

Presidential Remarks

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY (v12)

November 30, 2022

SLIDE #1

Welcome to the annual State of the University Address.

Thank you to the very talented OU Chorale led by Professor Michael Mitchell. And thank you to Yang Yang, a music major, for her beautiful performance as we began to gather.

And thank you, Dominique, for reminding us of our history... and how it is relevant every day.

Thank you....

- Bobby Schostak, chair of the OU Board of Trustees
- Trustee Dennis Muchmore
- Trustee David Kramer
- Special guest(s): Here

I'd like to take a moment to recall that a year ago today, our hearts were broken by the shooting at Oxford High School.

SLIDE #2

Today and every day, we keep the people of the Oxford community in our hearts and stand alongside them as we walk together on the path to healing.

SLIDE #3

As we gather at the State of the University Address, we look to our history for insight into the present and to illuminate the path into the future.

Indeed...history is written by changemakers.

We have just heard from several changemakers and a little later we'll hear from more...

For now, let's agree that Oakland is at its best when we all see ourselves as changemakers.

We must all...have a strong commitment to the Oakland University mission.

We must all...offer solutions.

We must all...lead by example.

And we must all...be passionate advocates for student success, research, community engagement and...for building a diverse, equitable and inclusive campus community.

We gather a week after Thanksgiving.

And there is so much for us to be thankful.

Let us give thanks that today we will always appreciate our health...and the privilege to play a role in educating students and serving our communities.

As stewards of Oakland University...

....the decisions we make...

....the strategies we adopt...

....and the direction we choose...will determine the course of Oakland University for the upcoming year, the remainder of the decade... and beyond.

SLIDE #4

Today, the transitions we face are distinguished by challenges that require us to be strategic, nimble and responsive.

I'll provide an overview of some of these challenges and our strategic actions that will give you a clear idea of our thinking and where we're heading.

SLIDE #5.1

First....

We face the challenge of...being prepared to respond effectively to public health threats and maintaining a safe campus. The lesson of the past two-and-half years is clear: pandemics and perhaps even endemics are increasingly likely.

In response....

SLIDE #5.2

....we have a multi-level coordinated plan in place to maintain a healthy and safe campus that promotes the wellbeing of our community.

SLIDE #5.3

We appreciate those who are leading by example.

Special thanks to Cora, and Ann for their tireless work and dedication during the pandemic.

Thank you to Chief Mark Gordon and the OU Police Department for all you do to keep us safe, and your role in making Oakland among the safest campuses in the country.

And... thank to our Office of Legal Affairs led by Boyd Farnam, for their outstanding counsel.

Throughout the pandemic, I have been so proud of the cabinet, deans, faculty along with the building and facilities teams for maintaining our classrooms and accessibility to an Oakland education.

Clearly, our success in navigating the pandemic is a reminder that for us to succeed in meeting challenges, large and small....

SLIDE #5.4

...it takes a team.

SLIDE #6

And, I just want to remind everyone that the flu and RSV are already here. So, I encourage everyone to get your flu shots, Covid boosters and all other vaccinations for which you are eligible.

Second...

SLIDE #7.1

We face the challenge of....

SLIDE #7.2

....making sure that we maintain a flexible and effective plan that focuses on student success, recruitment, retention, and graduation. In response to this challenge....

SLIDE #7.3

...we are refining the tactics in our Strategic Enrollment Management plan, a highly collaborative and integrative approach with the goal of recruiting, retaining and graduating students.

And, I am reminded by our Vice President of Enrollment, Dawn Aubry, that retaining students is crucial to our success.

Thank you Dawn for your outstanding work...and thank you to the SEM team, which is made up of members from around the university....

If you're on the SEM team, please stand,.

SLIDE #7.4

SEM is not a quick fix.

SLIDE #7.5

As you'll see in a moment, we are making progress toward our overall goals.

First....some context.

SLIDE #8

Since 2012, you can see that enrollment has declined at most of Michigan's public universities.

Currently, Oakland is the sixth largest university, which is up from eighth ten years ago.

But as you'll see other universities, such as Central, Eastern, Saginaw Valley and Ferris, have had even greater declines in enrollment.

SLIDE #9

In this slide, you'll see Oakland's decline in enrollment since 2017. There are three primary reasons for the decline...

SLIDE #10

SLIDE #10.1

Decreasing number of high school graduates

SLIDE #10.2

The impact of Covid-19

SLIDE #10.3

And....growing anti-college sentiment

SLIDE #11

The SEM plan addresses the many challenges of recruiting and retaining students.

You'll notice that we're making progress toward our 2025 new freshman and transfer students and adult students' goals. With a renewed focus, we will achieve our goals for new doctoral and masters students even though today we're not on track to hit those targets.

