

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
March 30, 2009

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## Sharing Our Success

It has been – and continues to be – a wonderful opportunity for me to visit with you during the “Share Your Success” sessions in our colleges and divisions. Being able to see first-hand the projects in which you are involved and to hear of your pride in your work is an uplifting experience. Learning the ways in which you are helping students is extraordinarily heartening.

During these times, it is more and more important to celebrate those things we do right. Day-in and day-out we are fortunate to work in an environment made vibrant by the vitality of our faculty, staff, and students. After the “Share Your Success” meeting with University College, I received an email pointing out that one of our greatest resources is the resilience and determination of our students. This person pointed out how she has students who struggle with chemotherapy, loss of loved ones, and difficult home lives. In her words, “Somehow through all of this, they go to class, they stay involved, they don’t give up, they look to the future, and stay motivated. It’s just an awesome thing to witness and I feel so lucky that my office is located in their presence.”

I cannot think of a better outcome of the time we take to consider successes than to realize that the students we serve – who are the reason we exist as an institution – in turn provide us with examples of perseverance we can all follow.

Four “Share Your Success” listening sessions are scheduled for this week. These include a visit with college leadership, a tour, and an open session for all faculty and staff.

### Thursday, April 2

morning – College of Education and Human Services, 11 a.m. open session, Bishop 215

afternoon – University Advancement & Marketing, Prakken 104

### Friday, April 3

morning – FLITE, 11 a.m. open session, FLITE 438

afternoon – College of Arts and Sciences, 2 p.m. open session, Starr 322

Thank you for the good work you do. I look forward to hearing from you.

## East Campus Apartments

At its meeting on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, the Ferris Board of Trustees approved constructing new student apartments on the northeast corner of Ives Avenue and Damascus Road. The current apartments on this site were constructed 59 years ago and no longer meet the needs of our students. Plans are to demolish current buildings and redevelop the site with two new, apartment-style buildings, which will help provide additional options for students to continue to live on campus. The new apartments will accommodate approximately 300 students. If you have attended one of the budget sessions I held on campus recently, you are aware that funds for dining and housing facilities do not come from the general operating budget, which consists of tuition and state funds. Instead these are self-sustaining projects in the auxiliary budget. The rents from

students who live in these facilities will pay for this project. This is an important step in making certain the facilities we have on campus will continue to attract students and, once here, help those students to live and study in ways that maximize their educational experience.

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk to an alumnus who started at Ferris in 1958 and lived in Vandercook Hall, which was then new. The late 1950s and early 1960s was a time that saw many new buildings constructed on our campus. These allowed Ferris to expand and serve the needs of the post-war educational boom, which in turn helped fuel the economy. Even as we attract students at the fastest pace of any state university, we need to be sure to have the facilities to retain those students and make their time here a productive one – just as we did in the 1950s and 60s. Our new East Campus Apartments are an important step in this direction.

### **Campus Master Plan**

At their meeting, the Board of Trustees also approved a new campus facility master plan. This document resulted from conversations, meetings and planning sessions held on campus over the past several months. I want to thank you for the extensive input and feedback received from the Ferris community in these various discussions, meetings and planning sessions. Just as with our new mission and vision statements, it has been essential to embrace our collective understanding of what is best for our students now and in the future. It is important to recognize the leadership of Professor Robert von der Osten and the contributions of the SPARC committee in this process.

Teaching and learning are at the center of this plan. Most of you have seen the extensive use that students make of the Connector between the Interdisciplinary Resource Center and the College of Business. This is at the core of vision for the future, a campus that facilitates learning and interaction wherever students may be – not just in the classroom.

The Master Plan is divided in three sections. The Existing Plan illustrates and analyzes current conditions of the campus. The Grand Vision provides an overall goal for the campus. The Five Year Plan shows proposed steps toward the Grand Vision. The Five Year Plan establishes five priorities –

- Renovate the Rankin Student Center
- Create a new College of Education and Human Services Building
- Provide upgraded student housing opportunities
- Renovate the College of Engineering Technology Buildings
- Enhance campus transportation and parking systems

The Master Plan establishes expectations for land use, vehicular systems, pedestrian systems, and green space. I am especially pleased that these plans contain a strong commitment to sustainability, incorporating sustainable design principles, establishing a goal of Silver LEED certification for all new campus buildings and major renovations, and calling for enhanced campus recycling programs. In some respects a campus master plan is always a draft, because it evolves with our campus. The current draft is accessible at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/pdf/BRmasterplan09.pdf>.

At Ferris we are planning and preparing for long-term success. The Campus Master Plan builds upon the University Strategic Plan and implements those goals and initiatives in the concrete, steel, and green spaces of our campus. Your help in making the plans for the Ferris of

tomorrow take shape has been instrumental in us getting us to this point. I also want to extend my thanks to the members of our Board of Trustees for their active involvement. Together, we are making sure that we will be an educational leader who prepares and plans for the many instructional, technological and cultural changes we are facing.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler  
President