

Teaching and Learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
State of the University Address - Nancy L. Zimpher  
October 29, 2008  
Great Hall, TUC

**I. Introduction**

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for coming.

And thanks, Timothy Northcut and the College-Conservatory of Music's Brass Choir for making your performance of *Christen the Voyage* a fall tradition at UC.

To those present and to those watching on our Webcast, welcome and thank you for taking time to listen.

And thank you, Marla Hall, for your willingness to serve and lead the Faculty Senate.

Welcome Trustees Buck Niehoff, Anant Bhati, Fran Barrett and Student Trustee Seth Vensil, and Student Government Speaker of the Senate, Kyle Snider.

Yesterday I attended the State of the Academic Health Center addresses from Vice President and Dean of the College of Medicine, David Stern, and Deans Elizabeth King, Andrea Lindell and Dan Acosta, now featured on the HealthNews Web site.

Vice President Sandra Degen will deliver the State of University Research on November 13 in the Vontz Auditorium, where you are welcome as well.





This past Saturday, our university launched **Proudly Cincinnati**, our ambitious comprehensive campaign, raising our goal to \$1 billion, the largest campaign in UC history. You no doubt have noticed the pervasive 50-foot Bearcat around campus, downtown and at our regional campuses. Please know that our kickoff event was attended by more than 1,000 people, including Governor Strickland, Chancellor Fingerhut, and Mayor Mallory.

I want to thank our UC Foundation Board and the Board of Trustees for their leadership contributions to the campaign. And I want to thank you and the “We’re All UC” faculty/staff campaign. This year, with your generosity, we raised more than \$9 million with nearly 2300 donors, a 6 percent increase over last year. Through your gifts, we proclaim that we are all **Proudly Cincinnati**.

Through our vision for this campaign and the progress already achieved through UC|21, our destination is nothing less than to be the finest public urban research university on a world stage. Thus today’s focus: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching and Learning.



## **The Changing Student Context**

Each year, as a new freshman class joins our ranks, we opine on the Beloit College Mindset List that encapsulates a first-year freshman's world view:

- CONTROL, ALT, DELETE is as basic as A-B-C;
- Computers have always fit into a backpack;
- And WWW has never stood for World Wide Wrestling.

So it shouldn't be surprising that today's students take for granted advances in technology, diverse ways of knowing, and the social, cultural and political contexts for teaching and learning...even though they may not articulate these differences as we do.

## **B. The World Context - The World Is Changing/Future Forces**

So as our students face a changing world, we are called to re-examine what is taught and how we teach it.

- If our graduates are to thrive in our 21<sup>st</sup> century society, they will need to master rigorous academic content and fundamental skills of critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and effective communication. As well, they need to learn how to collaborate, adapt, and participate in multi-cultural settings.

- They confront academic disciplines and areas of inquiry that are increasingly complex.
- They must plow through volumes of information which have expanded profoundly.
- The methods, technologies, and options available to faculty to facilitate student learning are challenging the ways we teach and how we define student outcomes.
- All the while acknowledging that our understanding of how humans learn is becoming increasingly sophisticated and specific.
- And the measurement of student outcomes is increasingly complex, detailed and meaningful.

### **C. Academic/Scholarly Reasoning (Teaching and Learning)**

In multiple ways, then, our fundamental instructional mission is dynamic, and increasingly so. What we teach, who we teach, how we teach, and why we teach will always be changing. Our curriculum, therefore, must always be a work in progress.

### **D. The Future Forces in Curriculum Design**

In January, the KnowledgeWorks Foundation and the Institute for the Future, with DAAP's assistance, will release an update of a tool we used last year to examine future trends in teaching and learning. The map forecasts a host of external forces "to remake learning, education and the context that cradles them...into the ecosystem of education [where] authority [...that is, knowledge] is a hotly contested resource."

The map also forecasts "digital ubiquity." Our incoming 18-year-olds are, in the words of scholar Cathy Sandeen, "savvy web researchers" who "will comparison shop and look for opportunities to 'test drive' programs. They expect 24/7 access to instructors and student

services...[and] they expect a high degree of customization and personalization in their educational opportunities” (“Boomers, Xers and Millennials,” *Continuing Higher Education Review*, Vol. 72, 2008).

In short, for these millennials and digital natives, technology is not just an option; it is a way of life.

Further, the Futures Map welcomes “Open Source Curriculum Development” — putting it all online. MIT’s open courseware project makes much of its curriculum freely available over the Web. Primary and secondary educators are also moving in droves to this collective resource exchange. And our students persistently encourage even more of our faculty to use Blackboard or the Web to post their syllabi, and other instructional interactions.

And our new iTunesU presence has great potential as a vehicle to house massive course materials and other resources.

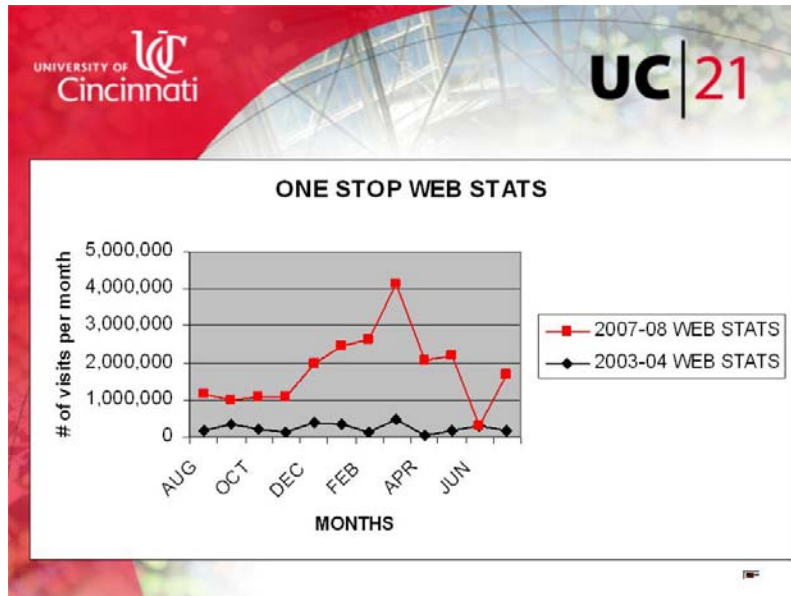
## **II. Major Changes in Our Approach to Teaching and Learning to Date**

