

STRENGTH & PROGRESS



HALLMARKS OF THE FREED YEARS

During the last decade The University of Findlay has continued its pattern of innovation, strengthening and progressing. Key ingredients of a Findlay education continue to be a capable faculty, talented student body and strong academic programs. The University balances its education with close attention to student needs and with a progressive look to the future to meet the needs of a changing society.

In response to those needs, Findlay has become the largest private college or university in Northwest Ohio. Findlay combines the intimacy of a small college with the rich diversity of a university that awards baccalaureate, graduate and professional degrees. Combining the depth and breadth of liberal learning with professional preparation adds uniqueness to the campus, student life, academic programs and learning.

Dr. DeBow Freed, who became president of the University in 2003, has played a major role in expanding programs and strengthening the University.

ACADEMIC QUALITY

Dr. Freed has placed emphasis on having strong academic programs and a supportive atmosphere on campus. Such an atmosphere encourages faculty and student engagement and learning, and sustains an encouraging environment for students.

The emphasis on academic quality means adequate or more than adequate course content, contact time with students, and material that stretches and encourages students in the learning process.

During the last half of the decade, 2005-2010, emphasis has been placed on progressively strengthening the academic program. This has included increasing the full-time faculty from 155 to 195 and strengthening in other areas with adjunct faculty. Considerable investment has been made in the total academic program, not only in the number and credentials of the faculty, but also in laboratories, experiential work and academic support such as first-class computer capability for teaching.

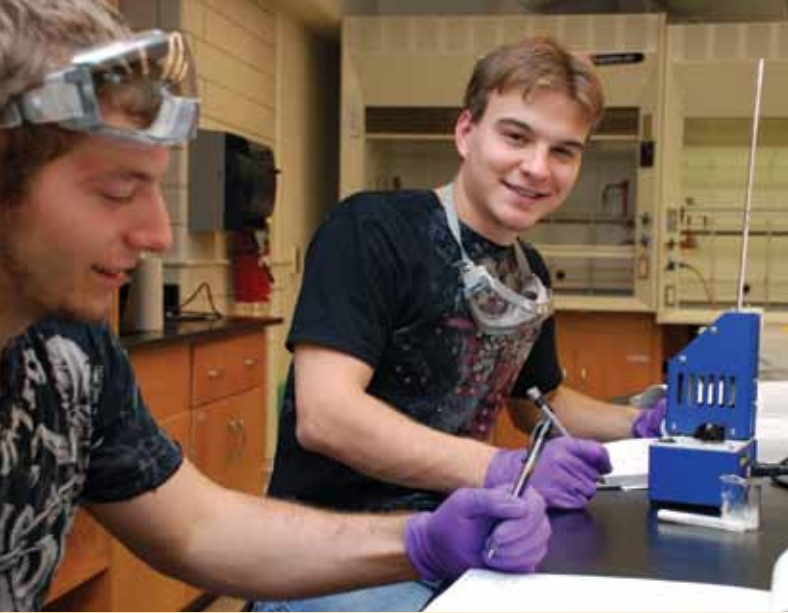
FINANCIAL HEALTH

The University's excellent financial operations have served the institution well. They have enabled strengthening the capital structure of the University, growing the plant fund for use as a reserve fund and for expansion of the University physical plant, and controlling costs.

The University has operated with balanced operating budgets each year, with net reserves of a few million dollars in most years and has been able to pay for most improvements from operating funds. That has enabled the University to dedicate capital funds to increasing the endowment, which has about doubled in the last six years, and increasing the value of the plant fund, which serves as a ready reserve, by a factor of four.

The institution's good financial operations are a reflection of the fact that faculty and staff are sensitive to and cooperative in holding costs down, and that has contributed to financial operating surpluses each year.





ACADEMIC GROWTH

Principal enrollment increases during the last five years have been for the pre-veterinary, equestrian and health science programs, including pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy and physician assistant. Pharmacy and physical therapy now lead to doctoral degrees in their fields.

To accommodate the larger number of students in the life sciences and animal science areas, it has been necessary to substantially expand the basic sciences, in the number of students taught, number of faculty and depth of course work. Essentially, the number of student credit hours taught and earned during the last five years has been about double that of the first half of the decade.

Clinical work has increased substantially. On a typical day, the University may have 200 students involved in clinical work in medical facilities throughout the country. Clinical work constitutes 15-20 percent of the total hours for students in the animal and human sciences programs and a higher percentage for such programs as nuclear medicine.

Providing the extensive biology, chemistry, physics and computer science programs which underlie many of the professional programs has been a major investment in talent and an uplifting of those programs.

The life and animal sciences program draw young people of good academic abilities and dedication. They gravitate toward programs which have the reputation and reality of being academically rigorous.

CHURCH & COMMUNITY

Dr. Freed has strengthened the University's relationship with the Church of God, which has historically been constructive and beneficial. The Church of God, as one of the two founders of the University, has supported the University over the years and continues to do so with a cordial and positive relationship.

The University has strong ties with the Findlay community through its historical association and service work, through providing leadership to organizations, and through strengthening the cultural, artistic and entertainment features of community life. For example, the Mazza Museum has become nationally distinctive as a unique collection of original art for children's literature and draws the best artists and the best children's book authors in the country.

ENGAGEMENT & SERVICE

The president has emphasized that it is important to pay close attention to faculty and student engagement and related activities and attempted to heighten awareness of the unique nature of the campus, which is student- and faculty-oriented with programs that are academically demanding.

Engagement between teachers and students has been and is a strong feature of the University. Students treasure their close association with faculty and with staff as a feature of the University that they most appreciate.

The service-oriented characteristics of an education at Findlay have continued, with a substantial percentage of the student body and faculty involved in service projects.

A reality of academic life is that students take their measure of and try to emulate what they see faculty and staff doing, rather than what faculty and staff say. The fact that most faculty set a good example in that regard has enabled students to learn from that process in their growth and development which occurs during the college years.

A stated goal has been to attempt to have an atmosphere of concern and kindness as part of campus life. If such an atmosphere can be developed and sustained, it is also an excellent atmosphere in which to study and learn, and to prepare to deal with larger problems that are going to arise after students leave college.



EXCELLENT FACILITIES

The University benefits from not being overbuilt as are many other colleges and universities, and in recent years, the University has been able to acquire needed facilities for current programs at reasonable costs. Examples are the addition to the Mazza Museum; the acquisition and renovation of the former campus of Owens Community College; acquisition of the Rieck Center for Habitat Studies for a biology field station and acquisition of needed land and construction of the new Beckett Animal Science Building.





INVESTMENT IN STUDENTS

The president noted that he and his wife, Catherine, chose to go into higher education in part because of the opportunity to associate regularly with faculty and students. “Dealing with young people on an everyday basis is part of the essence of a small university,” he said.

He pointed out that there are two points about college life which transcend whatever current circumstances may prevail:

- The purpose of our entire effort is to teach students well and to help them develop intellectually, socially, spiritually, morally and physically. Losing sight of this fundamental purpose leads to more problems on a campus than any other single factor.
- College and campus life can and should be enjoyable for faculty, students, staff and trustees. It is not a grim business in which we are partners, but a hopeful, happy, buoyant one. A civil tone, pleasant atmosphere, and Christian concern and kindness should be hallmarks of the campus.

“Education is a happy and ebullient experience. Learning takes place more easily where a pleasant environment, understanding and kindness are part of everyday life,” he said.

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