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Inventions for a Better Life

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University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



Ahead of the Curve

05.15.2014 | Students

The University of Dayton expects to enroll one of the largest, most academically prepared and diverse first-year classes in its history in the fall.

With increasing competition for a dwindling number of high school students, the University of Dayton "is on pace to exceed all enrollment goals," according to Sundar Kumarasamy, vice president for enrollment management and marketing.

As the traditional May 1 deadline for students to submit deposits passed, the University has now received 2,163 seat deposits — more than 200 confirmations over its 1,950 goal. The fall class is expected to boast the highest average test scores in school history and is on track to be among one of the University's largest classes, rivaling the baby boomer era of the 1960s. It's expected to be a more diverse class, too, with the number of African-American and Hispanic students up significantly.

The University of Dayton received a record 16,579 applications.

Of significance: The University of Dayton is bucking a trend among private schools in the region. Approximately two-thirds of 35 small private colleges in the Midwest rated by Moody's Investors Service have experienced two consecutive years of smaller entering classes, according to a May 9 report in *Bond Buyer*. Some private universities in the Midwest have faced layoffs, and one recently merged.

Why the uptick in enrollment at the state's largest private university? Kumarasamy points to a number of reasons:

- Expanded efforts by the deans and faculty in the recruitment effort, particularly for minority students. "The faculty are deeply committed to academic excellence in their programs, and that shows when they interact with families," he said.
- A transparent guaranteed four-year tuition plan that promises families their student's scholarships and grants will increase every year to offset any tuition increases. In addition, the University has eliminated all fees and offers up to \$1,000 annually for textbooks for students who make a campus visit and file the federal student aid form (FAFSA) by March 1. "At the University of Dayton, there are no surprise costs," Kumarasamy said. "Families appreciate knowing upfront the full cost over four years and being able to plan for it," he said.
- The NCAA men's basketball tournament run with the Dayton Flyers appearing in the Elite 8 for the first time in 30 years. "That surge of national media attention had a positive influence in helping to increase visibility and enhanced the impact of other measures the University took to address a down market," he said.
- A continued strategic decision to diversify the University's enrollment — especially out-of-state and international — to combat the demographic trends in the Midwest. The number of students from outside Ohio continues to outnumber in-state students, with 54 percent expected to enroll from outside the state and internationally.
- Other value-added distinctions, including a four-year graduation pledge; a four-year guarantee of University housing to first-year students who make that choice; and study-abroad scholarships for select programs, including China.

"The University of Dayton has added these features because they align perfectly with our mission," Kumarasamy said. "We want our students to graduate in four years, experience our distinctive highly residential campus and study abroad because all graduates need to be exposed to global issues and cultures. It's part of our Catholic, Marianist mission to prepare students to succeed in diverse and global environments."

The University of Dayton remains one of the best values among nationally ranked private, Catholic universities in the nation. Founded in 1850 by the Society of Mary (Marianists), the University of Dayton is a top-tier national research university.

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