SLIDE #12

Now I'd like to update you on our university finances as I do at every State of the University Address.

SLIDE #13

As many of you know, revenue comes from three sources:

74 percent from tuition.....

24 percent from state appropriations and 2 percent from other sources.

And how do we spend our money?

83 percent goes to compensation

And, 17 percent for supplies, services and other expenses.

SLIDE #14

It's important to keep the budget and enrollment revenue in perspective.

SLIDE #14.1

...from 2016 to 2022, enrollment declined 23 percent, but expenditures declined by only 4 percent.

Essentially, expenditures remained stable while revenue decreased dramatically.

SLIDE #14.2

Enrollment for fiscal year 2023 is down 7.2 percent.

SLIDE #14.3

And the lower tuition revenue has created a \$24M budget shortfall.

SLIDE #15

So... here's how we're addressing the shortfall and balancing the budget.

SLIDE #15.1

We are using a combination of tactics, including federal HEERF funds....

SLIDE #15.2

Applying an increased state appropriation

SLIDE #15.3

And enacting strategic expenditure reductions

I want to thank our interim VP of Finance and Administration Jim Hargett and his team along with the cabinet and deans for their leadership and tireless work.

SLIDE #16

As Dominique explained, we have grown impressively as a university.

While we have had significant growth, some of our systems and processes have not quite kept up.

SLIDE #17

We don't seek change for the sake of change....but we must change because we must strive to be the best that we can be.

When I came here five-and-a-half years ago, I was aware of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Process as a tool for continuous improvement. And, I wanted us to utilize this tool.

But frankly, at the time, I didn't believe Oakland was ready to undertake the process.

Since then, we've become more efficient... and are improving many of our administrative process.

Today, we are ready.

In August, we embarked on the Baldrige process led by our Chief of Staff Josh Merchant and facilitated by John Jasinski, who is an experienced Baldrige examiner and former university president.

SLIDE #18

Baldrige Performance Excellence Process is a framework to facilitate continuous improvement throughout the university, including in the areas of leadership, strategy, workforce and operations.

SLIDE #18.1

So far, more than fifty people from across the organization are already involved in assessing our processes.

If you are on one of the Baldrige teams, I invite you to please stand.

Thank you for your commitment to Oakland, and for your honesty and dedication.

You are indeed changemakers.

SLIDE #19

A few years ago, we began our process-improvement journey with Reimagining OU....

...an initiative to identify ways to improve the administration, culture and create proposals to position us for the future.

SLIDE #19.1

Reimagining OU created improvements in our administrative efficiency and developed a road map for campus-wide sustainability initiatives, among other positive steps.

Reimagining OU will now focus on strengthening our culture....

SLIDE #19.2

Meanwhile, the Baldrige process will focus on building a continuous improvement mindset.

SLIDE #20

In continuing Reimagining OU, we will build on the work of the Leadership Academy. Early next year, we will assemble a diverse team of faculty, staff and students to explore ways to foster a better campus culture.

I'd like you to please stand if you've participated in the Leadership Academy.

Thank you for your commitment to Oakland.

SLIDE #21.1

Another challenge we face is...

SLIDE #21.2

...remaining vigilant and strategic when there are opportunities for state funding.

In this demanding arena, I am proud to report, we are making significant progress.

Here's the good news...

SLIDE #22

As a result of our successful “Strive for 45” campaign, Oakland received the highest percentage increase in funding of any of the state’s 15 public universities....

SLIDE #22.1

...12.5% vs. an average of 3%.

This is a very significant achievement for Oakland...

The additional state funds are not only much-appreciated, they arrive a much-needed time.

With your support, we fought successfully for more funding for higher education. As a result, several other public universities also received additional state support.

Our campaign is not just about seeking more funding.

It’s about equity....

Standing up for the values of higher education...

...and defending our belief that higher education is at the heart of a democratic society, equal opportunity and progress.

And, of course, our success would not be possible without the engagement of our trustees, whose wisdom, and knowledge of the ways of Lansing are critical to our success.

SLIDE #23

In addition, Oakland has a \$30-million science complex capital outlay proposal that’s now before the legislature. Receiving state funding would require that we bond \$10 million to support of the project.

A special thanks to our Vice President of Government Relations Rochelle Black and Bonnie Maluchnik along with our Lansing lobby team, McAlvey Merchant.

SLIDE #24.1

A fourth challenge we face is...

SLIDE #24.2

....creating timely initiatives that integrate educational programs and degrees with the “talent needs” of the state’s industries, service sector and small businesses.

As our university becomes more and more of a talent pipeline, Oakland will become more and more of a catalyst for the region's and the state's economic growth.

My vision for Oakland is for the university to be known widely and preeminently as not only the "university of choice"....

SLIDE #24.3

...but the "the workforce university of choice."

