



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second University of Phoenix Academic Annual Report comes at a time of momentous decisions for the United States. As a result, this year's report begins with a look at the situation facing America (and specifically higher education) today. We then present the Academic Scorecard for the University of Phoenix. Finally, the report addresses various solutions that the University is pursuing as part of our philosophy of continuous improvement and transparency.

For the first time in history, a generation is coming of age while in danger of being less educated than the previous one. Unless action is taken immediately, a gap of highly skilled professionals will exist that will not be filled until access to higher education is increased for more than just traditional students who go directly from high school to live and study on campus. Traditional students make up only 27 percent of the undergraduate population today. They do not include a large number of underserved students who want to participate in higher education, but who are shut out of traditional institutions.

Several issues compound the severity of higher education's situation, including the changing demographics of American society, students who arrive at universities unprepared to meet the academic and social challenges before them, and an overarching call for academic accountability to students and the public in general. Completion rates have come under close scrutiny, as has the question of whether a college education actually is a wise investment of time and money for the student or for the public, without whose support, higher education of all types could not continue to exist.

The second Academic Annual Report takes an introspective look at student performance at the University of Phoenix. Several internal and external measures are reported, including the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills (SAILS), and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progression (MAPP) assessment. In all the assessments, University of Phoenix students' scores are comparable or better than the aggregate scores of their contemporaries in undergraduate education today. In addition, students at the University of Phoenix are able to work while earning their degrees. Many of these students report salary increases that are higher than the national average wage increase during the same time period. The cost to the taxpayer per student is examined and the results show that the University of Phoenix costs taxpayers substantially less than public and non-profit institutions.

Finally, based on what we have learned from the data in our first two Academic Annual Reports, we outline three initiatives the University of Phoenix is working to implement. These three, University Orientation, the First-Year Sequence, and Just-In-Time Remediation, respond to the four stated educational goals of the Obama administration and the Department of Education. It is in this spirit that the University is continually rethinking strategies for student access and success.

“Now, just as we've opened the doors of college to every American, we also have to ensure that more students can walk through them. That's why I've challenged every American to commit to at least one year of higher education or advanced training, because, by the end of the next decade, I want to see America have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.”

President Barack Obama