



## PRESS RELEASE: Ferris State University Responds to Budget Proposal

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Included below is a press release regarding a response by Ferris State University President David Eisler to the budget proposal of Gov Snyder announced on Thursday. Any questions regarding this release can be addressed to Marc Sheehan, (231) 591-3965 or Sandy Gholston (231) 591-2021. Sandy Gholston can best be reached by e-mail after 5 p.m.

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### Ferris State University Responds to Budget Proposal

BIG RAPIDS – Governor Rick Snyder’s announcement today that higher education funding will be cut by 21.9 percent is an unprecedented challenge to Ferris State University and its students. If enacted in its entirety, the cuts would mean the loss of nearly \$10.6 million to the University – or more than \$780 for each student enrolled. This would be the largest funding decrease in the history of the University.

“By any standards this is a historic shift in how the state funds higher education,” said Ferris President David Eisler. “Michigan’s needs well-educated, productive workers who will reverse the state’s economic situation. We will work to temper the negative impact these cuts will have on producing the graduates our state needs.”

Although the scope of Gov. Snyder’s proposal is historic, the university has already taken steps in line with the fiscal realities of the state. In the past two years the university has reduced its staffing by more than 100 full and part-time positions. This and other actions should help reduce the impact of the state’s disinvestment, although the size of the cuts means extremely difficult decisions lay ahead.

“Our first priority is our students and the continued high quality of their education,” said Eisler. “During my eight years as president, we have never increased tuition to cover reductions from the state. We remain dedicated to constraining costs and maintaining quality.”

The governor has proposed a reserve fund of \$83 million for universities that hold tuition increases to less than seven percent. Assuming all state universities hold costs below this level – as Ferris State University has done since at least 2003 – the impact would be a 15 percent reduction in funding. That reduction would still be the largest in the university’s history at more than \$7.3 million.

A 21.9 percent reduction in funding at Ferris State University would mean that the state would contribute approximately 21 percent of the cost of a student’s education. With a 15 percent cut

the state would still contribute less than a quarter of the cost of a college degree.

The impact of other details of the governor's plan, such as rolling funding for higher education into what would effectively become the K-20 budget, remain to be seen.

“Over the past decade in Michigan our state government has steadily stepped away from its financial responsibility to public universities,” said Eisler. “What was once a state commitment to higher education has now become the financial responsibility of our students and their families. This is a disappointing turn of events that is not likely to be reversed.”

The governor's proposal will be reviewed before a budget is passed by the state legislature. The university will remain engaged with lawmakers to shape legislation to keep a Ferris education within the reach of the record number of students who are enrolled. This is in keeping with Ferris State University's continued commitment to educational access, student success and providing graduates to lead Michigan's economic recovery.

- 30 -

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