

Military veterans find OU a supportive, friendly institution

Spurred by its largest-ever freshmen class, Oakland University officials announced today that the university anticipates it will top the 20,000-student mark for the first time in its history.

"This is a defining moment for Oakland University," said interim President Betty J. Youngblood. "Topping the 20,000-student mark will offer more proof that Oakland has become a first-choice destination for Michigan students."

The university's largest freshmen class ever – 2,542 first-time students – helps to make this the university's 15th consecutive

year of enrollment growth, with a 1.8 percent increase over last year. The university expects student retention rates to increase by roughly 10 percent, with a total of 77.9 percent overall retention.



"Enrollment growth and student retention are two key factors in measuring how you are serving your students' needs,"

Youngblood said. "We are pleased that these numbers reflect the fact that our students feel they are getting a high quality education at Oakland University."

Over the last 15 years, admitted students have been increasingly well prepared for success in more than 260 undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs.

To learn more about academics, achievements, and events at OU, visit the news site at oakland.edu/newsatou and follow the news team on Twitter at [@OaklandU_News](https://twitter.com/OaklandU_News).

World of "Downton Abbey" revealed through new course

The fashionable and exclusive world of Lord Grantham and Lady Mary will be revealed to Oakland University students this fall, through the new course, "The World of Downton Abbey: Revolution, Rebellion, and Re-Creation."

Inspired by the popular PBS series, "Downton Abbey," which follows the lives of an aristocratic family and their household in early twentieth-century Britain, the course will go beyond fiction to explore historic issues in politics and society.

"My Ph.D. work was in Wales and England, and there I became an Anglophile," said instructor Randall Engle.

"When "Downton Abbey" premiered, my wife and I were hooked. But the

show is enriched even more when one understands the context of the Edwardian era: the reforms and revolts of the 1920s were unprecedented. Then the thought struck me: "Downton Abbey" would be a great entree into European culture and history."

The series opened in 1912 with the sinking of the Titanic, and over the course of three seasons has traversed the First World War, women's rights movement, changing socio-economic and class boundaries, religion, fashion, mass media, and more. The fourth season of the show is set to debut in the U.S. in early 2014, and is set in 1921.

The course has the unique feature of taking place at Oakland's Meadow Brook Hall, considered to be the finest

extant example of Tudor Revival architecture in the country. In 2012, The Hall was named a National Historic Landmark.

"In addition to lectures on English aristocracy, peerage, history, royalty and the Church of England, we'll also read and discuss the novel "Dreamers of the Day," and take several tours: of the "upstairs" life at Meadow Brook, of the "downstairs" life at Meadow Brook, and a fashion tour that includes Matilda Dodge Wilson's closets," Dr. Engle said. "Of course, we will serve tea and biscuits during each class."

For more information about courses and programs in the Honors College, view the website at oakland.edu/hc.

News YOU can use from



Sagging state funding jacks up college tuition

The start of a new school year is punctuated by what's become a new financial norm for public universities: massive cuts in state funding that lead to rising tuition, cuts in enrollment, sporadic class schedules and staff layoffs.

Despite some recent tuition freezes for the 2013-14 school year, public universities continue to suffer from significant spending cuts by their own states. The state funding cuts are the primary driver of tuition inflation in recent years, education experts say.

Between 2007 and 2012, 15 states have experienced declines in higher-education funding per full-time student of nearly 30% or more, according to a report on higher-education financing put out by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association earlier this year. Since the recession, 48 states have cut state appropriations while just two have increased funding.

USA Today
September 3, 2013

A critical need for a workable visa plan

America's immigration system does not meet our needs and has not done so for years. A recent study found that reform measures like those featured in the bill just passed by the U.S. Senate would add \$903 million to the North Carolina economy and create over

11,000 jobs – in the first year alone. I am hopeful that the U.S. House of Representatives can seize the opportunity that will lie before it and pass a workable immigration reform plan this year.

North Carolina has one of the best higher education systems in America, world-renowned colleges and universities that turn out thousands of highly skilled, job-ready graduates every year.

But tragically, out-of-touch visa allocations frequently make it impossible for foreign-born North Carolina alums – including many with the science, technology, engineering and math training that economy-driving high-tech companies need – to stay here and put their talents to work for American companies. This is just one of the glaring inequities in our immigration system and one of the many valid arguments in favor of Congress passing immigration reform legislation.

News & Observer
September 3, 2013

Will MOOCs massively disrupt higher education?

