Dean Goes highlights growth, progress in annual 'State of the School' address

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Freeman School Dean Paulo Goes calls on a questioner during his annual State of the School address. The talk, which was part of the Freeman School's homecoming, reunions and parents weekend activities, took place in the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex on Friday, Oct. 20.

In his third 'State of the School' address, Dean Paulo Goes summed up the condition of the Freeman School in one word: Excellent.

"The freshman class that Tulane University just admitted, 54% of that class have declared they want to be business majors," Goes said. "That's a big testament to what we're doing here -- to the quality of what we do, to the experience that we offer, to the opportunity that we bring to the students. And I'm so excited to be part of that."

Dean Goes delivered this year's address as part of Wave Weekend '23, Tulane's annual celebration that combines homecoming, reunions and parents weekend. This year's event broke all previous attendance records, with more than 10,000 people registering for activities across the university and a sell-out crowd of more than 30,000 in Yulman Stadium for the Tulane-University of North Texas homecoming game.

Goes' address took place on Friday, Oct. 20, in the Goldring/Woldenberg Business Complex before an overflow audience of Freeman alumni, parents and friends.

At last year's State of the School address, Dean Goes outlined the school's newly released five-year strategic plan, laying out the goals and initiatives proposed in that document. For this year's presentation, Goes provided a status update, highlighting action items that had been completed and initiatives that had launched.

"A year ago, I was giving the audience like yourselves some ideas about what that plan was," Goes said. "I am very happy to report that we have made a lot of progress already in our first year."

Among the success stories Goes noted were:

- The launch of a new full-time MBA curriculum
- The launch of an online MBA program
- The launch of a new undergraduate minor in Entrepreneurial Business
- Development of new certificate programs in Real Estate Finance & Investment, Entrepreneurial Hospitality, Energy, and Sports Management

Referring to the Sports Management certificate, Goes said, "I talked to Coach Willie Fritz last night actually, and he was very excited. He said, 'I've got 32 football players in the business school, they all want to be in the sports industry.' So I think it will be a big hit."

Another central focus of the strategic plan was experiential learning. Goes highlighted efforts to expand experiential learning opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

"If you look back at the strategic plan, experiential learning was a recurring theme that we are going to be moving towards, and we are accomplishing that," Goes said. "It's something that is going to be part of our DNA. If you go to the Freeman School,

you do experiential learning, you work on real projects and you're able to solve real problems."

Sustainability and energy transition was another theme of the strategic plan, and Goes noted that through the Tulane Energy Institute, students have opportunities for real-world experiential learning in this critically important field.

At the graduate level, Goes touted the school's four MBA options, including the redesigned full-time MBA and the new online MBA, the school's first fully online degree program. He also highlighted the part-time Professional MBA and the accelerated Executive MBA, and announced plans to hybridize those programs to enable students to combine in-person and remote learning opportunities.

He also saved time to field questions from alumni and parents, who queried him on topics including business school rankings, internships, study abroad and the growing impact of AI.

In concluding his talk, Goes said Freeman was well positioned for the future of business education.

"It's a school that's on the move, it's a school that's growing in size, it's a school that is addressing the needs of real businesses," he said. "We're checking all those boxes, and we're excited that things are going very well."

View photos from the Graduate Reunions party and Black Alumni Brunch and Bubbly on Flickr.