



Challenging Academics. Christian Community.

April 5, 2012

Dr. Jane Nidiffer
Chair, Educational Leadership
School of Education and Human Services
Oakland University
Rochester, Michigan

Dear Dr. Nidiffer:

Through Dr. Sule, I have learned that Oakland University is exploring the addition of a Master's Degree in Higher Education. I have been a visiting presenter in her Administering the College course and have at least one member of Rochester College's current staff pursuing graduate work in education at OU.

I am writing to lend my support to the program you are considering.

As Rochester College continues to grow and hire, we would look very positively on any candidate who has completed the Master's Degree in Higher Education through your department.

Congratulations on the positive strides Oakland University continues to make on so many fronts.

Sincerely,

Rubel Shelly, Ph.D.
President

April 4, 2012



Jana Nidiffer, Ed.D.
Associate Professor and Chair
Co-director, Higher Education Program
Department of Educational Leadership
Oakland University
480B Pawley Hall
Rochester, MI 48309-4494

Dear Dr. Nidiffer:

This letter is in support of the establishment of the Oakland University Higher Education masters degree program with a specialty in Student Affairs Leadership. As the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students of Albion College, I have spent almost 15 years trying to recruit and retain young professionals who are qualified and well-trained to work in the Division of Student Affairs. This has proven to be a difficult task. To be successful, these staff members must have a master's degree in higher education with specific knowledge and skill acquisition in the student affairs field. Our attempts to hire entry-level staff without such credentials have resulted in (a) needing to expend significant time to provide on the job education and training or (b) rapid turnover in personnel. I have also learned that the Albion staff who are the best fit and are retained the longest are those who have some roots in Michigan or the greater mid-west.

I have reviewed the curriculum for the Department of Education Leadership proposed masters degree, and I am genuinely excited that this program will graduate students who I could actively recruit to work at Albion. For example, coursework in higher education and specifically, history and educational equity, will mean that Oakland University graduates will understand the context of their work as well as possess the knowledge to assist them to prevent and navigate difficult situations. One example is the ability to understand the perspective of under-represented students at a predominately white College. I would like to be in contact with you if this program is approved as Albion Student Affairs staff will potentially be interested in sponsoring internships for graduate student interns.

It is essential that institutions of higher education in the State of Michigan educate and train the future workforce of this State. The proposed Higher Education Leadership masters degree program is especially important to me as the curriculum offers a unique approach that will result in job candidates who will be qualified to work in a small, private college setting.

Sincerely,

Sally J. Walker, Ed.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs and
Dean of Students

SJW/dsc