

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
August 22, 2011

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## Welcome Back

As we gather to begin the academic year, I hope this summer provided you time to spend with family and friends, travelling or just relaxing. While summer is when the fewest number of students are on campus, much activity does take place. If you were on campus you undoubtedly saw the many large groups of new students we hosted for orientation. These students arrived in record numbers, and it was exhilarating to see their energy and excitement as they prepared to begin their studies at Ferris.

I want to extend my thanks and congratulations to everyone who made these sessions possible, and who worked so hard to make these students' time on campus as positive an experience as possible. Certainly kudos to everyone in Admissions and Enrollment whose planning helped assure that these students received all the help they needed. Faculty, advisors, department chairs and deans provided advising support in getting students registered for classes. Our Physical Plant employees kept our campus looking extraordinary throughout the summer months - sometimes in the face of adverse weather conditions. And if you ate at The Rock at any time these past couple of months, you know the great work they do to serve students, campers, faculty, staff and guests. Making our campus a welcoming place is an endeavor that requires the participation of the entire Ferris community.

As a result we are again looking at a record number of students for Ferris State University. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the welcoming spirit that has played such a part in our strong enrollment numbers these past several years.

## People

The start of a new year brings new people to our University. New faculty have spent the past week in orientation. It was my pleasure to welcome many of them to Ferris State University at orientation sessions last week. My thanks to everyone who helped contribute to this useful welcome to Ferris. New members of our teaching faculty include the following:

- Steven Amey, Criminal Justice
- Gabor Barsai, Surveying Engineering
- Rhonda Bishop, Nursing
- Karyn Bledsoe, Sport Entertainment & Hospitality Management-PGM
- Daniel Boyle, Social Sciences
- Adam Clark, Interior Design/Furniture Design/Design Studies, Kendall
- Amy Dinardo, Optometry
- Daniel Durosoy, Mathematics
- Gerald Emerick, Accountancy Finance & Info Systems
- Cheryl Endean, General Education, Kendall
- Jordan Fenton, Art History, Kendall
- Rachel Foulk, Humanities
- Sharon George, Educational Counseling

Lawrence Getubig, Photography, Kendall  
Paul Long, Architecture & Facility Management  
Arinze Okere, Pharmacy  
Bunnita Ouwinga, Criminal Justice  
J. Penn, Social Sciences  
John Shaw, Photography, Kendall  
George Sherlock, Humanities  
Kate Silvio, Sculpture and Functional Art, Kendall  
Devon Slattery, Drawing & Printmaking, Kendall  
Anne Spain, Biology  
Daniel Tuuri, Accountancy Finance & Info Systems  
Charles Vannette, Languages & Literature  
Michael Vasicek, Criminal Justice  
Kari Vavra, Pharmacy  
Aaron Waltz, Sport Entertainment & Hospitality Management-PGM  
Laura Whatley, Art History, Kendall

There are a number of people who have accepted new responsibilities in Academic Affairs. With the new academic organization, Bill Potter has been named an associate provost. Karen Strasser is now dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. In that college new department heads include Sandy Balkema, Languages and Literature; Joseph Lipar, Biological Sciences; and Trinity Williams, Humanities and Katherine Harris is a faculty associate for special projects. In the College of Pharmacy, Greg Wellman and Mike Bouthillier have been named Assistant Deans and Cambia DeHoag is the Department Head of Pharmacy Practice. Glen Okonoski is now Department Chair of Television and Digital Media in the College of Education and Human Services. Debbra Curtiss is the new Director of the Northern Michigan Regional Center in Traverse City.

### **Facilities**

Physical changes have also taken place on our campus during the summer months. Pennock Hall is gone, replaced by a new parking lot, which will serve students in nearby residence halls. Before, many of these students parked at the Ewingleben Sports Complex and had to walk down the hill, which was difficult in winter conditions and not lit well at night.

The initial stages of preparation for the University Center project are underway. As a result, Housing and Judicial Services have moved from the Rankin Center to Helen Ferris Hall. This move accommodates the relocation of telecommunications from Masselink Hall to the Rankin Center. This fall both Carlisle and Masselink Halls are empty and the parking lot behind these halls is now open for commuters. This allows the parking lot east of Hallisy and Vandercook Halls to become a residence hall lot, providing easy access to these facilities as well as Clark Hall.

Other residence hall changes include the opening of Ward Hall after a year of renovation. Plans had been to close Miller Hall this year for similar renovation. However, nearly 300 more students than planned requested residence hall housing. As a result, Miller Hall will remain open. As we transition telecommunications to the University Center, telephones in student residence halls have been eliminated. Student use of cell phones has made this service unnecessary.

There have been some office changes over the summer, including the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning moving to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the FLITE library and the Office of International Education relocating to space in the IRC.

Three recommendations from the Pedestrian Safety Task Force have been implemented. There is a new pedestrian stoplight on State Street in front of Williams Auditorium. This is a much needed improvement in what had been a dangerous crossing zone for our students. The intersection of Stadium Drive and Campus Drive at the northwest corner of Top Taggart Field is now a three-way stop eliminating a difficult traffic pattern. There is a new sidewalk on the west side of the street north of Timme Student Services building, running along the east side of lot 27 to help facilitate pedestrian traffic between FLITE and the Timme Center.

Long overdue improvements were made to the mechanical systems for the swimming pool in the Student Rec Center. New directional signs have been placed around campus and are meeting with positive responses. In Grand Rapids work continues on the 25 Michigan Avenue project for our third-year Pharmacy students. This should be completed in November. Also in Grand Rapids, the renovation of the historic Federal Building is on target for completion in March.

We will have new bus service between Big Rapids and Grand Rapids beginning on Monday, Aug. 29. The bus originates in downtown Grand Rapids at the Grandville Ave. central station of The Rapids – Ferris’ partner in the service. Its route to and from Ferris’ main campus in Big Rapids includes one scheduled stop at the Cedar Springs Meijer. In Big Rapids the bus stops at the Northwest entrance of the Science Building on the university campus. More information about the service, including schedule and fares, is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/current/shuttlebus>.

### **Founders Day**

On Thursday, Sept. 1, we will commemorate the 127<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Ferris State University. Founders Day provides us a unique opportunity to reflect upon where we are and where we are headed. At 11 a.m. in the Rankin Center Dome Room I will offer thoughts on our history and the many opportunities and challenges that lie ahead of us. Afterwards, we will have our traditional campus picnic lunch under the big tent on the Quad.

At 2 p.m. the History Task Force has placed new stained glass windows in the Ferris Mausoleum and will be dedicating those in Highland Cemetery. The old-fashioned ice cream social will take place in the Quad from 4-7 p.m. In addition to free ice cream there will be music and many activities. Please make time in your busy schedule at the start of this year to take part in this celebration of our founders, Woodbridge and Helen Ferris.

### **New Students**

During the next few days we will welcome many new students to our campuses. Thank you in advance for taking time to help them feel at home at Ferris. We never know when just a few moments might make a lifelong difference for a student.

I look forward to talking and visiting with you as we begin the year.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President