

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
December 18, 2007

Contingency Fee Refund

On Friday our Board of Trustees voted to return more than \$1 million in tuition to students. The monies were collected through a contingency fee charged at the start of the fall semester.

The University established this fee in response to a delayed state payment to public universities, and uncertainty on whether the state would meet its ongoing budget obligations. In November when we received the delayed payment, the Trustees removed the fee for spring semester. With the state recently finalizing its 2007 package of taxation and budget legislation, the Ferris Board voted to refund the fees collected for fall semester.

These are still uncertain financial times in Michigan with more than \$9.7 million in budget cuts from the state to Ferris State University over the past five years. Obviously, these are also very challenging financial times for our students. Our Board of Trustees and University Administration are committed to keeping costs low and helping our students complete their education.

Returning Ferris students will see the fall contingency fee credited on spring tuition bills. Graduating students and those not returning for spring semester will have refund checks issued to them. Further information about the contingency fee is available through a link on the Ferris home page. That page includes a link – for graduates who may be in the position to do so – to donate their refund to the Ferris Foundation general scholarship fund to assist other students.

It is wonderful to be able to refund these fees and help our students; however, as we look to the future we expect that we will continue to face difficult financial decisions. As the state transfers the financial responsibility for a college education to students, we will continue to strive to keep a Ferris degree affordable.

Commencement and Graduation Celebrations

On Saturday we presented degrees to nearly 500 students at winter commencement exercises. It was a great pleasure to have Ferris' 2007 Distinguished Teacher of the Year, Biology professor Mary Murnik, deliver remarks to our graduates at both ceremonies. Incorporating in her speech excerpts from Dr. Seuss, Prof. Murnik spoke about the places our students will go after graduation, and the accomplishments they have ahead.

Commencement is the culmination of our efforts for students. It is an opportunity to see how much our students have learned, matured and grown. I appreciate very much the efforts of our people to help prepare and coordinate the commencement ceremonies. My thanks to everyone who works so hard to make commencement an important and memorable experience for our students. In my remarks I spoke of "Heroes for Life," celebrating the example of Liviu Librescu, and "Determined to Make a Difference," relating Lori Armstrong's path to her bachelor's degree. You may access these remarks at - <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/presentations.htm> .

Each December the Professional Golf Management program hosts a Senior Banquet, honoring its graduates. On Friday evening, Ferris was pleased to welcome Brian Whitcomb, the President of the Professional Golf Association. It was a wonderful honor to have the PGA President on our campus and to have him address our PGM students as they enter their new profession.

Holiday Spirit

In the spirit of the season, many members of the Ferris community devote significant energy helping others through charitable actions. You can see evidence of this throughout our campus and communities. Through individual initiatives or working with civic organizations or church groups, faculty, staff and students contribute their time, money and resources to making life better for others.

On campus, there's one annual event that I think symbolizes this kind of effort and dedication to making a difference. Westview Dining Service's and AFSCME's holiday party for members of the Mecosta-Osceola Area Rehabilitation Center is remarkable. The MOARC party at Westview is a great example of our people caring for others and has become a wonderful holiday tradition. The staff members fund the MOARC celebration themselves and work hard to bring joy to these people in our community.

I hope the holiday season will be a good one for you and yours. In January we will return to face new opportunities and challenges. Until then, I hope you enjoy the remainder of 2007, and look forward to working with you in 2008.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President