### **Phase I: Collegiate Restructuring**

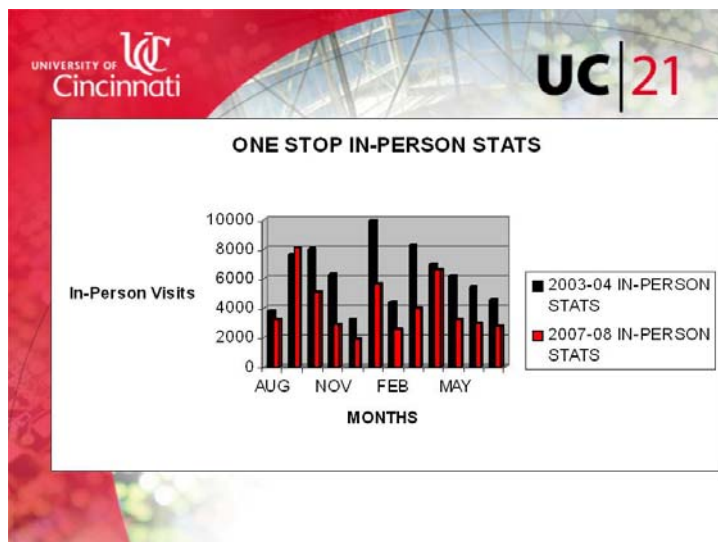
These steps reflect our propensity toward innovation in teaching and learning initiated with Collegiate Restructuring in 1999. We have accomplished a lot:

- Disbanding the College of Evening and Continuing Education and University College to ensure that all students matriculate and graduate within the Federal six-year window.
- Creating the Center for Access and Transition, giving under-prepared students extra advising and assistance to move successfully into baccalaureate degree programs.
- Fully implementing the campus-wide Gen Ed curriculum, culminating in a comprehensive capstone experience.

- At about the same time, the university adopted a set of principles and values known as the Just Community Initiative (1995), creating a more just and caring community.

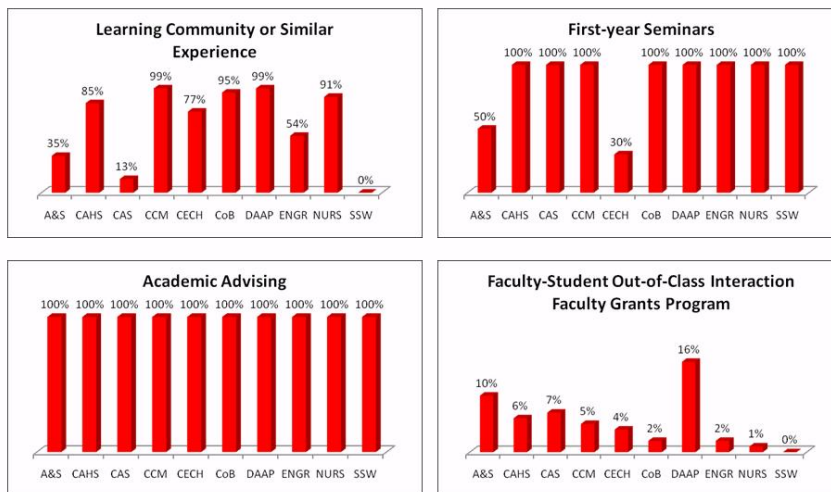


- Creating the **One Stop Center** as truly a 24/7 tool for our students, increasing Web activity and our Virtual Advisor utility to help students find answers to their questions.



The result: a 34% *decrease* in actual foot traffic. Our motto “don't get in line, go online” is becoming a pervasive reality.

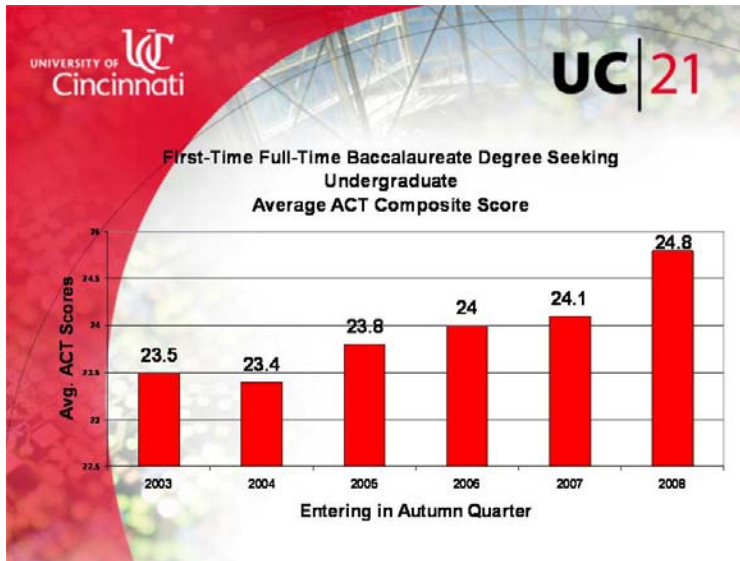
## High Impact First-Year Experiences 2007-08 - Uptown Campus Only



- And our **First Year Experience** program and Learning Communities have been an important part of the success story behind our improved retention and graduation rates. All of our Uptown undergraduate colleges have at least one element of the First Year Experience, where 100 % of the Uptown baccalaureate colleges offer some form of academic advising to intervene with freshmen, as we continue to grow this initiative across colleges. Now we're moving to a sophomore retention program.