What does it mean to be the workforce university of choice?

It means that Oakland is the university that students choose as a place where they get real world experience, and an affordable degree....

...a place where their investment in their education can be measured in a return by getting a good paying job...upward social mobility... and a lifetime of rewards...

...including professional gratification, broader range of opportunities, and a deep connection to a university that will always welcome them with open arms.

Among the keys to our success is becoming a leading university for internships and experiential-learning opportunities.

This fall, we established the....

SLIDE #24.4

...Experiential Learning & Internship Council, which will coordinate experiential learning, internships and service-learning programs across campus.

The council is led by Wayne Thibodeau, Director of Career Services.

Thank you, Wayne, and council members for your passion, expertise and leadership on a top priority for the university.

SLIDE #25

Contributing to Michigan's workforce is a top priority.

And Oakland is a leading university shaping Michigan's economic future at a time of a serious "brain drain" from the state.

The "Brain Drain" is an overall talent issue caused by college graduates

leaving Michigan, as reported (Sept. 19, 2022) by The Detroit News.

SLIDE #25.1

As you can see in this slide...

Less than 50% of graduates at the state's largest universities remain in Michigan.

SLIDE #25.2

Oakland is the leading state university with 86.3 percent of our graduates remaining in Michigan.

The Detroit News cites Oakland as the leading university in Michigan where graduates remain in the state, a major feature of why OU graduates form the "talent backbone" of the Michigan economy.

An innovative and timely way we are addressing the workforce shortage, and specifically the shortage of healthcare workers is an initiative that we call THE BEST.

SLIDE #26

SLIDE #26.1

THE BEST stands for Transforming Health Care Education By Elevating State-of-the-art Teaching, Learning and Practice.

At this point, think of THE BEST proposal as what is possible when we think innovatively about what Oakland University can be....

SLIDE #27

SLIDE #27.1

THE BEST is based on the goal of elevating Oakland as a catalyst in addressing the healthcare needs of people in southeastern Michigan and beyond.

SLIDE #28

Here you see some of the features of the proposal.

We are working with legislators and our public-and-private sector partners to support Oakland as a leader in creating a healthcare professional pipeline. Our plan is to establish an Inter-Professional (IPE)

Education Center located at 1500 University Drive... a facility located where we're calling OU West Campus.

The building will provide much-needed classroom space for health and human services-related courses, a training center and clinic.

Expanding these programs is a strategic response to the pressing need for health care and human services providers, particularly as the region rebounds from the pandemic.

I believe THE BEST is an entrepreneurial and mission-driven example of how Oakland is an institutional changemaker.

Thank you Provost Britt Rios-Ellis for your vision along with Vice President Rochelle Black.

And speaking of “the best”... I am so proud of Oakland’s athletic teams.

SLIDE #29

The men’s soccer team, women’s softball team, women’s golf team, and the swimming and diving team all won championships in the past year – which is impressive by any standard.

SLIDE #29.1

Our student-athletes are setting the bar high on and off the field, pool, and in the classroom.

We appreciate the hard work of the players, coaches, trainers and thank you to our Athletic Director Steve Waterfield for his leadership.

SLIDE #30

Another challenge we face is....

SLIDE #30.1

Building strategic alliances with corporate, philanthropic, industry and community partners.

Our future is inextricably linked to the communities and businesses in our region.

In the past year...

SLIDE #30.2

We strengthened our connection with Corewell Health, formerly Beaumont Health Spectrum Health. The newest chapter in our partnership has translated into an educational-economic-and-health alliance highlighted by a nearly \$21 million gift.

Our partnership will have a profound impact on improving the quality of nursing care in the region and beyond.

Thank you to our provost, Interim Dean Suha Kridli, former Dean Judy Didion and Mike Westfall, our vice president of Advancement, for your leadership on the Corewell gift.

By the way, Mike is a fundraising force for the university, and because of his leadership Oakland has recorded an....

SLIDE #30.3

....unprecedented five-year total in Oakland history.

SLIDE #31

I am very happy to share that at the midpoint of the current fiscal year, we are establishing a new annual fundraising record surpassing \$30 million for the first time in the university's history thanks to a number of significant gifts, including the Corewell gift, and a yet-to-be-announced \$6 million gift.

SLIDE #31.1

Furthermore, we have raised \$143 million in gifts and commitments toward the \$150 million "Aspire. Advance. Achieve." campaign. That's 95 percent of our goal AND a year-and-a-half before the deadline of June 2024.

Thank you Mike and the Advancement team for your long hours and the many ways you show your dedication to Oakland.

SLIDE #32

A significant way we demonstrate our connection and relevance to our communities is through the research conducted by our talented faculty.

This past year....

SLIDE #32.1

...we have recorded the highest level of extramural research funding in OU history.

