



Wednesday, December 4, 2002

OU program trains future leaders

Leaders of tomorrow are jumpstarting their careers in OU's new higher education cognate in the Ph.D. program in educational leadership.

The program, which began this fall, focuses on higher education administration in a college or university as well as planning and policy formation in a governmental, accreditation, or other related agency or organization.

"We're not training students for narrowly focused employment in higher education," said Sandra Packard, program designer and professor of education. "We're preparing them for increasing responsibility and contribution as leaders of today's changing higher education environment."

Jamie Simek, OU's assistant director of alumni relations, is taking courses in the program. "This advanced degree will help me go a step further both academically and professionally," she said. "I consider higher education to be my career field, and I hope to advance through the administrative ranks."

Through course work, supervised field experiences and independent administrative projects, students gain a broad understanding of higher education practices, systems, policies and issues. Students also are required to do an internship in a higher education organization.

"We want to expose students to new employment opportunities and also help students understand the complex nature of higher education institutions and the interrelationships between the functions of the organization," Packard said.

In the Administering the University or College course, students tour a variety of university offices and facilities and interview administrators in charge, such as the vice president for student affairs, the president, an academic dean or the athletic director.

"It's easy to become disengaged from the workings of the institution when we become too focused in our own offices and job responsibilities," Simek said. "Being enrolled in higher ed. classes and interacting with other professionals from a variety of institutions helps me align what I do in my job with the big picture. It also helps me stay on top of current trends and gives me a chance to be on campus and in the classroom."

Oakland faculty and staff are eligible for tuition benefits. The deadline to apply for the program is March 1, 2003. The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is required, so those interested in the program should begin the application process soon.

"Students may enroll in higher education cognate classes prior to admission into the Ph.D. program in educational leadership," Packard said. "Should they subsequently be admitted into the Ph.D. program, they will be able to count the credits they have earned toward their degree program."

For more information about the program, contact Packard at packard@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

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