8-19-2011

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08.19.2011 | Students, Campus and Community, International

When classes start next week, the University of Dayton will set a new record, welcoming more than 1,000 new and returning international students to campus.

Of the more than 10,000 graduate and undergraduate students expected, about one in 10 will hail from another country, said Sundar Kumarasamy, vice president for enrollment management.

Also booming is total first-year undergraduate enrollment. The University expects about 2,050 first-year students, equaling last year's number, which was the largest class since the Vietnam War era and about 200 more than the University's goal.

"The message that the University of Dayton education is one of the most affordable private, Catholic schools in the U.S. is resonating around the world," said Kumarasamy. "Our top-quality education is an excellent value and equips students to succeed in a rapidly changing world."

About half of the total international enrollment is expected to be from China.

About half of the first-year students are coming to Dayton from places other than Ohio, as the University continues to attract out-of-state students.

For example, four families from Roswell, Ga., a suburb of Atlanta, are making the 500-mile trip together. They are renting a huge recreational vehicle and a van, decorated in Flyer red and blue, to transport their first-year students — and hundreds of pounds of clothing, electronics and other essential collegiate gear.

"Three of the students are from Blessed Trinity High School, and when we found out we were all headed to UD and met the other family, we said 'Let's make a memory out of this,'" said Eileen Cunningham, mother of incoming student Dan.

"We're all very excited. It's a wonderful Catholic school and a great size for our students," she said. "There's an increasing number of families from this area who are sending their children to UD."


Other new developments for the 2011-12 academic year:

* For the first time, new student orientation will include a service component, with donations of school supplies going to Crayons to Classrooms, a nonprofit teacher resource center. Crayons to Classrooms helps under-funded teachers from low-income schools in the region with free school supplies for economically disadvantaged students.

* The department of visual arts has completed renovations of 33,000 sq. ft. of space, consolidating classrooms, offices, studios, creative spaces, storage and gallery space from six different sites into a centralized location at College Park Center.

* Some 26 cross-discipline courses will be piloted this year in preparation for the first major revision of the undergraduate curriculum in 30 years, slated to begin fall 2013.

* A $3.9 million renovation of dining facilities at Virginia W. Kettering Residence Hall will open in October. Renovations to Stuart Field, home of many intramural sports, will also be completed this fall.

The University of Dayton remains one of the most affordable private, Catholic universities in the nation. U.S. News & World Report's 2011 edition of "America's Best Colleges" listed the school in the top 100 of its ranking of national universities.

The Princeton Review's 2012 edition of The Best 376 Colleges lists the University of Dayton in the top 15 percent of the nation's best institutions for undergraduate education.
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