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Subject: Spring Enrollment Increases at Ferris
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Included below is a press release regarding spring enrollment figures at Ferris State University. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Officials Report Increase in Spring Enrollment

BIG RAPIDS – As the new year begins so do spring semester classes at Ferris State University, where officials are reporting spring enrollment figures remain healthy.

The fastest-growing public university in Michigan, Ferris officials report there are 12,687 students enrolled systemwide. With 280 more students attending classes in Spring 2009 over 2008, this translates into a 2.3 percent enrollment increase systemwide.

In particular, the university's College of Allied Health Sciences has seen enrollment growth of nearly 12 percent over this time last year, said Dean of Enrollment Services Kristen Salomonson. The university also continues to see steady growth in online learning and in its freshman student population.

“Strong growth in the College of Allied Health Sciences illustrates Ferris’ ability to remain nimble and offer degree programs students want, and offer career opportunities with a positive occupational outlook,” Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs Dan Burcham added.

Such programs include a new Associate of Applied Science degree being offered in the CAHS, Salomonson noted. The curriculum allows recipients of Tuition Incentive Program (TIP) funding the ability to earn a two-year degree, continue pursuit of a bachelor’s degree and remain TIP eligible. TIP program funding assists low-income students by providing tuition assistance for the first two years of college and beyond. Eligibility requirements are set by the Michigan Department of Human Services.

The A.A.S. also is beneficial to students, who for a variety of reasons, decide to step out of their program, or who are unable to progress in their program of choice, by providing them with a core set of skills that will allow them to obtain employment in a health care setting. According to CAHS Dean Ellen Haneline, there are 25 to 30 students each year that are unable to enter their degree program of choice, with half of those students choosing to leave the University without a degree.

The A.A.S. degree provides an opportunity for those students to obtain a degree that will lead to their employment in the healthcare field.

Along with its degree offerings, the University also offers students a wide array of scholarship opportunities that help defray the cost of obtaining a degree at Ferris, Burcham said. Nearly 7,000 scholarships worth a total value of \$18.9 million were awarded to students for the 2008-09 academic year.

Included in that funding was \$2.1 million in Ferris grant money that was distributed among approximately 1,500 students qualifying for need-based assistance. Salomonson noted the university is helping more students today, with total financial aid funding increasing in just a few short years from \$81 million to more than \$100 million today.

“Traditionally, Ferris students have been financially challenged, and if students want to come to school, we want to make sure we can help them,” Salomonson said.

“The student-centered approach of our faculty and staff has created a supportive educational environment for which students are responding positively,” Ferris President David Eisler said. “The kind of career-oriented education we offer is important to students today. Our graduates leave with degrees that prepare them to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy.”

Besides its main campus in Big Rapids, Ferris offers degree programs in Grand Rapids through the College of Professional and Technological Studies, and at Kendall College of Art and Design, and at more than 20 off-campus locations throughout Michigan.

Enrollment has remained steady at the university’s Big Rapids campus, with 8,989 students enrolled. There are 2,441 students enrolled in the College of Professional and Technological Studies, and other sites throughout the state, an increase of 230 students.

Kendall also saw an enrollment increase, with 1,257 students attending classes this spring.

“It is gratifying to see how much the programs we offer are resonating with students,” KCAD President Oliver Evans said. “With faculty who are professional artists and an atmosphere that promotes creativity, Kendall attracts some of the most talented young artists and designers around.”

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