

**President's Forum  
East Room, Carver Pavilion, UIHC  
October 16, 2014**

Welcome to our first Presidential Forum of the academic year. Thank you very much for joining us this morning. I am always pleased to meet with you throughout the year to share important information about the university and its initiatives and to engage in conversation with you. As always, I thank you for your leadership and your dedication to the institution we all care deeply about.

Let me begin my presentation today with a new video that we are sharing with our alumni, donors, and friends at various outreach events. The video features stories that show the University of Iowa's talented students, our excellent programs, and our profound impact on people's lives.

*[Video is shown.]*

I am thrilled that we have so many new students at the UI this year who show the kind of promise we have seen realized in the video. This year, we enrolled the largest first-year class of Hawkeyes ever (4,666 students), as well as the most diverse (19% minority) and one of the best prepared academically in our history. We are poised for even greater growth with the fall 2015 completion of the new Mary Louise Petersen Residence Hall and the recently Regents-approved new residence hall, which will be built on the east side of campus near Burge Hall and the Iowa Memorial Union.

The success of our students and that of the faculty and staff who teach and support them are the main ingredients of the high academic achievement that we are so proud of at the UI. Our faculty, staff, and students continue to build a remarkable record of accomplishment. With the excellence that we have achieved and the further greatness we aspire to, it's not surprising that we rank among the nation's top 30 public institutions of higher education at number 27 according to the *US News & World Report*.

Our students achieve excellence because they study under faculty in some of the very best academic programs anywhere. We are very proud that 27 of our graduate programs and hospital clinical specialties rank in the top 25 according to *US News & World Report*, including 10 in the top 10 in the country.

Examples of other achievements in academic excellence across campus include our world-renowned Iowa Writer's Workshop, which regularly emerges as the number one program in the country. And the Tippie College of Business's finance program is listed among the top ten in the world by *The Financial Times*. We have been developing our entrepreneurship programs very aggressively in recent years, and we are proud that *Entrepreneur* magazine designated Iowa among the top 25 entrepreneurship programs in the country.

Of course, we are renowned for our health care and medical education, and we consistently earn top rankings in these areas, too. Earlier this year, our hospitals and clinics received designation as the top hospital in Iowa and one of the best in the nation according to *US News & World Report* with nine specialties highly ranked. The University of Iowa Children's Hospital also ranks among the best in the nation and has been recognized in eight specialties. This just adds to our pride as the spectacular new children's hospital building rises taller and taller on its new site near the main hospital. We have achieved this remarkable success and excellence in health care at Iowa for 23 straight years thanks to the talent, compassion, dedication, and hard work of the thousands of doctors, nurses, and staff members who work every day in our academic medical center.

What I'm especially proud of at Iowa is that we provide an excellent education at an affordable price. For the tenth straight year, the University of Iowa has been designated a "Best Buy" in the *Fiske Guide to Colleges*, one of only 23 public universities from the US, UK, and Canada on the list. The "Best Buy" designation is determined by a combination of high academic rankings, an inexpensive or moderate price, and a high quality of student life on campus.

Another point of special pride for me is our success in serving a very special cohort of students—our military veterans. Through innovative programming and support from our state legislature, we have been able to grow our veteran student population, and I see that growth only becoming stronger. Our dedication and hard work has paid off, and we are honored and delighted that the University of Iowa has been ranked among the top ten in the nation in *U.S. News & World Report's* guide to the "Best Colleges for Veterans."

We are working very hard to keep the excellent students we have at the university until graduation and graduate them in a timely manner. For example, about 250 students took advantage of our innovative pilot program this past summer—the Hawk Tuition Grant, which offers first-year students a resident tuition scholarship for up to twelve credit hours for summer classes at no additional expense to the student. This program not only generously supports Iowa students, but it also supports our efforts to increase our four-year graduation rate, which jumped from 48 percent to 51 percent last year. We are also maintaining an approximately 70% six-year graduation rate, which is well above the 54% national average.

We're also very proud of our increasing retention rates. The national average for retaining students between the first and second years of college is 76.7%, and we at Iowa have raised that to over 85% for several years in a row. We will continue working to push these rates higher.

One way we are doing so is that we are now automatically enrolling every student in our four-year graduation plan. In addition, we are in the early stages of developing a three-year graduation guarantee for students and programs where such a program would work.

Top rankings and student success factor into the value of the degrees that our students receive here at the UI, and it's one of the reasons why 90% of our graduating class in 2013 was either employed or in graduate school within seven months after graduation. We see the excellence of our graduates not just in these numbers, but also in the real-world work that Hawkeye alumni perform once they enter the workforce in their communities. We are very proud, for example, that across our state, 50% of Iowa physicians are UI-educated, 80% of all Iowa dentists have been trained at Iowa, 47% of all pharmacists in the state are UI-trained, and 80% of Iowa's K-12 school districts have UI-educated teachers and administrators.

With over 4,100 businesses hiring our graduates in recent years it is not hard to run into a fellow Hawkeye no matter where our state's citizens work. As I travel across the state and nation and talk with community leaders and business owners, I consistently hear that Iowa graduates are not just highly trained professionals but hard workers and caring community members. Our students are seen as the next generation of leaders, and I know that our hometown Hawkeyes will continue to bring innovation and excellence to communities across the state, nation, and world in the years to come.

The education of our students and the way we improve the lives of people across the state and nation are at the core of all that we do at the University of Iowa. The video we saw at the beginning of my remarks shows how our students are taking advantage of the impressive opportunities that we provide them at Iowa, as well as ways our research and clinical service can transform people's lives.

To conclude, please let me share with you one more short video. This features President Emeritus Sandy Boyd telling us about his Iowa experience, and then it highlights the innovations that the University of Iowa has been proud of throughout its history and some of our "famous firsts."

*[Video is shown.]*

Thank you once again for joining us this morning, and I thank you again, as well, for the incredible support, dedication, and leadership you provide to the UI.

At this time, I would like to turn the program over to our special guests today. Georgina Dodge, Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Vice President, and Wayne Jacobson, Director of Assessment in the Office of the Provost, will discuss the SERU Campus Climate Survey. Please welcome Georgina and Wayne.