

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD: Mission forward at Governors State University



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Classes begin Monday at Governors State University for the 2013-14 academic year— a historic time in GSU's 44-year history.

Founded in 1969, the year of the moon shot, GSU developed a logo that captures the upward momentum of that hopeful time in the nation's history. This year, we are talking about Mission Forward, reaffirming GSU's mission to provide "an exceptional and accessible education."

We are also referencing the mission to the moon by committing ourselves to upward momentum and to overcoming difficult challenges. In 2013-14, with the admission of freshmen, GSU will become a full- service university characterized by big ideas.

Our recruiters are telling our story to high school seniors, who can apply now to be members of GSU's first class. All freshmen must be full-time, daytime students.

The deadline for early action applications is Nov. 15. Admitted students will begin the new year with the confidence they have a place among our first 270 freshmen, with opportunities to participate in a unique, highly personalized program.

Students will join learning communities, taking at least three courses with the same group of students. New friendships will form naturally. Classes will be small, 30 students in most sections and only 15 in freshman composition.

With GSU's most affordable tuition and fees and opportunities for financial aid and scholarships, we are offering the best value in the state — maybe in the nation. For more specific information, please email Kristy (kgoodwin-peterson@govst.edu).

For those who decide to apply later and take a chance of being wait-listed, we will have a May 1 deadline.

GSU's freshman program reflects decades of research into students' motivation to persist and graduate in four years.

First-year courses will fulfill requirements of the Illinois Articulation Initiative and will therefore transfer to any Illinois college or university. These courses will be enlivened from within by writing across the curriculum, innovative and critical thinking, civic responsibility, and ethical decision-making.

Even as we recruit freshmen to spend four years at GSU, we continue our promotion of the dual degree program, our award-winning community college transfer strategy. We advertise both our own

freshman program and the dual degree program, cheerfully competing with ourselves. Students can choose the right approach for them.

We also believe a full-service university should expand living/learning communities 24/7, by offering student housing to all levels of instruction, freshman through doctoral. Prairie Place, our first student residence, is now under construction and will be ready in early summer 2014.

In June, after a decade and a half of delay, the first phase of our renovated science facilities opened. Students and faculty are now engaged in learning and discovery in laboratories worthy of the 21st century. The second phase of the science renovation will be completed in spring 2014. Get ready for big ideas.

A full-service university must be committed to a healthy mind in a healthy body. We are renovating our athletic fields to provide opportunities for lifelong recreational and athletic activities.

We expect GSU's role as a public square for the surrounding community will expand as the university grows. We are fulfilling our mission to share our forward momentum with the entire region.