

Bluffton University and University of Findlay merger will not proceed

SECTION: [BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY](#) / FEB 27, 2025

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Bluffton University was informed that the University of Findlay Board of Trustees voted on Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, not to proceed with the joint application to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for merger approval and to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding signed on March 19, 2024. This decision comes after nearly a year of collaboration and preparation for the proposed merger.

The university issued this statement:

The merger work has resulted in an invaluable reflective process for both campuses as we have examined our strengths, areas for growth and capacity to change. The due diligence of the past year will help each university move forward in important ways.

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“While the outcome of this vote was not within Bluffton University’s control, we remain confident, optimistic and steadfast in our commitment to the future of our institution,” said Cheryl Hacker, Bluffton University Board of Trustees Chair. “Bluffton University continues to be financially stable, strategically independent, and well-prepared for the future. This decision does not diminish our core mission ‘to prepare students for life as well as vocation...and ultimately for the purposes of God’s universal kingdom.’”

The university, under the new leadership of Acting President Dr. J. Alexander Sider, remains focused on continuous improvement, student-centered initiatives, and collaboration both within and outside the institution to build a sustainable, forward-looking future. Bluffton is committed to creating new opportunities for students and forging meaningful partnerships that align with its mission and values, and looks forward to strengthening its position as a leader in higher education.

“We will continue to embrace the strengths that have made Bluffton University a place where students thrive—innovative programs, a caring community, and a shared commitment to excellence,” said Hacker. “As we pivot in a new direction, we will use this opportunity to evolve in ways that enhance the lives of our students, faculty, and staff.”

Bluffton University will provide additional updates as necessary and will continue to explore strategic partnerships that support the long-term goals of the institution and the students it serves.



“Today, Bluffton stands as a unified institution ready to capitalize on new opportunities,” said Hacker. “Though we had a moment of disappointment, our commitment to academic excellence and community impact remains our driving force. We have proven our willingness to make bold moves and remain excited for what the future holds as we look forward for our current and future students.”