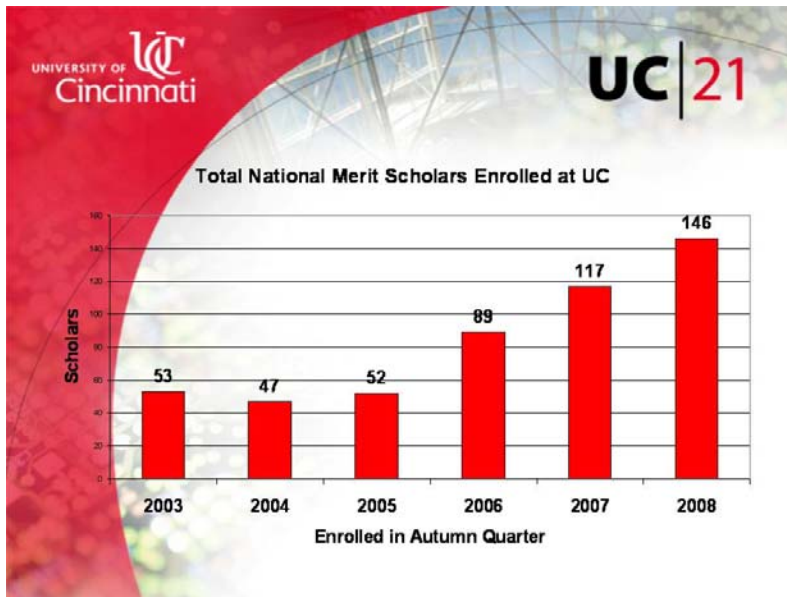
### Phase II: The Effects of UC|21

UC's second major phase of academic reform came about as a result of UC|21, and that "first among equals" goal of *Placing Students at the Center*. And just look at what we've accomplished to date:



## 1. New Admissions Policies

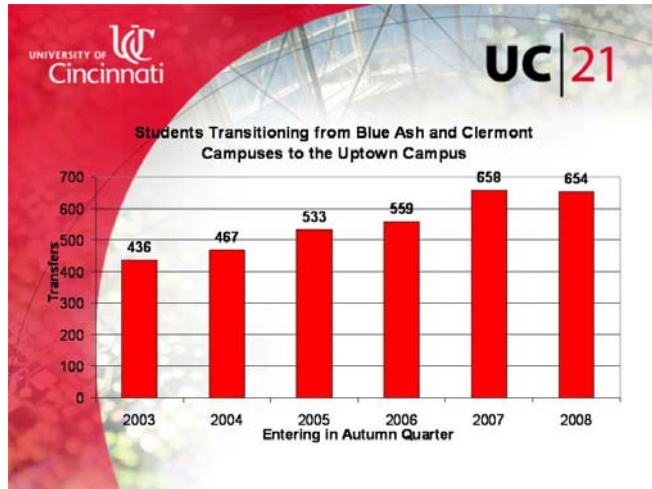
Raising the bar on our admissions criteria has led to steady improvement in the quality of our incoming freshmen.



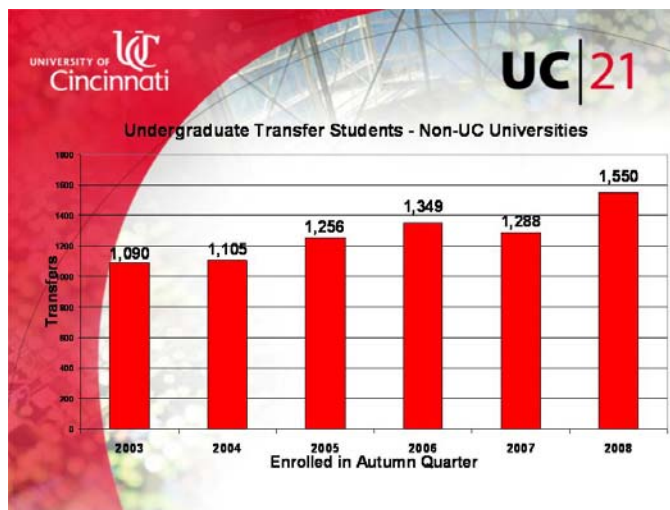
This fall we have 44 National Merit Scholars in our first-year class, placing us on the Chronicle's list of top schools attracting these high-caliber students.

## 2. New Transfer Policies

We have also worked very hard to make transferring easier for students.



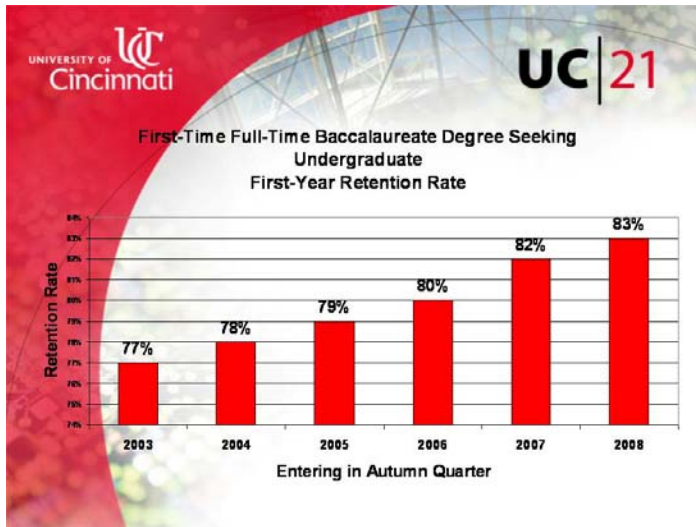
In fact, this fall we had more than 650 transfers to Uptown from Clermont and Blue Ash.



