

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 8, 2010

Opportunities for Engagement

Recently I have been struck by the large number of opportunities that exist for faculty, staff and students to engage in forums and initiatives that will help shape the University's future. These opportunities illustrate a commitment to openness and transparency. There are a wide range of areas in which members of the University community can provide input that will help shape important decisions. These opportunities include -

- **Academic Affairs organization review.** Provost Fritz Erickson and I have met with eight colleges so far regarding a proposed review of our academic organization. We appreciate the many faculty and staff who have attended and the insights and suggestions they have provided. On Tuesday, Nov. 30, we are scheduled to meet with the College of Arts and Sciences from 11-11:50 a.m. in SCI 126, and the College of Professional and Technological Studies from 1:30-2:30 p.m. in ALU 109.
- **Budget forums.** Two budget forums are scheduled for this week to discuss the economic health of our state and its implications for higher education. These forums will take place Tuesday, Nov. 9, at 1 p.m. in the Rankin Center's Centennial Room, and Nov. 10 at Noon in the West Campus Community Center. I look forward to visiting with you about our budget.
- **Energy saving efforts.** A new Energy Conservation Task Force has been formed to help make Ferris a "greener," more energy-efficient University. The task force will be looking for your input on specific, practical ways we as members of the Ferris community can help save energy and operate more efficiently.
- **General Education.** The General Education Task Force has developed the revised General Education Philosophy Statement and recently released a first draft of learning outcomes. Additional information is available here - <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/academicaffairs/vpoffice/senate/GenEdTaskForce/homepage.htm>
- **Higher Learning Commission.** Between now and April 18-20, 2011, our HLC Steering Committee will be making final preparations for our accreditation site visit. The October 25th version of the self study is accessible here - <http://www.ferris.edu/hlc/drafts.htm>
- **Strategic Planning and Resource Council.** SPARC currently meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 3 p.m. in West Campus Community Center. Tomorrow's meeting will focus on facilities planning and student success. SPARC meetings are open to all who wish to attend.
- **Administrative Employee Meetings.** As a part of soliciting input and feedback, today I am beginning a series of meetings with our administrative employees. It has been some time since I visited with them and I look forward to this opportunity.

I encourage you to attend and participate in the efforts described above and provide your insights. Thanks for your efforts in helping advance the mission and develop the future for our University.

Faculty Contract

Last week faculty members ratified a new three-year contract. On Friday the Ferris State University Board of Trustees approved the ratified contract at their meeting in Grand Rapids. Although the negotiations for this contract lasted for more than a year, throughout this process the University and its faculty members remained focused on teaching and learning.

Beyond salary and benefits, this contract includes new agreements on bereavement leave, equity review, professional development, summer instruction, tuition benefit and wellness. I want to thank the faculty members for their strong vote to approve this contract. Negotiators for the teams worked many hours to reach this agreement and their efforts to reach a contract are sincerely appreciated.

Closing Thoughts

Congratulations to Julie Coon for being selected interim dean of the College of Allied Health Sciences. Julie brings a wealth of experience to this position. Her leadership will help the college during this difficult time.

During their meeting last Friday, the Board of Trustees elected a new slate of officers. Congratulations to Chair Ron Snead, Vice-Chair Sueann Walz and Secretary George Menoutes. Please join me in extending a special thank-you to Immediate Past Chair Tom Cook. Tom's dedication to the University has been shown many times during his years of serving with the Board. His experienced, committed, and selfless leadership for the University has made significant contributions to our success.

Thank you also to everyone who helped make the Ferris Foundation Gala so successful. This is a remarkable event that requires many hours of planning and preparation by the staff in University Advancement and Marketing. The large crowd in attendance was treated to a program that centered on our students, faculty, staff, and alumni, highlighting some of Ferris State University's unique and extraordinary efforts throughout Michigan. Funds collected through this evening support student scholarships and Faculty\Staff Merit Grants.

Finally, congratulations to the men's ice hockey team for their performance against top-ranked Miami University. Our team won 3-2 on Friday and then bested Miami again on Saturday in a thrilling shootout victory. The team's next home series will be Nov. 19 and 20 when they host Western Michigan University.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President