

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
November 16, 2009

Support for college students has become a topic of significant interest in Michigan this past week. Ferris State University's action to cover the funding shortfall of the Michigan Promise Grant and Michigan Competitive Scholarships for our students received significant favorable reaction throughout the state and country. This action provides financial assistance, for fall semester, to 1,312 Ferris students who expected to receive the Michigan Promise Grant, and to 616 students who were to receive Michigan Competitive Scholarships.

Remaining funds from the \$1.4 million of federal stimulus will be used to provide additional financial aid for students for Spring Semester 2010. Please encourage students who need additional financial assistance to contact the Financial Aid office. When possible, we will refigure students' financial aid requests to help them receive any additional support to which they may be entitled.

Pedestrian Safety

The recent pedestrian fatality of a Ferris student is a tragic reminder of the importance of pedestrian and vehicular safety both on and off campus. Because safety for our students, employees and guests is an issue of utmost importance, the University's Strategic Planning and Resource Council has recommended a Pedestrian Safety Task Force be created with the charge to -

- Solicit input broadly from the campus and community regarding observations and experiences with pedestrian safety and possible solutions to these challenges.
- Consider possible actions with streets controlled by the University and through consultation with appropriate city and state officials, with streets controlled by the City of Big Rapids and the Michigan Department of Transportation.
- Identify and report recommendations with estimated costs and a potential timeline for these actions.

The task force will study current conditions, consider future developments as identified in the Campus Master Plan, and identify ways to improve pedestrian safety through education, physical modifications to the campus and other means.

I want to thank the following members of the task force, chaired by Jerry Scoby, Vice President for Administration and Finance, for giving of their time and expertise to help keep members of the Ferris and Big Rapids communities safe -

Shelly Armstrong, University Advancement and Marketing
Pam Augustine, Michigan Department of Transportation
Marty Bledsoe, Department of Public Safety
Travis Cervantez, Student Government
Robert Eastley, Construction Management

Claire Gould, Student Government
Nick Greenway, Department of Public Safety
Mike Hughes, Physical Plant
Andy Karafa, Social Sciences
John Linnen, Mathematics
Mike Mignano, Golf/Athletics
Bonnie Rogers, Disability Services
Mark VanLent, Counseling Center
Frank West, Big Rapids Department of Public Safety

I encourage you to provide input, ideas, observations and suggestions to this group as they begin their very important work. The task force is expected to submit its recommendations by mid-February, 2010.

Until then, please know that our growing enrollment means that there are more pedestrians and more cars. As you walk the campus, please be aware of your surroundings. It is easy to become distracted by conversations with friends both in person and on a cell phone. And as drivers, we need to obey all traffic laws and without exception, yield the right-of-way at crosswalks. We want everyone in the Ferris community to learn and work in the safest possible environment.

Budget Forums

In addition to the two previously announced forums on the budget – the first taking place today, November 16th from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and the second tomorrow, Tuesday, November 17th from 1:30-3:00 p.m. – there will be a third forum on Tuesday, December 1st, from 4:00-5:30 p.m. The first two will take place in the Rankin Center’s Centennial Dining Room and the last will be in Rankin Center’s Founders’ Room.

The entire state budget situation has been a long and difficult process, with lawmakers unable to find consensus while revenues have continued to fall. The action, or inaction, at the state level has created difficult choices for Michigan universities.

In these sessions we will consider together the current budget situation, clarify the actions taken by the state in this year’s budget, and talk about what lies ahead for both this and next year’s budget. I look forward to seeing you there.

Ferris Magazine

If it has not already reached your mailbox, you should soon be receiving a copy of *Ferris Magazine*, the successor to our longtime publication *Crimson & Gold*. The new *Ferris Magazine* features a slightly larger format, an updated graphic look and more pages than did C&G.

John Willey, Vice President for University Advancement and Marketing, took a lead role in helping define the look of the new publication. Christa Walker of UA&M did a wonderful job of designing the magazine based on general concepts for this first new issue.

UA&M has formed a broad-based new faculty/staff advisory board to help in developing the further evolution and focus of *Ferris Magazine*. Board members include –

Patrick Bishop, Marketing
Jeff Carney, Welding Engineering Technology
Bob Carter, Optometry
Cheryl Cluchey, Professional and Technological Studies
Matt Chaney, Multicultural Student Services
Adnan Dakkuri, Pharmacy
Don Flickinger, Academic Affairs
Tracy Glentz, Nuclear Medicine Technology
Karen GreenBay, Scholar program
Glen Okonoski, Television and Digital Media Production
Erin Weber, Languages and Literature

I hope you enjoy both the new look and the content of *Ferris Magazine*. Your story ideas, suggestions and comments regarding this and future issues can be addressed to the editor, Marc Sheehan, at sheehanm@ferris.edu, or by calling him at ext. 3965.

Closing Thoughts

Last week was an especially busy and diverse one at the University, with a series of events for Veterans Day including flags on the Quad, speaker Kathy Snead from the Servicemen's Opportunity College Office, and our annual Veteran's Day Breakfast. Additionally, there was a Native American Powwow, for Native American month, a Critical Encounters with Globalization lecture with Lars Rensman from the University of Michigan, and an Epilepsy Awareness Event, "Epilepsy in Their Own Words and Seizure Smart," which featured student speakers. Pictures of these and other activities on campus are accessible at the Week in Pictures, <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/news/week/archives/nov1309>. Information on this week's events, including tonight's West Central Concert Band Veterans Concert is accessible from the campus calendar - <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/calendar/calendars/calendar.cfm>.

Finally, last week was an exciting time as construction continued on the East Campus Apartments and site construction began on the new Optometry building. If you have not tried it, there is a Web-cam on the East Campus Apartment complex that is accessible at <http://fsuech.com/webcam.html>.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President