

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 30, 2004
Ext. 2500

There is still much for me to learn about Michigan weather. I was pretty surprised to see some snow earlier this week. As I write this, the morning temperature is again nearly 60 degrees, but there is a prediction of weekend snow. With classes concluding, exams and commencement are just around the corner. I want to take this opportunity to share with you some information and updates on ongoing efforts.

A Vision for Ferris and Its Future

Following my remarks to our campus on a Vision for Ferris and Its Future, many have taken time to provide your reactions to these ideas. However, I am very much aware of how busy this time of the year can be. If you did not have the opportunity to hear my remarks, or have not yet read them, they are accessible on the web at <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/vision2004.pdf>

When there is time during the summer, I am hopeful you will take a few moments to consider these thoughts and provide your comments, suggestions, and observations. I need your assistance to help shape and mold this vision so it truly does have the meaning, value, and potential to create a powerful, successful future for our university. I very much want to hear from you and know that working together we can develop a vision that is truly worth working toward.

During the summer we have scheduled two large group activities to provide you the opportunity to consider, react and suggest how you can contribute to this future. We will first do this on June 14th, the first day of Summer University. That day will focus more on how staff can help develop our future. At the Opening of School Convocation on August 23rd these ideas will be presented again with more of a focus on faculty.

Transitions

Since the fall of 1998, Dr. Richard Cochran has served our University admirably as Chief Information Officer. Recently he visited with me regarding his desire to direct his full attentions to the library. Reluctantly I have agreed to his request. I very much appreciate the leadership Richard has shown for our campus and his willingness to tackle some of the truly difficult issues associated with information technology support. Dr. Cochran has shared with me his plans to pursue some very interesting projects with the library, including a state-wide digital initiative with Library Deans, electronic initiatives associated with our campus portal, and increased support for information literacy on campus.

I want to thank Dr. Cochran for his wonderful efforts for our university in technology and look forward to his work on these exciting projects. On July 1st Scott Thede will assume Richard's technology support oversight responsibilities, serving as Academic Computer Support Manager and reporting to John Urbanick in Information Systems and Telecommunications. I appreciate very much that Scott is willing to accept this position and look forward to his strong leadership for information technology support efforts on our campus.

On Tuesday the Academic Senate selected its leadership for the 2004-2005 academic year. The President is Adnan Dakkuri; Vice President is Bob Loesch; and the Secretary is David Aiken. Other board members are Jim Bandstra, Mike Cron, and Leonard Johnson. I look forward to working with Adnan and his colleagues for our University. At the same time I want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Bill Papo and this year's executive board for their wonderful efforts. They and their colleagues on the Academic Senate have worked very hard for Ferris and our academic programs. I am especially thankful for their assistance during this my first year at Ferris.

Legislative Hearing

On Wednesday I presented to the House Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee chaired by Representative Sandi Caul from Mt. Pleasant. I believe our presentation was well received. As part of my presentation process I create a web page with copies of the materials distributed, data sources, and background readings. I very much want to share this information with you; it may be accessed at http://fsunw3.ferris.edu/~eislerd/house_2004.htm. It is still too early to tell what the house subcommittee will recommend. As part of our continuing legislative efforts I will be visiting individually with the members of the committee and watching this process carefully.

Thursday we hosted a legislative luncheon in Lansing at the Mackinac Room of the Anderson House Building. It was delightful to visit with the crowd of representatives and government officials who attended. A busload of supporters from our University and Big Rapids made the trip to help tell our story and build legislative relationships. They did an excellent job of interacting with those in attendance and creating a very favorable impression of our University. I appreciate very much their help and support.

As a part of these two days in Lansing, I visited with Lt. Gov. John Cherry regarding the higher education commission he will lead. There was strong interest expressed by the Lt. Governor and representatives from the Governor's Office for the education we provide at Ferris State University. Our message regarding Ferris and the successful preparation it provides for careers is being very well received in Lansing. Further I believe strongly this is precisely what Michigan needs now.

Thank you

Over the last few weeks I have attended many award ceremonies, recognition events, and honor banquets. It is a wonderful opportunity to visit with our graduates and to see firsthand the difference education at Ferris makes for our students. They truly are outstanding. Their confidence, growth, and maturity are a direct result of your efforts with them.

I look forward to seeing you at next week's activities including recognition events, the Granger Building dedication, and Commencement. Thank you again for the difference you make for our students.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president