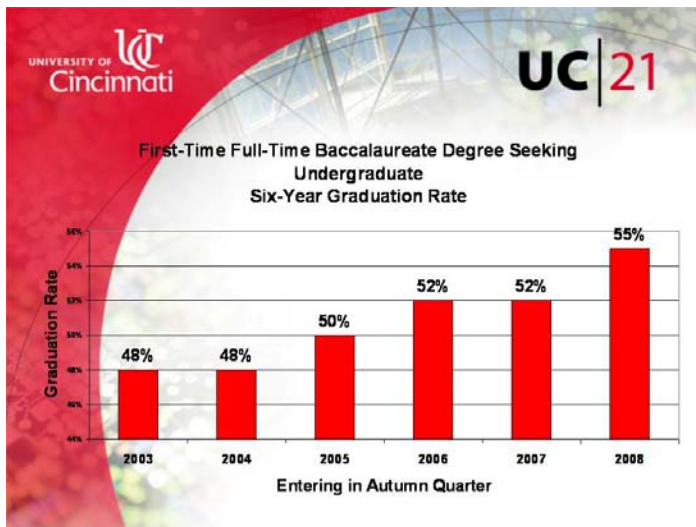
As impressive, transfers from outside the university have risen tremendously over the past five years, up over 45 percent

## 3. Retention and Graduation Rates

Ultimately students want to graduate; our role is to help them achieve that goal.



As a result, we have moved this needle significantly. Our retention rate now stands at 83 percent.



At the same time, our graduation rate has risen seven percent over the past five years; we will not rest until we reach 100 percent.

**Cincinnati Pathways Yield Data (CSTCC)**

ENROLLMENTS	06A	07A	08A	INCREASE
All CSTCC transfers	73	126	190	160%
Pathways eligible transfers	Did not exist	47	67	180%
Total Scholarships to CSTCC students transferring to UC	14	34	36	157%

**4. Cincinnati Pathways**

In this same spirit, our Cincinnati Pathways Scholarship is in full motion. Transfers from Cincinnati State are up 160 percent in the last two years, and we have more than doubled the number of scholarships to Cincinnati State transfer students.

**5. Dual Admissions**

Closer partnerships with Cincinnati State have also resulted in Dual Admissions programs, where students start at Cincinnati State with an associate’s degree and continue at UC to pursue a bachelor’s as we work hard to expand these dual admissions programs.

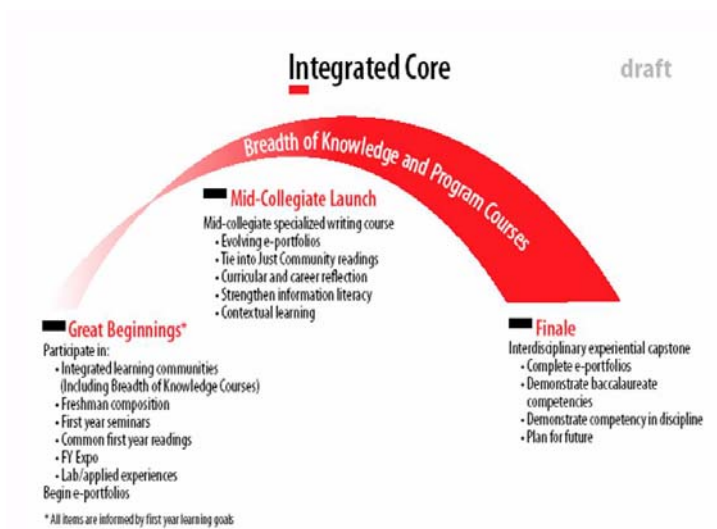
**6. Seniors to Sophomores and Other High-School Students**

Our high school dual enrollment programs continue to show solid performance as we have almost 1000 high school students enrolled in UC courses — some there and others on our campus.



## 7. RWC/Clermont Baccalaureate Programs

When it comes to our regional campuses, we are working to extend our baccalaureate programs at both Clermont and Raymond Walters.



## 8. Integrated Core Learning

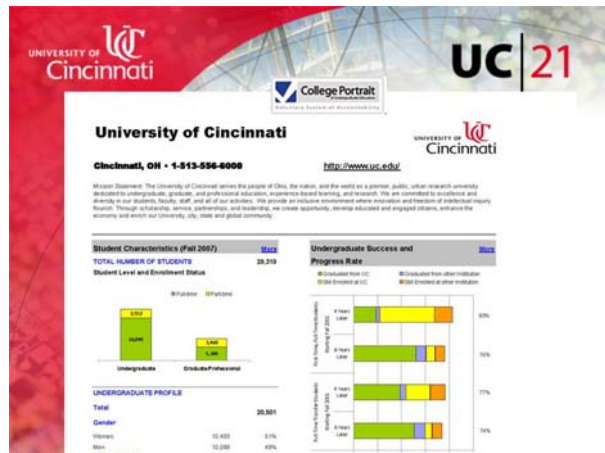
Under UC|21, we have also made great strides in expanding UC's strength in experiential learning, including undergraduate research, co-op, service learning, study abroad, clinical placements and internships into a program called Integrated Core Learning.

