

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
August 20, 2007

This week we welcome students back to campus. As they face the fresh challenges of a new year, we seek to help them best prepare for their future. Beyond fulfilling our obligation to our current classes of students, now is the time when we must develop a powerful and compelling strategic plan for our future.

The success of this planning effort depends upon two critical factors. The first is your active participation. Please take every opportunity to share your thoughts, hopes and dreams for this institution. Second is our ability to address such difficult and fundamental issues as mission, values and vision, how we honor the traditions of our past, meet the challenges of the present, and prepare for a future where evolution and change will be even more rapid and dramatic.

This is an opportunity to discuss and debate, to agree and disagree, and most importantly, grow together as a university to develop this plan that will guide our future. Languages and Literature Professor Robert von der Osten will lead this effort and head the Strategic Planning and Resource Council that will help coordinate campus planning. During this year there will be stakeholder meetings, discussion drafts, and multiple venues to share your vision of who we are and what we must do to continue to excel. Taken together, our individual insights will help the University chart a proactive path for the future.

A second initiative, our first-ever comprehensive diversity plan, also goes to the heart of who we are and what we will become. Like strategic planning, diversity planning builds upon past efforts, assesses the challenges ahead and looks to the future. David Pilgrim has talked with many of you in the past months since being named Chief Diversity Officer and will lead this effort. David says it best, "Diversity is the range of human differences and potential that manifests itself in members of a campus community." With your help in this ongoing dialog, Ferris State University will be united in its goal of realizing its full potential for all people.

These are exciting and challenging times at our University. By recognizing and respecting our differences, while at the same time discovering our common values and aspirations, our future will contain the best of who we are, creating new ideas and new possibilities. Again, please make sure your own ideas help form the basis for this course we are charting by taking part fully in both our strategic and diversity planning.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas, and to working with you as together we forge our future.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President