

Daniel E. Hall  
Miami Hamilton  
State of the Campus Address 2008

Good afternoon and welcome to the 2008 – 2009 academic year. As I begin my second term as dean of Miami Hamilton, I do so with great enthusiasm and pride - because over the past five years, we have accomplished much. And because when I think about what lies ahead, I am filled with optimism and hope. Each and every day the faculty, staff, and students of this campus make me proud to be part of the Miami Hamilton team.

Four years ago, one year on the job for me, during this same address, I answered the question that it commonly posed to newly appointed academic administrators: what is your vision for the campus? I answered that I see a campus that will continue its efforts to provide the highest quality education; that we will remain true to our access and opportunity mission; that we will become more sensitive to the needs of our students; that we will seriously examine our degree programming and develop new degree programs, particularly bachelor's degrees; that we will explore going residential; that we will be a more diverse campus than in the past; and we will become more community centered.

Although I knew these goals were ambitious, I had no idea how far we would come. Indeed, we are in the midst of the most significant period in the history of Miami's regional campuses, save their founding in 1966 and 1968. The most significant – indeed, monumental – change we are experiencing is our evolution from a largely two-year campus to a largely baccalaureate campus. When I first suggested this direction, I was told by many it could not happen. One faculty member predicted that the obstacles would be too high for us to overcome and went so far as to predict that I would, “melt down” like administrators before me.

Collectively we stayed the course; we followed our passion, and we didn't allow the obstacles, which were and continue to be real, to paralyze us. We were not deterred from what was the right course of action. It wasn't easy, as many in this room can attest to, but we were successful in a big way.

Happily for us, the stars aligned. Miami's change of president, a new, supportive provost, and now, a state administration that stopped asking why regional campuses in Ohio are offering

bachelor's degrees, and in a dramatic change of direction, started asking why we are not offering more bachelor's degrees all converged, resulting in our current metamorphosis. Our national recognized bachelor's degrees in nursing and engineering technology are now complemented by our new Bachelor of Integrative Studies. This degree, designed to deliver the best of Miami, is going to provide much needed opportunities for the people in our community. Moreover, its innovative and unique design, which capitalizes on Miami's outstanding liberal arts tradition and our stellar professional and upper division arts and sciences programs, is going to shake the academy. We have already begun to will field calls from other institutions who will want to borrow its innovative, 21<sup>st</sup> century architecture. [Recognize Lee, Michael, and others]

Even though it is the cornerstone of our bachelor's programming, the BIS is just the beginning. Further development of our academic portfolio is needed if we want to live up to the promise to be the region's public university. It won't be easy, however. We learned from the BIS that we have detractors, as well as structural obstacles, to continued development. As we were during the past year, we must be creative, persuasive, tenacious, and open to change.

Never before has technology played such a significant role in higher education and another dimension of our transformation has been the introduction of new technologically enhanced pedagogy. The development of Miami's first fully hybridized degree through our Saturday Select program was nothing less than revolutionary for Miami. As intended, it has provided new opportunities for students. But it has done more than that. It has also provided opportunities for faculty. George Vascik's account of how his traditional teaching has improved as a result of developing and teaching hybridized courses is testament not only to the vitality of George's mind and efforts, but to the importance of continuous teaching improvement for all of us.

We developed the pedagogical model, graduated over twenty faculty from the learning community, and fully developed all 64 hours of the program in only two years! Enrollments continue to grow, our sister campus in Middletown is now partnering with us, and our assessment efforts have established that this form of teaching can be as effective as traditional, in-class experiences, and we are now moving into fully online course development. This is nothing short of remarkable and the credit goes to Michael, Lee, the faculty, and staff involved in the program. Everyone involved, please stand to be recognized.

Responding to the needs in our community has also been a priority in recent years. Through the service initiative and special thanks to Provost Herbst for his support, we now have an elaboration of tenure and promotion that better rewards and incentivizes faculty for their service. Beyond this, through our new center for civic engagement, the appointment of a

director of civic engagement to coordinate our efforts, and our increased focus on student service learning, we are harnessing the intellectual and creative powers of this campus for the public good in ways we have not done before. We are also beginning to seriously conceptualize what it means to not only educate students in their chosen academic areas, but to prepare them to be responsible, contributing, and productive citizens. [recognize service committee members]