### III: What Remains to Be Done

#### USO & Accountability, Access, Affordability & Efficiency, Quality and Economic Leadership

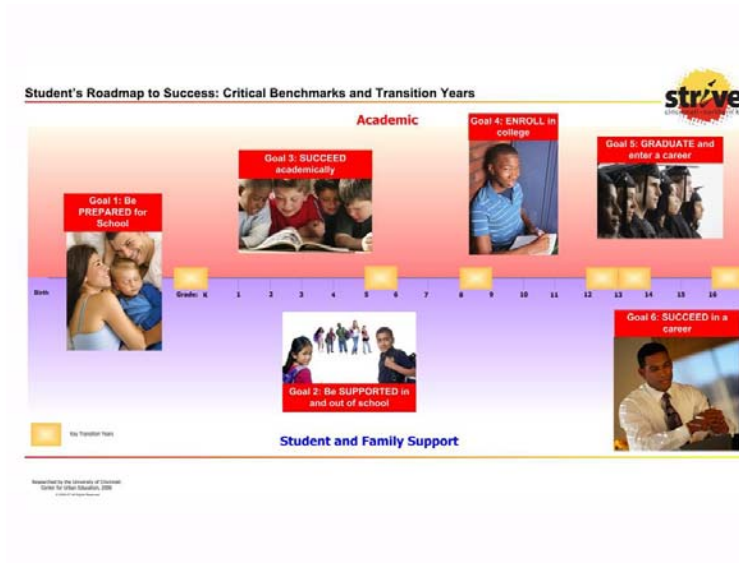
But what remains to be done? As the third phase of our instructional reform unfolds, the need to be accountable and transparent about our academic mission and the quality of our undergraduate, graduate and professional programs has never been more important. Increasingly our stakeholders, whether state or federal policy makers, parents or donors, want assurance that we are adding value to students entering our doors. As such, we have become a true leader in assessment and accountability.

- Our UC|21 Report Card tracks our progress on more than 80 metrics and positions us well for the 20 new measures within the University System of Ohio.



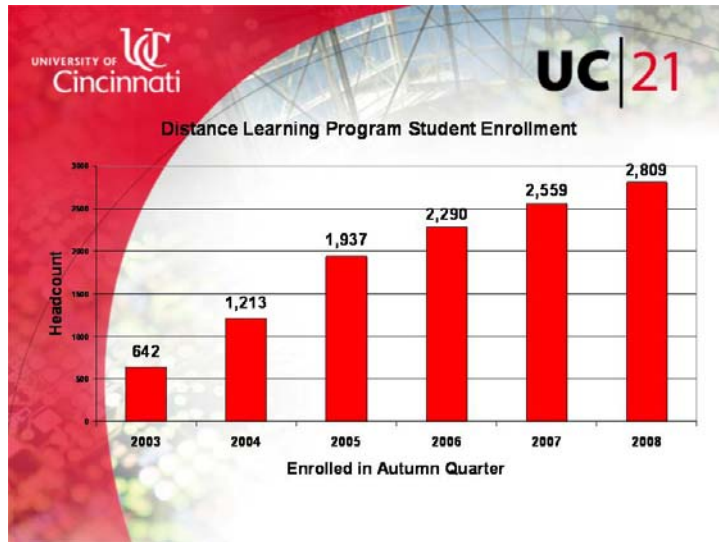
- And this summer, UC became the first public university in Ohio to place its “College Portrait” on the national Voluntary System of Accountability Web site, a cornerstone of the Chancellor’s 10-year strategic plan.
- And currently, we are piloting the Collegiate Learning Assessment with a group of honors students in order to assess the quality and value-added nature of our undergraduate instruction. As I explore what remains to be done, I will

organize the task into the four themes that align appropriately with Chancellor Fingerhut’s Plan for the University System of Ohio.



## 1. Access

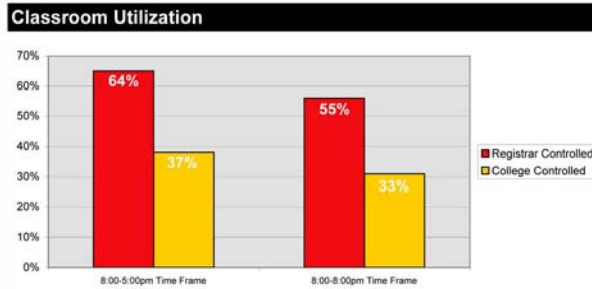
By now, most of you are aware that UC, along with key partners, both public and private, in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, are committed to every student graduating high school—no exceptions—and moving on to college and career. This ambitious effort, called **Strive**, will only become a reality if we improve educational access and quality from birth through career, inviting literally every college across campus to contribute to one or more destinations of the education roadmap.



At the same time, we know that access, especially for returning adult students and those who are fully employed in the workforce can be greatly expanded by our Distance Learning programs, among the largest programs in the state.

Not only have enrollments exceeded our initial projections, quality indicators such as student learning, retention, satisfaction, and appropriate time to degree indicate that we maintain the same high standards in our distance programs as in our face-to-face, residential programs.

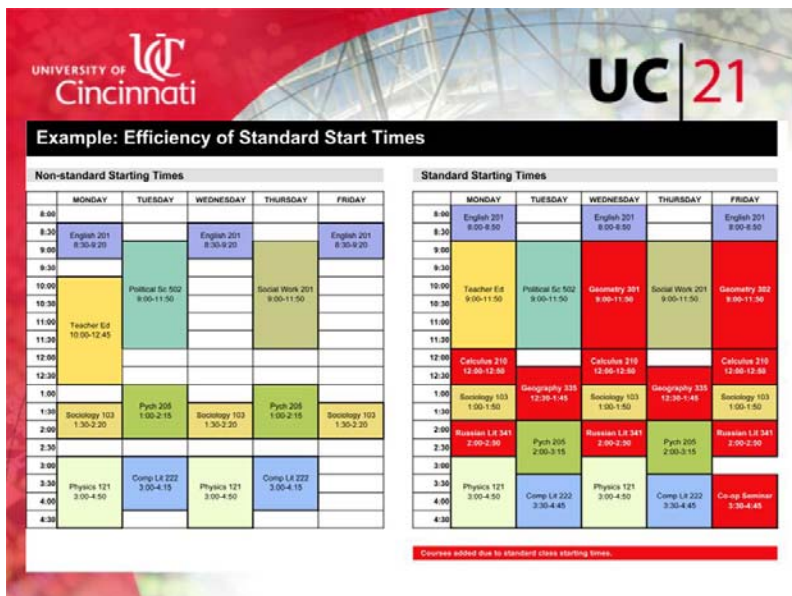
At the same time, we can take pride in the fact that our residential students really appreciate our small class size. Given the anecdotal preferences of both our faculty and students, it's not surprising that the most underutilized classrooms during the day tend to be from 8:00-10:00 a.m. and 3:00-5:00 p.m.



