

Around the world in 60 sites

Article by Andy Ellis

Illustration by Hambright, Calcagno and Downing

Troy University and Phileas Fogg have something in common – both have successfully ventured around the world. The eccentric character from Jules Verne’s *Around the World in Eighty Days* rounded the globe to win a wager and satisfy his adventuresome spirit. TROY’s mission, on the other hand, has opened doors to educational opportunities in 11 countries and 13 time zones through its 60 campuses.

However, the University’s most recent journey makes Fogg’s trek seem like a walk in the park. On Aug. 1, TROY campuses will come together as one university under a single accreditation, an initiative that grew out of a strategic planning process aimed at positioning the University to more effectively and efficiently meet the higher education demands of the 21st century.

In 2000, the Board of Trustees and Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., discussed the future of what was then the

Troy State University System and how to make it an even better value for students and the citizens of Alabama. From that discussion, the board challenged Dr. Hawkins to develop a strategic plan that would bring the system together into a much more focused, integrated, cost-effective and innovative institution. That plan would transform TROY into One Great University, but to do so by Aug. 1, 2005, would require faculty, staff and administrators to tackle several key issues.

Literally hundreds of faculty and staff from throughout the University have helped to pave the way to One Great University, according to Dr. Cameron Martindale, senior vice chancellor of advancement and external relations.

“So many of our faculty and staff have gone above and beyond the call of duty, spending countless hours to help us come together as One Great University,” Dr. Martindale said. “We are also appreciative of our alumni who have given us their input. The



reception to our One Great University initiative has been wonderful. Our alumni have seen the value of a university that is forward-thinking enough to pursue such a monumental undertaking.”

Dr. Martindale said the public is invited to help the University celebrate this move at an academic convocation, scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on July 29 at the Davis Theatre for the Performing Arts in Montgomery. Dr. Jim Fisher, former president of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education and President Emeritus of Towson University, will deliver the keynote address.

One of the monumental tasks that had to be completed as a part of this initiative was the development of a common curriculum. The common curriculum will allow for the seamless transfer of academic coursework between the University’s campuses.

“Pulling together a common curriculum meant bringing together faculty from all campuses in each discipline,” said Dr. Robert Pullen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. It was a good process from the standpoint that the faculty from each campus came together and got to know each other. It has been a process that has really served to strengthen our

curriculum because we have been able to take the best that we have to offer from each of our campuses. We truly have redesigned the University from the bottom to the top.”

Issues surrounding admissions and student services, including the development of a common student handbook, have required countless hours of discussion and work.

“We actually consolidated our student handbooks from our various campuses in time for the 2004-2005 academic year,” said Herb Reeves, dean of student services. “We are tweaking it some but it reflects a common set of policies for our students whatever campus they attend.”

Other student services issues that had to be addressed included common identification cards, parking decals, activity fees and student governance.

“One change has been in the student activity fees,” Reeves said. “Students on the Troy Campus will continue to pay the \$108 activity fee. However, students on other campuses will now have the opportunity to pay a voluntary \$50 per term activity fee that will enable them to attend athletic events and campus activities and enjoy the same privileges as students on the Troy Campus.”

In addition, a plan is in the works to consolidate and outsource campus book store operations, according to Reeves.

“The successful bidder will run all physical campus book store sites, as well as our on-line operations,” he said. “In addition, we will be upgrading all of our physical book store locations.”

Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., says that through One Great University, Troy University has made a commitment to success.

“The creation of One Great University has forced us to leave the beaten path. We are blazing a new trail and, in the process, we will reinvent a university that will be the pride of Alabama,” Hawkins says. “We are here to serve students at home and around the world – that’s the most important thing we do. Our commitment to building One Great University is our commitment to their success.”

Ellis is a University Relations coordinator and editor of Troy University Magazine.