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In High Demand

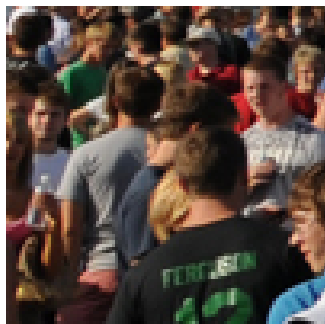
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In High Demand

01.09.2012 |

While applications to private colleges and universities are slowing across the nation, the University of Dayton is bucking that trend and has set a new record for applications for next year's first-year class.

Two months ahead of the March 1 deadline, the University had received more applications than last year's record total, according to Kathy McEuen Harmon, assistant vice president and dean of admission and financial aid, who estimated the final number will near 14,000.

That's not what seems to be happening across the country, said Barmak Nassirian, associate executive director of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. After private universities were flooded with applications in the last few years, the pace seems to be slowing down with what Nassirian called "a steady erosion of interest."

However, interest in the University of Dayton is running counter to that trend. To date, the University has attracted about 12,500 applications, a 20 percent increase over last year's number of applications at this time. Applications have been received from every state except North Dakota as well as 65 countries. The University is on track to break last year's record for international student enrollment.

"This speaks to the value of a University of Dayton education in transforming young people into successful professionals, people who give back to their communities," Harmon said. "There's still a lot of uncertainty about the economy but many of our families consider a University of Dayton education to be worth the investment."

With two large classes enrolled in 2011 and 2010, the University does not plan to overfill the fall 2012 class and will become more selective due to the large number of applications, she said.

Harmon said the University is reaching more prospective students than ever, using cutting-edge technology complemented by personal contact to acquaint them with the core values of the University's Catholic, Marianist education.

A key factor in this success seems to be the campus visit. Harmon said the percentage of students who visit campus and then apply has increased to 72 percent from 62 percent at the same time last year.

"We're using technology in a way that is building on our success," she said. "In addition to the personal contact prospective students have with current students who lead campus tours, our new welcome center engages them and conveys the unique aspects and core values of our Catholic, Marianist education."

"A Marianist education offers the kinds of skills graduates need to succeed in the future — collaboration, inclusion, excellent academic preparation and the ability to adapt with the times. Students and their families recognize that and are responding."

The University of Dayton, Ohio's largest private university and one of the nation's pre-eminent Catholic universities, continues to develop innovations in the admission process. Consider:

- Students who apply, complete the FAFSA and visit campus by March 1 will get four years of free textbooks.
- The new iPad viewbook application puts a window into campus life right in the hands of students, engaging them in fast-moving video, bold graphics and opportunities to videoconference with professors and admission counselors.
- In an "American Idol" twist, high school seniors are being invited to create videos on what servant-leadership means to them and compete for a total of \$50,000 in scholarships through a Facebook contest.

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