We can also observe that we are more efficient in utilizing classrooms in the all-university pool than those controlled at the college level.

Going forward, here are some questions to consider:

- Can we extend the hours of classroom use throughout the day and more dramatically in to the evening?
- Can we put our classrooms to better use on Saturdays?
- Can we teach required classes during non-peak hours?
- Can we increase the seat fill in each class?
- Can we match the enrollment size of the class to the size of the room?
- Can we create out of this maze of class start times, more standardization to more fully utilize classroom space?



- And, can we consider these steps without compromising the quality of our instruction?

## **2. Affordability**

While UC tuition remains a bargain compared to private colleges and universities, affordability continues to be one of the greatest challenges for our students and their families. New 21<sup>st</sup> century digital or mobile tools may offer opportunities for us to keep our costs down while rethinking the way we deliver instruction at UC.

### *The Campaign Case*

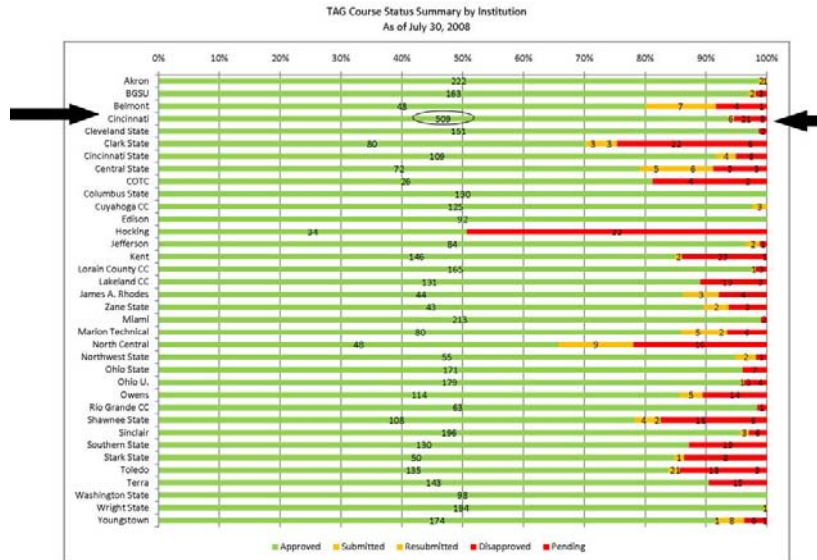
Clearly a big part of the solution to affordability is scholarships. With the launch of **Proudly Cincinnati**, we hope to shift more of our scholarship programs away from our general funds to other stabilized sources. Make no mistake about it, a central focus of our campaign is all about creating opportunity and affordability for all students who seek to call our campus home.

### *Strive*

And you should know that one of Strive's key goals is to make college more affordable to enrollees who come to us from center city schools. Not unlike what we've learned from the now widely-acknowledged Kalamazoo Promise, scholarships not only make college affordable, our feasibility study of the Strive College Promise indicates that this "promise" can help retain or return residents to our urban core, and attract new families too – making the proposed Strive Promise both an educational and an economic instrument of prosperity.

## **3. Efficiency**

Closely related to affordability, of course, is efficiency. We must be good stewards of our resources and aggressively pursue cost containment wherever possible. We have accomplished a great deal in effectively downsizing the administrative side of the house in recent years. What follows are a few recommendations about academic efficiencies that need our full attention in the months to come.



**TAGS**

This chart shows the total number of courses each university has reviewed in recent years in order to create the Board of Regents Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGS) implemented across the state to improve transferability from one institution to another. Why did we have to review over twice as many courses in these TAGS than other participating state four-year institutions to meet statewide transfer goals? I think the answer lies in streamlining course designations, and aligning credit hours.

**Credits to Degree**  
(Bachelor's Degrees – Uptown)

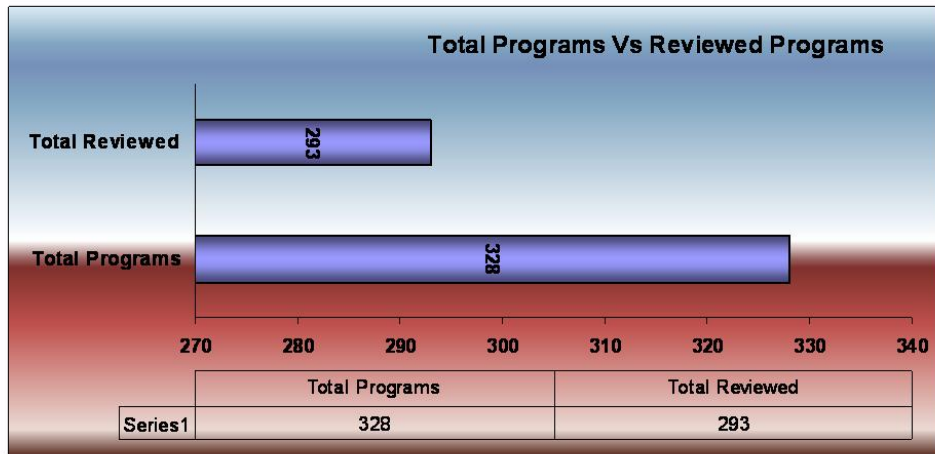
College	Credits to Degree Low/High	College	Credits to Degree Low/High
A&S	180	BUS	180/195
CCM	180/222	DAAP	186/209
CECH	180/196	NURSING	180/205
ENG	197/204	AHS	186/216
SW	180		

**Credits to Degrees**

As we pursue our charge to continuously improve programs, it seems we have consistently added without taking anything away. This chart

shows a sampling of credits to degree and calls for a review of the variance.

