

February 7, 2012

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Last week was an unusually busy—and important—one for our university, so I'm writing with a quick update to my recent eNewsletter (which is no longer my "last" one!). As always, please let me know if you have any questions or comments at: umpresident@umsystem.edu.

Sincerely,
Stephen J. Owens

State of the University Speech

On January 7th last year, the Board of Curators paid me the utmost compliment by naming me interim president of this university—the university of four generations of the Owens family and three generations of the Arnaud family—my wife's family.

I gave a speech that day, and the theme was: continuity of purpose under team leadership. I wanted people to know that the noble purposes of the university that have been handed down from generation to generation would continue; and that they would be led, not just by a president, but by a team of talented leaders throughout the system and the campuses.

At the Board of Curators meeting last week (February 3), I had an opportunity to review the past year as part of the president's annual State of the University Report.

Tuition Proposals Under Consideration

Last week we presented our curators with proposed campus tuition and fee increases averaging 6.5 percent for the FY2012-2013 school year.

Curators plan to hold a special meeting later this month to focus on these proposed increases.

For more information about proposed tuition and fees for the upcoming school year, please visit: <http://umurl.us/kvw>.

University Presidents Visit Jefferson City

The state's public university presidents visited the House Appropriations Education Committee in Jefferson City on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Collectively, we addressed the proposed 12.5 percent proposed reduction in appropriations to our institutions—which in our case amounts to \$50 million, on top of \$53.5 million in reduced appropriations over the past two years.

On behalf of the university, I provided written answers to five questions education committee members asked us. [Click here](#) to view the Q&A's.

I then spent about 15 minutes discussing the university's unique statewide mission in teaching nearly half of all undergraduate students and almost two-thirds of all graduate and professional school students attending public universities in Missouri; our leadership among our peers in research and economic development; and the impact of our organization as the state's second-largest nongovernmental institution with 28,000 employees.

In that speech, I characterized the state of the university as “remarkably good.” Despite reduced state support, the university performed well throughout 2011 because our purpose—what we do here at the university—is important, and we have capable people who believe in that purpose and carry it out with extraordinary efficiency. I reviewed 2011, a year in which we:

- Continued to be good stewards, keeping administrative costs below the national average of our peers; directing more of our budget to instruction; generating \$75.2 million in costs savings; and producing \$53 million in revenue enhancements;
- Continued to creatively expand our students’ opportunities for learning and our university’s capabilities for innovative instruction, particularly through the single portal project for online learning;
- Continued to honor our most important asset—our people—by stabilizing the retirement benefits of our employees and retirees; keeping health care costs relatively low; and providing our high-performing employees with their first pay raises in three years;
- Continued to act as an economic engine for the state, providing almost 28,000 Missourians with jobs and creating new jobs through the innovations of our faculty; and
- Continued success on the campuses with records set for enrollment and entering-class academic credentials; faculty admissions to national academies; record numbers of invention disclosures

You can view our testimony and accompanying slides here: <http://umurl.us/sdC>.

Annual Report on Economic Development Available

I encourage you to check out our new website featuring systemwide progress on our research and economic development initiatives at: investinginmissouri.com.

Mike Nichols, vice president of research and economic development, provided an update on our progress in this area to curators at last week’s meeting.

A video of his presentation and his annual report are available at: <http://umurl.us/eLIJ>.

Campaign Addresses Local Impact

Curator Chair David Bradley last week launched the second year of the University of Missouri System’s “Advancing Missouri” informational campaign: <http://umurl.us/CQIMb>.

To see some examples of how our four campuses have an impact on the St. Joseph area, please see this video: <http://umurl.us/1DTW>.

System Links Online Learning Efforts

and total sponsored activities; and nationally and internationally ranked programs.

Thanks to you, 2011 was, by almost any measure, a remarkably eventful and productive year—another year in which we did more with less. But I also asked during my remarks, how long can this continue? How long can we do more with less? Even an institution with a noble purpose and dedicated people cannot flourish for long without adequate resources.

To learn more about the university's challenges and opportunities, you can [click here](#) to review my presentation.

University Identifies Nearly \$132 Million in Efficiency/Effectiveness Measures

Current national discussion about significant tuition increases generally underscores the need for universities to become more efficient to reduce and limit rising tuition and fees. Our data shows that our university's tuition increases (on average, under 3 percent over the past five years) are aligned with declining state support. We have been able to avoid placing the entire burden of reduced state support on students and their families by carefully managing our expenses and improving the effectiveness of our operations—as you can see in our annual report on administrative effectiveness and efficiency measures: <http://umurl.us/i8J>.

For the period covering FY2008-2010, the university's administrative expenses as a percent of

The University of Missouri System has created and will [soon be launching](#) a single entry point for students to gain access to courses delivered online at any UM campus.

The new e-portal allows new and existing students to search for online courses and programs at any campus and apply, register and gain access to all their courses and support services from one location.

The branding of the portal, including the colors and logos, will vary by campus depending on how a current or prospective student enters the site. The portal will be used by students who register for online courses beginning in March.

More than 12,000 UM students are taking at least one fully online class—an increase of 13 percent in just the past year.

For a preview of the portal, visit: <http://online.umsystem.edu/portal>.

our operating budget were *21 percent less than the national average of our peer institutions*. And while administrative expenditures nationally were reduced by 4 percent over this period, our university achieved a 9 percent reduction.

Another way to look at our stewardship is to understand how we compare when it comes to resources spent on educating students. The latest data available in 2009 show that, as a percent of education and related expenses, *we devoted 9 percent more than the national average on instruction*.

My Final Thanks...

I again thank my academic and administrative colleagues across the system for their focus and teamwork in maintaining the positive momentum across our statewide mission of teaching, research, service and economic development. I look forward to welcoming Tim Wolfe as our next president on February 15.

