

OU seeks more state funds WSU touts community role

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

People in and around Oakland County want more advanced college degrees, says Oakland University President Gary Russi.

"Graduate growth is exploding," Russi told a friendly panel of senators pondering his school's state aid.

"Graduate enrollment has increased 32.8 percent in just six years. Each time a major business such as the Chrysler Tech Center moves to the area, we experience a significant increase in graduate enrollment," Russi said during May 9 budget hearings in Detroit.

Last school year, 28 percent of all degrees and 22 percent of all students were at the graduate level — master's and doctoral candidates. "Since 1991-92 we have awarded an average of 33 PhDs annually," Russi said — and all without a law or medical school, or even a football team.

But Russi, now in his second year, complained that OU, based in Rochester Hills, still isn't funded like a doctoral institution. He asked for a "floor" under per-student aid so that OU wouldn't actually suffer a loss per student (now at \$4,293) because of its great growth.

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Gary Russi
Oakland University President

Engler had recommended \$41.2 million, up 2.6 percent from the current fiscal year, while the House of Representatives voted \$42.2 million, a 6.1 percent hike.

"It's not gonna happen," Schwarz said. Although he agreed OU's growth is "unbelievable," Schwarz said universities "must be competitive with the corrections budget (prisons), and that is not going to go away."

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■ The Eye Research Institute, funded at \$2.1 million by federal funds.

■ A new Center for Biomedical Research.

■ Four new graduate degree programs — a doctorate in applied mathematical sciences and masters in accounting, biology and software engineering.

■ A new Center for Automotive Research, staffed by retired automotive experts and executives. It offers a combination of academic theory, research and practical orientation.

■ A summer internship with Chrysler Corp. which netted OU \$250,000-plus in contracts and provided engineering professors exposure to the manufacturing environment.

■ A Center for Family Business — "the only one of its kind in the state" — in which OU and leading financial, legal and insurance sponsors offer information to family-owned businesses.

OU is the eighth largest of Michigan's 15 public universities. About half its nearly 14,000 students come from Oakland County and a quarter from next-door neighbor Macomb.

Despite the emphasis on graduate students, Russi said undergraduate education is still a priority: "98 percent of all classes are taught by faculty members, including introductory courses."

Refer to House Bill 4309, the university budget bill, when writing to your state senator, State Capitol, Lansing 48909.

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STAFF WRITER

Even though the Legislature has been generous to Wayne State University, the Detroit campus is "stretched thin" to meet changes in the new global economy, said retiring President David Adamany.

"I've had the pleasure of living through a number of economic cycles where the state has supported us generously," Adamany said at his 15th and last annual appearance before a Senate Appropriations subcommittee May 9.

"Even in the worst of times, the state has been highly favorable," Adamany said, producing a chart to show WSU has held the line on student tuitions better than any of the 14 other state universities.

Since 1983, WSU has raised tuition 51.7 percent compared to 172.5 percent at the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus and Michigan State University's 180.5 percent. In the middle of the pack were Eastern Michigan, sixth at 151.3 percent, and Oakland University, ninth at 135.7 percent.

Adamany, who announced his impending retirement shortly after the Legislature amended the Open Meetings Act to allow the WSU board a measure of secrecy in picking his successor, was treated like a conquering hero by the panel, which presented him a framed certificate to the accompaniment of flash cameras.

"What is your vision for the



David Adamany
Wayne State President

next decade?" asked John H. Schwarz, R-Battle Creek, chair of the subcommittee.

"We must double as a major research university in this area. And given the distress in Detroit — conditions for children are still terrible — our public outreach must continue to expand."

"We've been one of the anchor in the redevelopment in the central city. University policy has been to buy abandoned buildings and rehabilitate or demolish them to avoid blight. There is no gate that keeps the community out," he said, referring to (literally) the open-door policy of campus buildings.

"We have a police department, with arrest power, that made 4,600 runs (on campus) last year and another 4,500 to surrounding neighborhoods."

Gov. John Engler recommended \$220 million for WSU in the coming fiscal year, up 2.5 percent. The House raised it to \$228 million, up 6.2 percent. Schwarz didn't say what figure he had in

mind, but he wore a green and gold tie, signifying he earned his medical degree from WSU.

Adamany highlighted these areas of WSU's challenges:

■ Its graduate enrollment (for master's, doctorates and law degrees) is 12,278 — third highest in the nation (behind New York University and Harvard) and ahead of U-M, Central Michigan and Michigan State.

■ 74 percent of its alumni stay in Michigan, concentrated in the metropolitan Detroit area.

■ Enrollment has dipped as the economy has boomed. Fewer laid-off persons want or need to work on advanced degrees; overtime keeps many workers from enrolling.

■ Degree programs have been pared to 369 from 381 because of low degree rates. But WSU is unlikely to phase out too many programs with low enrollment because "our students are place-bound and can't go to another university. One-third are married and raising children."

■ 48 percent of undergraduates are taught by faculty, 40 percent by adjunct faculty and 13 percent (rounded off) by graduate students. "The adjunct faculty are deeply committed teachers," Adamany said, citing engineering professionals and 30 Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians.

■ Class sizes are about 27 for freshmen and sophomores and 22-23 for juniors and seniors — "as small as the elite universities," he said.

University tuition levels

Here are average undergraduate tuition rates for the current fiscal year at Michigan's 15 public universities, as compiled by the Presidents Council:

- UM-Ann Arbor \$5,842
- Michigan State \$4,921
- UM-Dearborn \$3,896
- Michigan Tech \$3,843
- Wayne State \$3,581
- Oakland U \$3,551
- Ferris State \$3,532
- Eastern Mich. \$3,430
- Western Mich. \$3,416
- Lake Superior \$3,396
- UM-Flint \$3,304
- Saginaw Valley \$3,260
- Central Mich. \$3,142
- Grand Valley \$3,108
- Northern Mich. \$2,891.

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