

## The Student Success Initiative

### BACKGROUND

On February 12, 2016, at the annual State of the University Address in Portland, President Ed Ray made an “all hands on deck” call to some 700 alumni, students, parents, and friends of the University to join him in a bold commitment to raise and equalize OSU’s student success rates by 2020:

*I call upon you to join me in getting this right for every student at Oregon State University.*

*I make this pledge: that with our great university leadership team, with the right organization and plans, with a reallocation of current university resources, and with additional financial support from the state Legislature and friends and alumni like you, we will move immediately to make the kind of progress on student achievement that has eluded us for too many years.*

*We intend by the end of this decade to raise Oregon State’s first-year retention rate for all undergraduate students from 83.8 percent to 90 percent and OSU’s six-year graduation rate for all undergraduate students from 63.1% to 70% — without any achievement gaps for underrepresented, first-generation or Pell-eligible students.*

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) is OSU’s collaborative, integrative strategy to move the dial on undergraduate student success to attain these goals. Through an unprecedented partnership across OSU’s colleges, our central student support divisions and the OSU Foundation, the SSI will both leverage existing student success resources and seek to raise new resources to advance student success. The Initiative focuses on closing the cost-of-attendance gap for all qualified students, providing competitive recruitment packages for high-achievers, and investing in transformative experiential learning for all undergraduates.

This vision for the SSI is a draft strategy on which we are seeking comment from the OSU Board to help us launch for success. The SSI also presents a unique opportunity for alignment and collaboration between the OSU Board of Trustees and the OSU Foundation (OSUF) Board. The Foundation’s Development Strategies Committee previewed the SSI proposal at their March meeting in southern California and discussed a revised version at their May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. With input from those discussions having been incorporated, we now bring the SSI proposal to you for additional discussion about the Initiative and possible opportunities for joint engagement between the OSU and OSUF Boards to advance University student success goals.

### KEY QUESTIONS

Some of the important issues for discussion include:

- How effectively does the SSI address the core values and commitments of our University?
- How can we promote the Initiative internally (with faculty, staff and students) and externally (with alumni, state bodies, friends of the university, future students)?
- How can this initiative inspire donors to commit to supporting student success? What works in our approach and what is missing? What is compelling here? What is confusing

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or raises doubt?

- This effort will require the whole University to coalesce around one theme. How can we ensure that this effort generates a high level of commitment, collaboration and synergy?
- How can the OSU Board and the OSU Foundation Board collaborate to shape and support this initiative?

### NEXT STEPS

College and central university student success divisions will finalize action plans by the end of summer. The OSU Foundation will focus fundraising goals and approaches in the coming months. The University and Foundation will create dashboards to monitor progress toward goals. We anticipate an official launch in early fall 2016.