Massive open online courses (MOOCs) have often been described as "revolutionizing" or "disrupting" traditional higher education during the past couple of years as interest in their potential has surged.

The common vision: Nimble Internet startups were destined to sweep through academia, the last

walled garden, just as they had in the worldwide media markets years earlier.

In retrospect, the hyperbole and excitement around MOOCs was understandable. While "online education" -- broadly defined as a class delivered in part or whole across a computer network -- goes back decades, the scale of MOOCs, in which a single course can attract a quarter-million students, was new and breathtaking.

Most histories of MOOCs start with the 2008 course "Connectivism and Connective Knowledge," created by George Siemens, then an associate director for research and development with the Learning Technologies Center at the University of Manitoba, and Stephen Downes, an online learning and new media designer and commentator.

Information Week
September 4, 2013

Undocumented migrants in US gaining improved access to higher education

While the US Congress struggles with passing immigration reform, many lawmakers and educators around the country are finding common ground on initiatives that improve undocumented students' access to higher education. Republicans in Colorado have demonstrated support for a proposed bill that would grant undocumented immigrants in-state tuition at the schools' public universities. University of Notre

State and National Headlines

Dame announced last week that it would consider undocumented applicants the same as domestic applicants. Loyola medical school in Chicago waived legal residency as a requirement in July and is working to improve financial aid for these students.

The Guardian
August 29, 2013

U.S. Budget Cuts Prompt 18% of Scientists to Consider Moving

A survey of 3,700 scientists across disciplines has found large numbers reporting that their research and the way they spend their time have been severely affected by the across-the-board budget cuts ordered by Congress.

The survey -- conducted by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular in collaboration with other science groups -- reported the following findings, among others:

- 18 percent are considering continuing their research career in another country.
- 64 percent report that they are having difficulty getting grant funding.
- 45 percent have a colleague who has lost his or her job.
- 80 percent report that the time they spend writing grant applications has increased.
- 64 percent said that their grant funding has decreased.

Inside Higher Ed
September 3, 2013

UW campuses work to get graduates out in 4 years

MENOMONIE, Wis. (AP) — At least two University of Wisconsin campuses are working to boost the number of students graduating within four years, in part by limiting the number of credits required for degrees.

Administrators at the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie limited the credits required for most degrees to 120, instead of the previous 124 to 130 credits. Four engineering programs require more credits because of accreditation requirements.

The university also revised its lineup of general education classes for freshmen so they can graduate more quickly with the same set of skills needed for work, UW-Stout Chancellor Charles Sorensen said in a news release.

"We heard the concern over the rising cost of higher education loud and clear," Sorensen said. "These changes will allow our students to graduate in four years while still giving them the exceptional and rigorous education they and their future employers have come to expect from us."

Officials at UW-Eau Claire also are aiming to have more students graduate in four years. About four-fifths of that school's programs require 120 credits for graduation.

Administrators are taking a look at classes with high failure rates, giving students credit for their experiences and offering peer mentoring to help them succeed, said Michael Wick, associate vice chancellor of academic affairs.

About 21 percent of the students who enrolled as freshmen at UW-Stout in 2007 graduated in four years, the Eau Claire Leader-Telegram reported (<http://bit.ly/16a47fD>). At UW-Eau Claire, the rate for the 2007 incoming class was about 27 percent. Overall, the UW System four-year graduation rate for 2007 freshmen was nearly 29 percent. UW-Madison's was much higher, at 55 percent.

Associated Press
August 14, 2013

NJ: Legislative leaders to draft bill to study "tuition-free" finance plan

Last week New Jersey legislative leaders said they will introduce a bill to establish a commission to explore the feasibility of a plan to waive tuition and fees at the state's public colleges and universities in exchange for students paying back a portion of their salary for an extended period after completing college. The plan is based on a proposal that has been approved for study in Oregon.

The Star-Ledger
August 6, 2013



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State and National Headlines *CONTINUED*

Tenn. Gov. Haslam promotes higher ed initiatives in Nash- ville

Dive Summary:

- Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam promoted his "Drive to 55" education initiatives to 300 business, political and education leaders during a 90-minute presentation Wednesday at Nashville's Music City Center.
- At least 55% (494,000) of the state's residents must have college degrees or certificates by 2025 in order for it to remain economically

competitive, and other speakers at the event stressed the future need for some post-high school education for all workers.

- Programs launched by the Republican governor include the private scholarship fund TNAchieves, a partnership with online Western Governors University, and pre-college math remediation from Chattanooga State's Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support.

Clarksville Online
September 5, 2013