

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 2, 2007

As you may have heard, the Executive Committee of the Ferris Faculty Association announced that they would conduct a vote of no confidence in me as your president. Because I believe in openness in matters that impact the University, a copy of the two faculty newsletters regarding this are attached.

This vote comes while we have three important issues that affect us in front of legislators in Lansing. The first is an effort to split universities into two categories with separate funding streams – the big three research institutions and the other twelve. The second is a move by community colleges to award bachelor degrees for nurses. The third is state budget negotiations, which are entering a critical stage. For these issues to be resolved in ways that benefit the University, we need to be united. Instead of helping the University face these serious challenges, faculty union officers seem most interested in revisiting grievances that the Ferris and Big Rapids communities believed we had moved past with the successful completion of faculty contract negotiations seven months ago.

It is especially disappointing that the union officials seek to take this action at the same time our Board of Trustees has reached out to them to see how future negotiations can be conducted with less animosity and to establish ways to work together more productively. As a campus community, both the challenges and opportunities ahead of us are far greater than this current distraction.

Last week I received an invitation to visit with the faculty union executive committee. Unfortunately, this conflicted with my visiting the chair of the Joint Capital Outlay Committee during which we discussed the optometry building project and some of the challenges presented by passage of the anti-affirmative action Proposition 2. I have extended an invitation to both Michael Ryan, the current union president, and Jim Rumpf, who appears set to be the incoming president, to meet with me, and want to extend that invitation again today. Although they have not yet accepted this offer, I hope they will do so. I believe the actions of the FFA will do nothing to further Ferris State University's interests in Lansing and, in fact, will hinder the progress we are making.

As word of this action has begun to reach our community, many of you have written or called to express your support and encouragement. Thank you so much for making your feelings known. Together we will continue to establish the kind of working relationships this great university needs to continue its success. I will try very hard to deserve your continued support.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler
President