SLIDE #32.2

This translates to a 200 percent increase in research funding from FY20 to FY22.

In the next few months, we will put the finishing touches on the nearly 50,000-square-foot research building four miles south of campus that will accommodate researchers from the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

Thank you to our dedicated deans, talented faculty and all those

engaged in important research....

...and thank you to Dave Stone, our Vice President of Research, for your leadership.

SLIDE #33.1

And finally....

We face the challenge....

SLIDE #33.2

...of creating a deeper engagement with communities in the region, and enhancing relationships among all members of the OU community. This is an essential part of our obligation as Stewards of Place.

SLIDE #33.3

SLIDE #33.4

We are extremely proud of our partnership with the city of Pontiac.

The OU-Pontiac Initiative continues to have a positive impact on the city's education, healthcare, culture, economic development and civic engagement.

Our faculty, students and staff are...

SLIDE #33.5

...working alongside more than 75 civic, business and nonprofit groups...

SLIDE #34

We are committed to the Pontiac community in what is truly a mutually beneficial partnership.

SLIDE #34.1

In late October, we held the OU-Pontiac Initiative Townhall on campus.

SLIDE #34.2

I am so impressed with the collaboration and commitment to the city's promising future.

Thank you to the city leadership, the people of Pontiac, Glenn McIntosh, Senior Vice President of Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer, Teresa Roges, Senior Director for Community Service.

And thank you Jean Anne Miller, an unsung hero.

Please stand if you're a member of the OU-Pontiac Initiative Core Team and Pillar Leads, and if you've participated in our engagement in Pontiac.

SLIDE #35

Another way we are serving as Stewards of Place is to foster greater community and civic engagement.

In this area, Professor Dave Dulio has been widely recognized for his leadership in advocating for civility and supporting democracy through the OU Center for Civic Engagement.

SLIDE #36

The Center has held a congressional debate, a timely discussion on the future of the Abraham Accords, an engaging conversation called "After Roe," and along with UCM supported a gubernatorial debate on campus.

Thank you, Dave, for your example of what engagement and making a difference looks like.

Thank you to John Young, our Vice President of University Marketing and Communications and his team for elevating the reputation of Oakland University.

SLIDE #37

And by the way, in 2022, Oakland was named to the Washington Monthly list of Best Colleges for Student Voting, a distinction given to higher education institutions that get students to vote.

SLIDE #38

After we return from the holiday break in January, we will gather for one of the university's hallmark events, "Keeper of the Dream."

The spirit of that day, the symbol of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the ongoing struggle for civil and human rights must be in the forefront of our minds if we are to be a model campus for diversity, equity and inclusion.

In August, the DEI annual report noted that underrepresented minorities and underrepresented groups were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. While the report measures our progress toward achieving our DEI goals, it is clear we must recommit ourselves to improving URM retention and graduation rates while also doing more to increase the percentage of URM faculty and staff at Oakland.

We are all so appreciative of the hard work of those working for a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus.

Thank you to Glenn and his team, Omar Brown-el and the Center for Multicultural Initiatives, the Gender and Sexuality Center, and the DEI council.

SLIDE #39

Each month, I look forward to meeting informally with a group of staff and faculty.

We call these meetings, “Conversations.” And really, that’s what they are... Just conversations about how things are going. The positive and the negative.

One topic has come up often: In the past two-and-a-half years, the world has changed dramatically and people feel stressed.

SLIDE#40

Aimee Symington from the College of Arts & Sciences shared her perspective... and it has stayed with me.

Aimee said: “Many of us are exhausted after two-years of the pandemic... Some of us are struggling, and all of us need to find ways to heal our community.”

She added: “We all need and want to feel connected.”

Thank you, Aimee... and thank you to everyone who has participated, and will participate in our regular “Conversations.”

I agree with Aimee.

We all need and want to feel connected.

Healing takes time.

It takes understanding.

It takes a community of changemakers.

Let’s listen to what a few of them have to say...

NOTE: CUE VIDEO #2

SLIDE #40

We have heard from some of the many changemakers at Oakland.

There are so many, many more out there.

Each of us in our own unique way are changemakers...

SLIDE #41

May each of you be empowered to be a changemaker and contribute to making Oakland University a great university.

And thank you to the people behind the scenes of today's State of the University...

Thank you to the Oakland Center staff, our AV team, video services, UCM, our incredibly talented events team, my wonderfully supportive staff in the President's Office, and Frank Provenzano....

Together, they show us the meaning of teamwork.

Just a reminder...Please make sure you get your box lunch and refreshments on your way out.

Thank you for sharing your time with us.

We look forward to seeing you back here at the Holiday Party on December 8.

May each of you have a healthy and happy holiday season.

CUE THE CHORALE

SLIDE 42