

Oral Roberts University (ORU): A BEACON OF INNOVATION IN THE GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION SPACE

Modern-day education is slowly slipping into the rabbit hole of becoming just a business. More and more, educators and students alike are viewing higher education simply as a gateway between academic life and the professional realm. But there is much more to education than getting ready for the next phase of your life. Only very few institutions across the globe acknowledge the importance of helping their students have holistic development. Located in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Oral Roberts University (ORU) has been a constant advocate of providing whole person education to the students. Guided by President Dr. William M. Wilson, ORU has been showing the world the success a higher education institution can have by concentrating on the overall development of a student. Taking the office as the fourth President of ORU in 2013, the work he has done and the changes he has brought to the University have been nothing short of inspiring.

His confident and forward-looking approach has served ORU very well as the University continues to witness a massive jump in the performance of its students both on and off the campus.

Leading through Example

ORU truly lives up to its name as a global higher education institution, currently educating students from over 115 nations. Operating with the mission to develop Holy Spirit-empowered leaders through wholeperson education, ORU has been raising its students to have a positive impact on the world. "ORU was founded on the principle of 'whole-person education', raising students as leaders in mind, body, and spirit. This is achieved through rigorous academic training, appropriate physical activity, and Holy Spirit-empowered Christian practice. It is, to our knowledge, the only University in the world founded on the power and principles of the Holy Spirit. Academically, ORU students are challenged to go beyond themselves by a first-rate faculty that truly goes the extra mile to help its students succeed both in the classroom and in life. The goal is to make our graduates spiritually alive, intellectually alert, physically disciplined, socially adept, and professionally competent", says Wilson.

ORU comprises of six colleges with bachelors, masters, and doctoral programs. These are the College of Arts & Cultural Studies, the

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College of Business, the College of Education, the Anna Vaughn College of Nursing, the College of Science and Engineering, and the College of Theology & Ministry. Through these six colleges, ORU currently offers over 135 undergraduate majors and minors, 14 master's programs, and four doctoral programs. Creating an atmosphere of supportive learning, ORU's wholeperson education model is a distinctive element, which attracts students to choose ORU. The school is also a non-denominational university welcoming students from more than 50 denominations.

A Powerhouse of Culture

Schooling students from a multitude of nations, ORU focuses on developing world-class leaders. The ORU community upholds strong



Dr. William M. Wilson, President

Since taking office in 2013, Wilson has led ORU through several consecutive years of enrollment growth, established global alliances on several continents, and spearheaded numerous campus improvements. Wilson also serves as Global Co-Chair of Empowered21, an initiative that unites ministry leaders, scholars, and next-generation voices from the Spirit-empowered movement. He has also authored several books, including *Father Cry*, *Foundations of Faith*, and *Fasting Forward*.

values and a commitment to character development that underpins excellence in academic endeavors. ORU recently opened the Global Learning Center where professors are using virtual and augmented reality to train students in a variety of disciplines including science, business, and education. The University has invested over 1 million dollars to establish a library of nearly 500,000 immersive learning experiences, and the University isn't stopping there. Recently, ORU began utilizing a device called the AI-enabled MQ-Mirror which allows students



to engage with all education systems and acquire global knowledge through a smart mirror. ORU has also recently opened a new Nursing and Engineering Complex as well as the Stovall Center for Entrepreneurship, both of which support students in state-of-the-art classrooms and learning environments.

With an impressive 16:1 student-faculty ratio, ORU is offering personalized attention and mentoring to the students for their development. Providing extra support to their international students, ORU has a dedicated International Student Center. Its mission is to support and empower international students to succeed socially and spiritually while creating global awareness across the University through intercultural events and study abroad opportunities. It also prepares students to understand how culture shock may impact them and what they may experience as they adjust to college life. With more than 65 student clubs on campus based on interest or field of study, international students can connect and find common ground with other students. ORU also provides a service called 'Family Connect,' which links international students with local families during the semester breaks and holidays. ORU has been growing consistently over the past 11 years, and the University has recently launched a new campaign named 'Whole Leaders for the Whole World' to continue improving the campus and services for students from every country in the world to study with ORU. Committed to developing its students holistically, ORU believes that learning is directly connected with the successful development of all other parts of a student's life.

