

# O. U. President Responds

Dr. Peter H. Armacost, President of Ottawa University, discussed major areas of concern for the University in an interview with the CAMPUS. Among questions discussed in the interview were:

Dr. Armacost, you are entering your third year as President of Ottawa University; are you satisfied with the changes the university has seen during your administration?

In general, I am quite satisfied. I think we have made remarkable progress on several important matters. I qualify my response primarily because we progressed less rapidly than I had hoped on several matters and, of course, because there is so much to do. I think we can point with pride to a number of accomplishments.

1. We have approved a new and visionary educational program by an overwhelming vote

of faculty and trustees. A number of outside experts have described our Self-Study as the best they have seen. Our new program has met with enthusiastic response from prospective students, educators, alumni, church and business leaders. Perhaps most satisfying is the quality of faculty and student involvement in developing our new program.

2. We have been able to expand our faculty by over 20% during these past two years and the new faculty members are outstanding people. We have nearly doubled the proportion of the faculty holding the doctoral degree and of greater importance the new members of our faculty share the same concern for personal values and for teaching undergraduates as do our faculty members of longer tenure. Needless to say, the progress we have made

on faculty salaries makes an important contribution to the increased faculty strength. From 1967 - 68 to 1968 - 69 only 15 of the more than 2000 colleges and universities in the nation had a larger percentage increase in faculty salaries.

3. We have had substantial student involvement in the work of the Self-Study Committee, our faculty recruitment activities, and the Student Personnel Council. Student representatives have had opportunities to influence virtually every key decision of the past two years. The student Resident Director and Resident Assistant program are other steps toward more meaningful student involvement and leadership.

4. We have made a substantial beginning on the Educational Research and Development program which will be exceedingly important to us as we continue to evaluate and to

improve our educational program. This is vital to our desire to provide the highest possible quality in our educational program.

5. We have increased awareness of the nature of student life on campus and of some of the measures which will improve the quality of student life as we are able to implement them.

6. We have doubled our annual expenditures for the library.

7. We have taken major steps to strengthen and increase the efficiency of our administrative operation including added staff, new control report procedures, more sophisticated budgeting, systems analysis work for data processing. The net effect of these and other steps should in the long run result in much more effective and efficient use of our limited resources.

8. Last year we made sig-



DR. PETER H. ARMACOST

nificant progress in securing the needed financial support for our current budget. Our total gift income total rose from \$265,000 in 1967 - 68 to \$526,000 last year. Even so we fell short of our goal and our need.

Clearly this attention to recent changes should not cause

us to overlook the wisdom of our historic commitments and the loyal and extremely effective support of the faculty members who have been here for many years.

What concerns do you see as foremost for 1969 - 70?

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As I view 1969-70, my foremost concern is that we implement wisely and with vision the new program ideas which we approved last year. We do not want to spoil a great program by poor implementation. To this end faculty and students will need to work hard in a spirit of cooperation, understanding, and patience. At the same time, I am concerned that our planning for the new program will not cause us to overlook the fine educational opportunities this year and the immediate needs of students and faculty.

I am concerned also that we capitalize fully on the opportunities for community and for meaningful personal relationships among faculty and students which are possible because of our size. I am especially concerned that, as a Christian college, we give special attention to the quality of race relations on campus so that the true sense of community embraces all regardless of background or race.

I also hope that we can make substantial progress this year on studies of our religious life program and our student life policies and programs from the same perspective and, in the same depth as characterized our Self-Study effort last year. These matters have high priority as we begin the year as does our long-range planning activities.

It goes without saying that I am greatly concerned that we take the necessary steps to insure the financial future of Ottawa University. To this end we must devote special attention to our annual gift support.

Many questions concerning transition into the new program are being asked by members of the university community. What steps are being taken to facilitate this change?

First, the Self-Study Committee met last spring and identified twenty-one different steps in the implementation of our new

program. We are now proceeding with these steps as rapidly as possible. For example, the Core Committee has been appointed and four of its members participated in a workshop this summer to begin developing the curriculum for the Freshman Core.

Second, a key aspect of the responsibilities of Chuck Upshaw as Administrative Intern this year will be to identify the concerns of students during this period of transition and to help us draft procedures governing the change to a new program which will be fair to our present students. We will take every possible step to see that current students receive favorable treatment during the transition.

Third, each department is beginning the task of formulating its course offerings in the new program. We have budgeted funds so that leading experts across the nation can assist us in this task.

Two major areas - Religious life and student life - have been mentioned as priority items for examination in the upcoming year. What are some of the points you feel should be kept in mind as the community discusses these issues?

I think, first, that we should be mindful of our aims and objectives as a Christian College of liberal arts. Our historic commitments have been reformulated in the last two years with increased clarity and precision and we must now develop the programs and the policies which will be most effective in achieving these goals.

Second, we should remember that significant student learning occurs in a variety of settings--inside and outside the classroom, on and off campus. If we are to achieve our institutional goals, the quality of the total learning environment must be a joint concern of students, faculty and administration. In my judgement, students

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have been given too little responsibility on these matters in years past, but the proper corrective is greater student involvement in a community process rather than an abdication of responsibility for student life policies on the part of faculty and administration.

Third, we must consider carefully the background and personal characteristics and desires of our students. The objectives of our students are important considerations in developing programs and policies which will be educationally effective as well as providing a quality of student life which is personally rewarding to students.

Finally, we must consider together our assumptions about how students learn, and, perhaps more basically, our assumptions about human nature. Both of these matters have significant bearing on an approach to program and policy.

In both areas - religious life and student life - our basic commitment is to the development of policies and pro-

grams which are effective in achieving our institutional goals as a Christian college of liberal arts rather than with any defense of the status quo as such. We are open to change and we desire it in those cases where new policies and programs will enable us to do a better job. In view of the changes in students, their backgrounds and desires, over the past decade it appears possible that a number of changes would lead to a greater educational experience for students and a quality of student life that is more satisfying personally.

## *Board Has Cro*

The University Religious Board, a non-denominational co-ordinating body on campus, is looking forward to another exciting year. All religiously-oriented organizations are represented on the Board. A main goal this year is to achieve a true cross section of the University on its committees. The Coffeehouse, Lazarus Tomb, is anxious for new talent and entertainment, as well as persons interested in working