



**PRESS RELEASES: Ferris State University Board of Trustees meetings (Dec. 17)**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

12/17/2010 02:26 PM

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Included below are a series of press releases from Ferris State University's Board of Trustees meeting on Friday, Dec. 17. Any questions can be directed to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services, using the contact information in this e-mail.

For Immediate Release  
Dec. 17, 2010

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### **Board of Trustees Approve Academic Degree Changes**

**BIG RAPIDS** – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees, in a special session today (Dec. 17), approved a series of changes related to academic degrees.

Trustees approved a new academic concentration in Sports Communication, the reinstatement of the Bachelor of Science degree in Social Studies Education and a new academic minor in Medical Informatics.

Due to the growth of sports as an industry, University officials sought to address statewide, regional and national needs for support personnel to administer, market and broadcast events. The 2010-11 edition of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (a biennial publication on employment projections from the U.S. Department of Labor) predicts that jobs in the sports industry will increase 20 to 25 percent during the next six years, second only to careers in the healthcare industry. It is the intent of the University to begin enrolling students requesting the Sports Communications concentration beginning in the Fall 2011 semester.

The addition of the Medical Informatics academic minor, approved for implementation in Spring 2011, is in response to healthcare information technology becoming one of the hottest career options for graduates according to a new trend study from the University of California. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that professional and service (healthcare) occupations will account for more than 50 percent of the total job growth during the next decade. Courses for the new minor will be offered online, and those courses that are not currently being offered online will be transitioned to an online format. The minor will require students to be familiar with computer software, maintaining electronic health records security and analyzing electronic data to improve healthcare information and health information networks.

“A university curriculum is a dynamic enterprise where new programs are created and innovative ideas are implemented,” said Fritz Erickson, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Ferris. “We are excited about the opportunities to align programming with student and

development interests.”

The trustees also reviewed and evaluated the possible closure of several existing academic programs.

In other board news:

- Trustees approved and ratified the collective bargaining agreement tentatively agreed to on Dec. 2 between the Ferris State University Board of Trustees and the FSU Birkam Health Center Registered Nurses Unit, Teamsters, State, County and Municipal Workers, Local 214, affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The agreement is in effect through June 30, 2015.

- 30 -

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### **Trustees Authorize Purchase of Medical Mile Space for Pharmacy Students**

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees, in a special meeting today (Dec. 17), authorized the purchase of space on Grand Rapids’ Medical Mile that will be used to deliver instruction to third- and four-year Doctor of Pharmacy students.

Earlier this month, the Michigan legislature approved a \$6.6 million capital outlay to support this initiative that will create spaces expected to be ready for class work beginning with the Fall 2011 semester. The College of Pharmacy will be locating third- and fourth-year students in close proximity to the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, the Van Andel Institute, and principal Spectrum Health hospital and medical clinic areas.

The legislative action will facilitate the alignment of the space for experiential pharmacy learning and clinical practice, with varied labs for computer support and digitally-rich distance learning.

- 30 -

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## **Ferris Trustees Approve Housing and Dining Rates**

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees today (Dec. 17), in a special session, approved a housing and dining rate increase of 1.9 percent beginning in the Fall 2011 semester.

“The trustees approved the increase earlier in the year to allow students and their families the ability to compare rates to other options as they make their decisions prior to University room sign-up in February,” said Jerry Scoby, vice president for Administration and Finance. “The University’s plan is to hold the line and not increase meal plan costs where on-campus residents are not required to purchase a meal plan.”

Beyond typical expenses, price sensitivity of students and families is a major factor the University considers as it sets rates. The rate adjustments historically have reflected this issue; however increased sensitivity in this economy has caused this to be a more significant component.

“The goal is to set rates as low as possible to minimize the cost of attendance for students and to better position the rates with the other public universities in Michigan,” Scoby added.

Room and dining rates for residence hall students will increase from \$8,580 to \$8,744, annually, for a standard occupancy room and unlimited meals seven days a week on the bronze and silver plans (a popular plan for students). The increase will allow the University to continue to provide students with quality and flexibility in housing and dining options, and to maintain facilities.

- 30 -

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