

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 23, 2009

Academic Program Review

Last Tuesday the Academic Program Review Council presented its recommendations to the Academic Senate at its regular meeting. This marks the 20th year of such recommendations – a truly significant success story for our University and its academic efforts. According to the APRC, 22 degree programs and five pre-programs and non-degree entities in 18 program review panels produced self-study reports which were submitted to the council in August. Since the day after Labor Day, the APRC met for three hours twice a week for 10 weeks to do the hard work required to formulate its recommendations.

Tuesday evening's deliberations included the first review of a College of Professional and Technological Studies program - the Bachelor of Applied Sciences in Industrial Technology Management. This, coupled with the recent Board of Trustees approval of a revised omnibus resolution for Ferris programs in Grand Rapids, is an important milestone in the development and review of academic programs by the Academic Senate.

Many people across the University contributed to the success of this endeavor. Among them, I want to especially thank members of the APRC, chaired by Doug Haneline of the College of Arts and Sciences:

- James Bandstra, Business
- Roger Daugherty, Allied Health Sciences
- George Nagel, Arts and Sciences
- Vordyn Nelson, University College
- Gregg Potter, Pharmacy
- Frances Rosen, FLITE
- Gary Todd, Engineering Technology
- Matthew Wagenheim, Education and Human Services
- Helen Woodman, University College

Relationship Building

Beginning in April 2008, leadership from the Ferris Faculty Association, the administration and Board of Trustees have worked to build an improved relationship between faculty and the administration. This included the development of a guidelines document signed in August 2008, which was subsequently endorsed by the Board of Trustees, the President's Council and the FFA Executive Board (<http://www.ferris.edu/fsuintranet/negotiations/relationship.pdf>) and then shared with faculty in college relationship meetings that fall. Over the past two weeks representatives from the FFA, Board and administration have met with college faculty, department heads, and deans listening to the progress that has been made in building stronger relationships and the challenges that remain.

I want to thank Board of Trustees Chair R. Thomas Cook and Immediate Past Chair James K. Haveman, leaders from the FFA, and Provost Fritz Erickson, who facilitated the listening

sessions, for the time they have invested in this process. This is part of an ongoing dialog at the University to strengthen and deepen the working relationships between faculty and administration at many different levels. For me, these were an excellent opportunity to listen and learn from our faculty about the success of these efforts and some of the challenges we still face. If you did not have the opportunity to attend a college-wide meeting and would like to provide input to or feedback on this process, please email me eislerd@ferris.edu or Provost Erickson, FritzErickson@ferris.edu .

Although important in many respects, relationship building is an especially vital element of the current faculty contract negotiations. The negotiation teams began early, starting last July, which I believe is a positive sign. So far, these talks have taken place in a very constructive atmosphere – both in full meetings as well as in various subcommittees – as the teams work toward their shared objective of reaching a fair and equitable contract. The goal of both teams is to reach contract agreement before the end of spring semester.

Information on the negotiations including a list of the bargaining teams, post-meeting updates and other information is available on the Ferris intranet at <http://www.ferris.edu/fsuintranet/negotiations> . This site will continue to have information added to it as the negotiations advance.

My thanks to everyone who took the time to be a part of these important meetings last week and to the members of the FFA and administration who are working to reach a contract agreement. The viability of our University depends upon on our ability to work together.

Budget Forums

Thank you to the faculty, staff, and students who attended the budgets forums this past Monday and Tuesday. I very much appreciate this opportunity to share information, discuss what lies ahead, and address your questions. This will be a significant challenge for our University. As one participant asked metaphorically this past week, “Do we have time to not have a sense of urgency?”

There is one additional meeting scheduled for this first round of forums, Tuesday, December 1st from 4:00-5:30 p.m. in the Rankin Center Founders’ Room. While the problems facing Michigan are severe and complex, I believe that working together we will meet the challenges ahead.

Athletics Success

Ferris student-athletes have recently achieved some significant goals. This past weekend our women’s cross country team finished 11th in the NCAA Division II National Championship. Tina Muir finished 12th overall and was selected as an All American for the second consecutive year. Congratulations to Coach Steve Picucci and the cross country team. Our women’s volleyball team earned a berth in the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional tournament. This was the team’s first regional appearance since 2006. Congratulations to Coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm and the volleyball squad for an outstanding year.

Our men’s ice hockey team is off to a very strong start. Two weekends ago they skated to a pair of tie games against the number one ranked team in the nation, Miami University. In both games Ferris prevailed in a shootout. This past weekend the team defeated the Ohio State

University twice - 8-1 on Friday and 6-5 on Saturday. In Saturday's contest the team came back from a three-goal deficit in the third period, tying the game with 50 seconds remaining in regulation and scoring the winning goal with 26 seconds remaining in overtime. The team has a winning streak of six straight, is undefeated at home, and is now third in the Central Collegiate Hockey Association. Congratulations to Coach Bob Daniels and the hockey squad.

Finally, an alumni's recent appointment reminds us of how our student-athletes succeed in life as well as in sports. Kristen Campbell, an attorney in the Traverse City office of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, has been invited to join the Board of Directors of the Professional Tennis Registry Foundation. Among its other charitable works, the foundation sponsors the Wheelchair Tennis Championships and the Special Olympics Tennis Championships. While at Ferris, Kristen was nationally ranked in singles and doubles, won the GLIAC conference championships at number 1 singles, and was also the GLIAC conference player of the year.

Congratulations to our student-athletes both present and past, as well as to the men and women who coach them.

Closing Thoughts

Thanksgiving is a special time to be with family and friends and to express thanks for the many blessings and good fortune we enjoy. I want to extend my thanks to you for the many contributions you make to our University and our students. I am hopeful this extended weekend will be a wonderful time of food, fellowship and thanksgiving for you.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President