

Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

April 30, 2008

Over the past few months a series of stakeholder meetings has sought your input on strategic goals for the University and initiatives to move these goals forward. With your assistance the Strategic Planning and Resource Council has refined these ideas into the following draft document. It is a pleasure to share the results of these efforts with you.

The overarching goals and action initiatives represent next steps to embody the values expressed in the recently adopted Mission and Vision statements. We look forward to finalizing this plan in the fall as a document that will guide our strategic future.

Ferris State University Goals and Initiatives

Goal 1: Become a demonstrable center of excellence in educational quality and student learning.

1. Enhance assessment and the use of assessment data at the program and course level to measurably improve student learning.
2. Increase the number of scholarships, including graduate and need based scholarships.
3. Increase the number of courses that employ student-centered learning approach that integrates theory and practice.
4. Support the emphasis on quality performance by faculty, staff, administration that demonstrably improves student learning.
5. Review the curriculum and increase the emphasis on preparing students for a global society and leadership roles.

Goal 2: Develop a university community where all are valued, welcomed, and informed.

1. Implement and sustain the Ferris State University Diversity Plan according to the plan's time table. Review current structures for resolving conflicts and concerns and recommend strategies for improving conflict resolution.
2. Enhance the quality of external and internal responsiveness across the institution.
3. Conduct a review of available locations, and where needed, create shared gathering spaces in buildings and on the grounds that are comfortable places to study, meet, and gather.
4. Develop and implement specific strategies to create a sense of community for on-line and off-campus students and faculty.
5. Identify or hire a chief informational officer responsible for coordinating information processes.

Goal 3: Enhance the financial position of the institution.

1. Launch first-ever comprehensive capital campaign by 2009.
2. Continue to develop collaborative ventures to provide efficient services.
3. Expand resources to continue an extensive marketing campaign to support the positive image of Ferris State University.
4. Establish a comprehensive energy conservation effort.
5. Increase university and college budget transparency.

Goal 4: Provide a state-of-the-art, sustainable and safe learning, living and working environment.

1. Finalize and implement a plan to renovate or replace student living space to be competitive with the market.
2. Develop and implement a plan for the renovation of the student (Rankin) center.
3. Upgrade lab spaces and classrooms based on the identified needs of the users.
4. Continue to enhance the parking plan to reduce campus concerns and provide better information to students, faculty, staff and visitors about parking.
5. Improve, implement, and communicate the emergency preparedness plans.
6. Develop and implement an environmental sustainability plan.
7. Develop and implement a wellness plan.

Goal 5: Foster collaborative internal and external working relationships.

1. Build positive long-term working relationships between the unions and the administration.
2. Develop and implement strategies for increasing collaboration among colleges and programs.
3. Establish better relationships with the broader communities that includes coordination of service learning, volunteerism, internships, civic engagement, wellness activities, art projects, and other interactions.
4. Enhance relationships with industry, business, other educational institutions and government.
5. Develop and implement outreach to high schools to inform, support, and educate students about higher education, its processes (i.e. financial aid), career possibilities, and Ferris.

Goal 6: Foster innovation and improve processes to move the university forward.

1. Enhance programs to develop leadership for faculty, staff and administration.
2. Designate a standing “blue sky” committee to review market trends, identify opportunities and work with appropriate leaders and structures to facilitate the development of innovative programs.
3. Review, eliminate and enhance non-effective existing committees, reports and procedures.
4. Enhance evaluation processes and the related performance improvement methodologies, keeping the campus informed about those processes.

5. Identify the appropriate levels for budget responsibility and change the budgeting process to accord to those levels.

We believe these goals and initiatives will serve to keep the University focused on its drive to promote its core values of Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence, Learning and Opportunity. Although both of us at various times over the past months have expressed our thanks to everyone who has helped to shape these goals and initiatives, we want to do so again. The process that led to the development of these points has been dynamic and inclusive, which are values that will continue to be promoted as new actions are initiated and existing programs are expanded and intensified.

As part of Ferris' Summer University on June 2, the campus community will have opportunity to further shape this plan by identifying possible ways we can implement these initiatives. Your comments and suggestions are always encouraged and invited. We both look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your involvement, contributions and assistance throughout this strategic planning effort.

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