We have also deepened our community connection through Miami Hamilton Downtown. Incredibly, in one academic year, Chele Dienno and Jim Paulus have developed our little storefront location into a vibrant and engaging center with eight series featuring faculty from all three campuses, students from all three campuses, and community members. It is not an exaggeration to say that MUH Downtown is a magical space. And in the future, it will contribute mightily to our students' education as a portal for service learning and will continue to provide a venue for faculty to enrich their scholarship by engaging the public. [recognize Chele and Jim]

One of the many characteristics of this campus that I love is that we don't see the academic enterprise as a zero sum game. Even though we have further developed our curriculum, enlarged our teaching methods, and we have delved seriously into engagement and service, we have simultaneously enhanced our research support. Through the appointment of a grants coordinator, overhead sharing, and the appointment of a senior faculty member to support scholarship and creative activity, we have increased our grant awards and service to the scholars on our campus.

Preparing students for an increasing diverse world is also an imperative for us. In the past five years we have increased our minority student population, and under the leadership of Jimmie Jones and the diversity committee, we have established a new diversity plan with real, measureable goals and a new proposal to improve the recruitment of minority part-time faculty is in development.

Our notions are diversity should be broad. Indeed, we need to think globally. Thanks to the efforts of Chen Ferguson, and building on Miami's focus on China, we have begun to build important bridges with Chinese universities. Indeed, a delegation of EMBA students from Sun Yat-Sen University, a prestigious Chinese University, is coming to Ohio in September for a program on doing business in the United States. This is one of many initiatives the regional campuses will have with Chinese Universities in the upcoming years, all in an effort to increase the exposure of our students to foreign cultures and people and to better connect our communities, Ohio, and the nation with one the fastest growing economies in the world.

In addition to having the right programs and an outstanding faculty and staff, having a quality physical facility is important. I hope you share my opinion that our recent renovations have greatly improved the aesthetics and functionality of campus. In the next few years, the renovations will focus on much needed improvements to our academic areas - faculty offices and classrooms. In addition, other overdo renovations will occur to common areas, such as the plaza between Mosler and Rentschler, Harrier Drive, and the Mosler dock. Bob and Scott will tell you more about our renovation plans in a few minutes. Good facilities have to be maintained. And without a doubt, our PFD crew, grounds, custodial, and maintenance work hard to keep our facilities in excellent condition. Thanks to Scott and his entire crew!

Finally, the last major element of our metamorphosis is to begin thinking less as a campus and more as a regional system with three parts, MUH, MUM, and VOALC. The days of viewing our sister campus as a competitor must end. With the opening of the VOA Learning Center, which co-reports to both campuses, an increasing number of students who avail themselves of both campuses - and soon we will have students attend all three venues - and the increase in the number of competitors in the region, the need to unite is growing.

To this end, we are establishing common policies and practices and where appropriate, we are merging operations. For example, we now have an identity of hours for administrative offices, we share a budget officer, our continuing education units have been merged into one unit, now named the Corporate and Community Institute, we are merging all our E-Learning initiatives into one unit, several administrative directors are now meeting regularly with their counterparts at MUM, we are recruiting three new advancement positions, at MUH, MUM, and VOA, with the understanding that they will act as a regional team, and our marketing and PR teams have met and created new regional branding and marketing strategies. Without a doubt, bringing our campuses together into one cohesive operation has been, and will continue to be, challenging. But the realities of our time make it imperative that we do it.

All of these changes have produced concrete results. Enrollment is one measure of success and for several years Miami Hamilton has experienced continuous increases in enrollment. And the preliminary numbers for this semester are staggering. Enrollment is up an amazing 10% from this date last year! That is the largest increase in enrollment I have seen in MUH's records. [recognize admissions and FA, advising, LA, etc.]

You and I have been blessed to be part of this campus during a time of great, exciting change. Good fortune has unexpectedly befallen us, presenting us with a significant opportunity. And we can be proud of what we have done with this opportunity. As we celebrate our fortieth anniversary, let us take stock of what we have accomplished and the impact we have had on so many lives. But we must not become complacent or comfortable. We are transforming lives –

the lives of our students and their children and their grandchildren. We have an opportunity to increase our impact, to produce better citizens, and to be better citizens ourselves. This moment in time is ours. Let's embrace it and let's capitalize on it. As I said when I opened a few minutes ago, I am proud of you and I am proud to be a part of the Miami regional campus team.

### Reports

Enrollment, etc. (Daniel)

Introductions of new faculty and staff

Daniel (Annie), Lee, Bob, etc.

Academic Affairs (Lee)

Facilities Update (Bob and Scott)

Emergency Planning (Bob)

40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, etc. (Michael)