And while we're at it, how about course proliferation? Are we creating new courses rather than redesigning existing ones or eliminating obsolete ones? UC currently has 15,000 courses on the books, but we're not really offering all of those, nor should we. Apparently, we need an academic policy to sunset or retire courses no longer central to our contemporary degree programs.



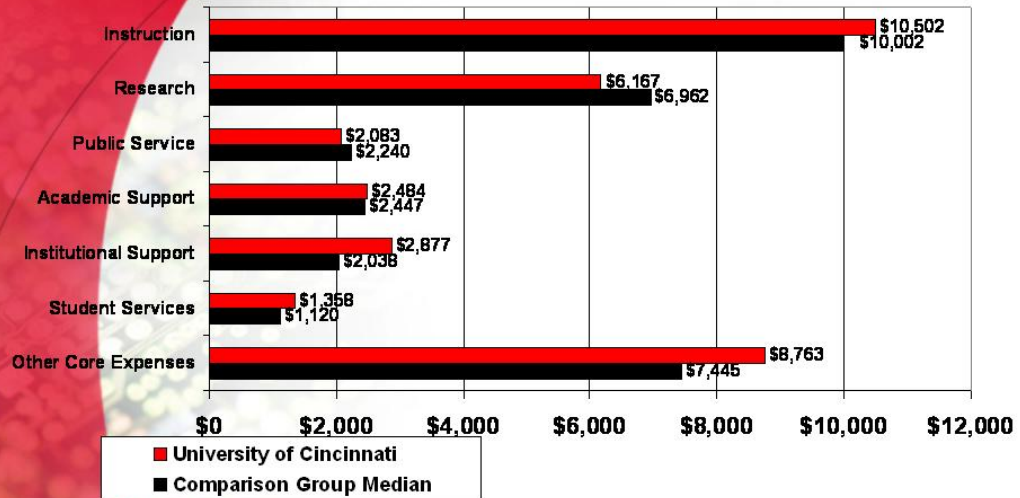
**Satisfactory: 99**  
**Unsatisfactory: 19**  
**Need more info: 147**

***Graduate and Undergraduate Program Review***

And while we're on the subject of course offerings, what about our program array? Just five years ago, we listed more than 470 offerings. How can we sustain such a vast array of degree programs?

The Academic Coordinating Committee, after extensive review, has narrowed that number considerably, and continues to work with each college to provide additional information and complete its review by the end of December.

Core Expenses per FTE enrollment, by function  
Fiscal Year 2007



***Cost of Instruction***

As this slide shows, UC — in the red — exceeds our comparison group — in the black. In order for this data to be most meaningful, we need to do more benchmarking by discipline. But in the meantime, I want to raise the question, are there ways to make our programs more cost effective?



## State of the University Address

### ***Performance-Based Budgeting***

Given the uncertainties of our economy, it is even more paramount to find ways to stabilize our revenues on our own and to “pay as we grow.” The key to this is Performance-Based Budgeting. Using solid enrollment management models, we are devising a plan that will grow our enrollments and allow our university and our colleges to share in that growth. We anticipate a large-scale pilot to begin immediately as we continue to craft the class for 2009.

### ***Integrated Planning of Financial, Capital and Academic Goals***

And ultimately we hope to achieve efficiencies by fully integrating our financial planning, academic planning and facilities planning into a melded, cohesive system. Led by our Office of Planning, Design and Construction, we are making steady progress with the help of the deans and our financial team.

### ***Quarters to Semesters - A Transformative Opportunity***

The USO strategic plan calls on us to use a common calendar so that students can move more easily from one institution to another. Currently, UC and three other state universities are the only four-year institutions who remain on the quarter system. Thanks to our UC task force on calendar conversion, we have identified the academic implications, costs and possible timelines toward a transition to semesters by the year 2012.

The conversion from quarters to semesters would galvanize the whole university community around a transformative re-thinking or “re-visioning” — a word used by the Task Force — of our pedagogy, a modernizing of the curriculum, and a systematic streamlining of degree-requirements. As a result, UC will become an increasingly attractive destination for first-time and transfer students seeking high-quality education that is more affordable in terms of both time and money.

Assuming a timeline leading to an autumn 2012 conversion in concert with Ohio University, Wright State, and Ohio State, UC would budget for this transition over the next two biennia. The Provost’s Office will assume responsibilities as the “transition” office, and orchestrate the curriculum redesign and provide “block grants” to the colleges for student advising and curriculum re-design. Our plan is to forward a resolution to the Board of Trustees at its November meeting to begin the implementation and financing of this conversion immediately thereafter.

***Where Tenure Resides — Administrative Design in Relation to RWC and Clermont***

Another important step in re-visioning our learning environment is to examine where our faculty are aligned within our own structure.

Just last week, the Provost’s Office convened a new Collegiate Restructuring planning team focused on our regional and Uptown campuses. Its charge is to develop a comprehensive process that will lead to a set of recommendations for achieving a heightened degree of inter-dependence between and among our regional campuses and Uptown.



