faculty members who replaced male chairs. I also appointed an exceptional woman to be the new Assistant Dean for Preclinical Medical Education.

At the recommendation of last year's Women's Climate Study, a private room to accommodate breast feeding mothers has been established. College committees continue to work on issues and recommendations discussed in the Women's Climate study.

Women made up 56% of the OU-COM entering class of 2008.

Financial State of the College

This year I worked with the OU-COM Executive Committee and an Executive Committee subcommittee to develop strategies for dealing with projected decreases in State funding due to the economy. We developed contingency plans for dealing with various levels of cuts from the State. In addition, we put into place a series of policies to conserve funds. These included temporary travel freezes, eliminating membership payments, eliminating food at any meetings, etc. In doing so we were able to add to our College reserve which had been decreased by the falling market. Several mid-year decreases in State funding of 4.75% and 5.75% were accommodated without any disruption in College functions or programs. Despite the large financial issues facing the University, careful planning currently has the College on firm financial ground.

University Medical Associates and Medical Care in Southeastern Ohio

This year I spent a large amount of time working with OhioHealth, Ohio University, The Ohio University Board of Trustees, O'Bleness Hospital, and University Medical Associates developing a plan for coordinated medical care in Athens. An initial effort to develop a new clinical facility that would house both UMA and Student Health proved unsuccessful because of rapidly escalating building costs. Since that time I have met extensively with developers, representatives from OhioHealth and O'Bleness Hospital, and the UMA Board to develop alternative plans. That process is very active and continues to move forward.

This year I worked with the UMA Board to develop a management agreement with OhioHealth.

Personal Academic Activities

I continue to take an active role in teaching and community service. I was a facilitator in the PCC curriculum, and delivered problem sets to both curricula in electrocardiography and hypertension.

I see patients regularly in the Parks Hall Free Clinic and participate in the breast and cervical cancer screening program.

2009--2010 Initiatives:

A major effort this year will be attempting to establish a new clinical facility and develop a coordinated medical delivery system that involves OhioHealth, O'Bleness Hospital, Ohio University, OU-COM and University Medical Associates. I want to see a significant expansion of UMA services, and will be working with local health care providers, OhioHealth and other partners interested in recruiting new medical talent to Southeastern Ohio and the College.

I will continue to work with Ohio University to ascertain the appropriate role for OU-COM and University Medical Associates in student health.

We will evaluate the feasibility of establishing an Academic Health Center that promotes partnership between health care training programs at Ohio University. We will also reach out to other health care training programs not currently affiliated with the University to explore collaborations.

We will continue to extensively plan for expected future cuts in State funding. While the upcoming budget may be helped by a federal stimulus package, future funding is expected to face significant challenges. We will be prepared for future significant cuts in State funding.

Despite current budgetary challenges, we will make every effort to increase our financial reserve.

Our faculty is what makes OU-COM a world-class institution. In this financial environment, we need to make strategic structural changes that put more resources towards faculty needs such as travel and research support. To this end, we will attempt to operate more efficiently and centralize or outsource selected services in order to maintain or improve quality at a decreased cost to the College.

I will work with our Development Office in an attempt to obtain external funding to establish a new Clinical Training and Assessment Center. If successful, we will work with other Ohio University and community partners to maximize the utilization of the facility.

An important goal of the Simulation Program will be teaching students skills required in modern practice. These will include new technologies such as Electronic Medical Records, Electronic Prescribing, and new clinical equipment such as ultrasound guided central line placement.

In addition, we will be investigating new paradigms in a team approach to patient care that involves working with other health care professionals such as Nurse Practitioners, Physicians Assistants, Doctors of Pharmacy and Doctors of Physical Therapy.

We will investigate the establishment of new graduate degree programs, particularly masters degrees. We will also begin evaluating the feasibility of working with other colleges to participate in the establishment of new medical training programs such as Physicians Assistant and expanded Advanced Practice Nursing programs.

We will continue working with other osteopathic and allopathic colleges and Community Health Centers to establish a training presence in Cincinnati. The CORE Board will be in discussions with other hospitals wishing to affiliate with the CORE.

We will make strategic facilities improvements that will allow increasing our class sizes if the faculty determines that it is feasible to do so.

This year we began requiring tablet computers of our incoming students. I am asking the Curriculum Advisory Committee to develop new teaching methodologies that utilize this technology and decrease faculty time. I also want to use distance learning technology to develop teaching relationships with College alumni and friends.

I would like to begin development of a rural medicine track in our curriculum. Included in this will be exploring new paradigms for rural medical care for Appalachia that can be extended to other underserved areas of the country.

I will continue to meet with legislators to inform them about the importance of OU-COM and medical training in general. With the rapid turnover in the legislature resulting from term limits, this becomes a constant and ongoing challenge.

I want the College to continue as a leader in educational technology and to increase its institutional assessment capabilities. As the University moves to centralized IT services, I want to develop a medical informatics unit that utilizes selected current personnel to accomplish these goals.

The primary development priority this year will be to increase the College's endowment to support scholarships. I will also be seeking foundation and corporate partners interested in having a much more substantial role in the College's future.

Despite the extraordinary success of our curriculum, we need to continually assess and streamline our educational program. We will continue a broad assessment of our current curricula and look for ways to more efficiently utilize faculty time. This is vital if the College is to significantly progress its research mission.

I will work with the Curriculum Advisory Committee to develop standardized testing for our students to help them gauge their progress and prepare for licensing board exams.

We will continue to develop relationships with community and University partners in research and commercialization. We will utilize the new research building to attract new researchers who fit well into the primary research priority areas of the College. These currently include endocrinology, cancer, and musculoskeletal research.

We will continue to seek new funding to enhance our diversity programs in these times of decreasing State and Federal support.

I sincerely appreciate the privilege of serving as Dean of the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine. I am extremely grateful for the outstanding work and strong support of our Faculty, Staff, and Students. OU-COM is clearly a center of excellence at Ohio University.