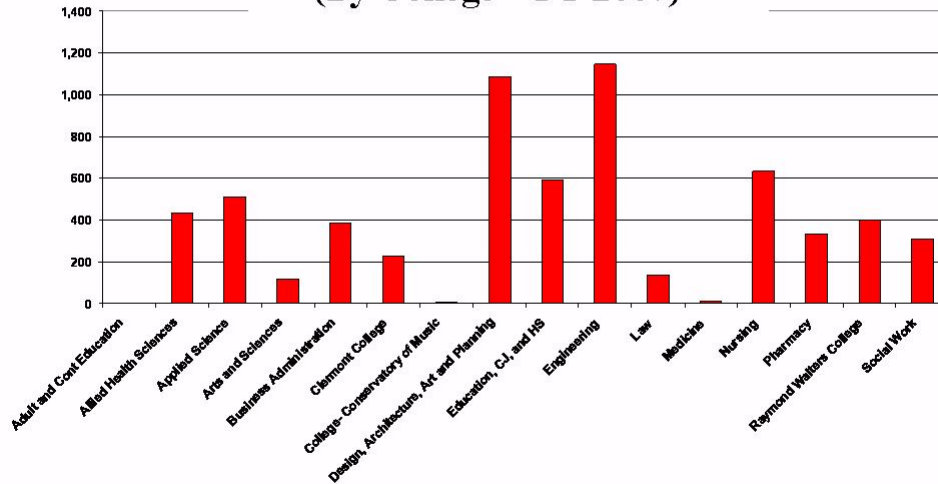
#### **4. Linking Quality & Economic Leadership**

I made numerous references to the quality of our academic programs. Now I want to comment on the USO linkage of quality to economic development — calling for all campuses in the USO to identify Centers of Excellence — centers that are intended to distinguish one university from another and build on our existing strengths and areas of potential growth. Our Centers of Excellence report is due by the end of June 2009, and we are hard at work on this task.

##### ***International Education***

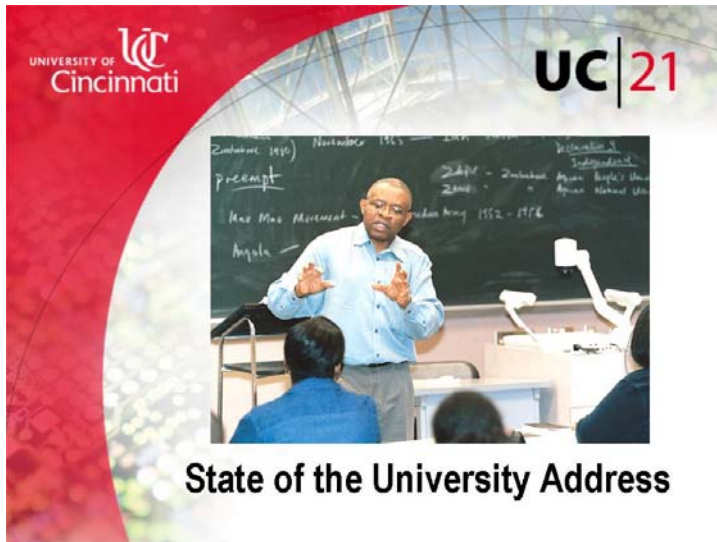
The economic downturn has only stood to reinforce just how interrelated our global economy has become. More than ever, our students need to experience other cultures and learn about the world outside our borders. We have made great strides in the flow of students and faculty here and abroad, and are determined to capture more exchanges and partnerships with key international institutions as we continue to define the quality of the learning experience through a global lens.

**Number of Undergraduate and Graduate Students  
Engaged in Internships and Co-op  
(By College – FY 2007)**



***Experiential Learning***

This year, our university, the birth place of cooperative education, saw record levels of students in co-op, along with record levels of income that they earned — \$35 million to be exact. Our strength as the founder of co-op and our Integrated Core Learning emphasis on experiential learning both beg the question: How can we achieve even greater scale here and put this valuable tool into the hands of more students? This graph shows us where our co-op and internship programs are already strong, and where we might have room for growth. Again, in the best interests of our students, can we create even more opportunities for the real-world learning they need to succeed?



#### **IV. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teaching and Learning**

Given all the ground I've covered today, I believe it's possible to capture our transformation as a 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning environment into three key steps:

First, I applaud the work of our academic leaders in clearly defining a pathway to stabilizing and eventually growing our revenue base through Performance-based Budgeting. Solid enrollment projections, managing the cost of instruction, and rewarding enrollment growth are key elements in aggressively and thoughtfully managing our future.

Second, by strategically synchronizing calendar conversion with collegiate re-structuring and curriculum redesign, UC can make "once in a lifetime" fundamental changes. These changes, combined with pedagogical and digital innovations and coupled with extraordinary strides in work-integrated learning, can position UC as a leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning.

And third, an expedited review of credits to degree, course offering designations and schedules, space utilization, regional and Uptown campus integrations, concomitant with calendar conversion, suggests a moment in time for the University of Cincinnati; and one that will carry long-term gains in the quality and caliber of our programs, our faculty and our students. No matter what role you play in the UC

family, this integrated approach to curriculum transformation holds opportunity for all.

In the words of our Future Forces Map, I close with this thought:

“The first lesson at the heart of the remaking of education is the appreciation that ‘schools’ [colleges and universities] and centers of learning must be life affirming organizations — for learners, their families, educators, and the broader community. The second lesson is consistent with the first: learning must be an ongoing process of becoming engaged citizens of a global society. Our ability to meet the social, economic, health, and climate challenges of the next several decades depends on our heeding these messages from the future.”

In keeping with our campaign launch, I’m Nancy Zimpher, and I’m **Proudly Cincinnati.**