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Wednesday, November 12, 2003

Ferris set for state address on universities

Big rapids - Ferris state students, faculty and staff, as well as the general public, will be able to watch the first ever state of the public universities address through a satellite link to Ferris.

The speech comes in a year when the state cut appropriations to higher education by 10 percent.

Irvin D. Reid, president of Wayne state university and chairman of the president's council, state universities of Michigan, will deliver the address at 5 p.m. Today (Wednesday) at the Michigan historical museum auditorium in Lansing.

The speech will be available locally on cable television through Ferris channel 7 and via the university's web site <www.ferris.edu>. To access the webcast, click on "visitors" then "Ferris cable 7."

The address will outline the changes Michigan's universities have made in the wake of major budget cuts last year and possible further reductions this year. It will offer public policy alternatives aimed at ensuring Michigan's group of public higher education institutions continue their status as among the finest in the nation.

Presidents from all of Michigan's universities are expected to attend, along with many top policy makers including lawmakers, officials from gov. Granholm's administration, university governing board members and top Lansing association executives.

"Michigan's universities are committed to increasing their communications with the Michigan public," said Michael Boulus, executive director of the presidents council.

"Reporting to students, families, policymakers and the public on the value and impact of higher education through an annual state of the universities address is an important step in making sure that everyone understands the consequences of actions taken by the state and our universities on Michigan's future."

The Detroit news
Wednesday 12, 2003

Grade inflation cheats students as employers get wise to scam

By the Detroit news

Grade inflation -- long an inside joke in Michigan schools and elsewhere -- has serious economic consequences. Students who slide through high school are finding out they can't cut college, much less get that high-paying job they want, says new research.

Colleges, meanwhile, are spending millions of dollars to teach students basic skills they should have learned in high school -- dunning taxpayers twice for the same education.

And now the crunch: employers are getting fed up with bloated and meaningless grade point averages. Many are now emphasizing other indicators to assess job applicants.

All of which is a heads-up for educators.

Padding grades or pushing students through school to make them feel good about themselves is backfiring.

Eventually, students who enjoyed grade inflation learn the truth about their academic skills and feel cheated. That's because they have been. They got a grade they didn't deserve.

A grade is essentially a school's warranty to a student that he or she knows lessons at a certain level. In today's lawsuit-happy society, it wouldn't be surprising if a student sued a high school or college for providing false feedback in report cards. Accountability suits have been filed on shakier grounds than fake grades.

Only 32 percent of students leave public high schools qualified to attend a four-year college, says a study by the Manhattan institute for policy research sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Even students with good grades arrive unprepared because -- despite high marks -- they don't know the material, say other reports.

Unfortunately, grade inflation rolls right through many colleges, too. Harvard University recently reformed its grading system after criticism that too many A's were handed out. Nearly 90 percent of all students graduated with honors.

College preparedness

Using U.S. Department of Education information, a study this year found:

- * only 32 percent of all students leave high school qualified to attend four-year colleges.

- * that preparedness rate was lower for some minority students. Twenty percent of black students, 16 percent of Hispanic students and 14 percent of American Indian students were qualified to go to college.

- * the college readiness rate for white students was 37 percent.

- * Asian students had the best readiness rate at 38 percent.

Source: Manhattan institute

In metro Detroit, high school grades over 10 years increased dramatically compared with scores on standardized tests. As teachers hand out easy grades, the value of a high grade point average declines.

To make matters worse, many students get easy grades in easy courses -- studies that don't emphasize rigorous mathematics, science and writing.

In Georgia, 40 percent of the high school students who earn the state's hope scholarship lose it after a year in college because they can't keep up their grades.

The Manhattan institute concluded that the big losers in grade inflation are minorities. "by far the most important reason black and Hispanic students are underrepresented in college is the failure of the k-12 education system to prepare them for college, rather than insufficient financial aid or inadequate affirmative action policies," researchers said.

Frustrated employers are wise to the grade inflation ruse, and more are now looking at test scores -- such as the scholastic assessment test (sat) -- to determine a job applicant's true potential. By examining sats, employers can make informed decisions amid the overflow "a" students.

Employer rejection of grade inflation raises the question: what's the point of cheap grades? There is none.

Nor has there ever been much value in giving credit where it is not due. The system should die a quick and quiet death.

Pioneer

Thursday, November 13, 2003

Ferris celebrates Native American history month

Big rapids -- the Ferris state university office of minority student affairs will sponsor several Native American activities in the weeks ahead.

On Wednesday at p.m., the White Wolf Drum group will appear at the Masselink dorm lobby (next to Mascar grill). The event will feature Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi singers of west Michigan.

On Nov. 20 from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m., a presentation titled "History of the Anishinaabek Great Lakes Indian Culture and Today's Anishinaabek Perspective" will be held at Starr 324 (next to Williams auditorium, third floor).

Finally, on Dec. 4 at 11 a.m., "Material Culture of the Anishinaabek Indians: Natural Resources Uses" will be presented in the Starr 136 lecture hall.

Grand rapids press

Thursday, November 13, 2003

Colleges to state: you need us

Lansing - trying to avoid more steep cuts in state funding, Michigan's public universities kicked off a campaign pitching themselves as the key to the state's economic future.

Wayne state university president Irvin Reid on Wednesday called for better public understanding of the importance of the public university system, in the first state of the universities address, broadcast on the 15 campuses.

"Failure to recognize the need for high-quality public universities is to unilaterally disarm ourselves in the fight for jobs," said Reid, chairman of the President's Council, State Universities of Michigan.

The speech comes amid a new round of potential budget cuts. Gov. Jennifer Granholm is looking for ways to ax \$920 million from the state budget.

Universities lost about \$150 million in state funding over the past year.

Reid used the speech to point out that state funding was 75 percent of the cost of a four-year college education 30 years ago; it is 45 percent today.

"We are at a crossroad in our state's history," Reid said. "Will we remain true to the high standards of access and quality that define our institutions of higher education? Or will we let both of these cornerstones erode in the face of economic challenges?"

Reid said the universities are critical to Granholm's economic push for cool cities to stop young educated people from fleeing Michigan.

Mike Boulus, executive director of the President's Council. Said the idea for the annual speech grew out of a university investment commission report. The commission, comprised of business, labor, civic organizations and others, recommended universities do a better job of communicating their role in the state's economy.

The speech was delivered at the Michigan historical museum before about 100 lawmakers, university officials and lobbyists.

Some lawmakers attending the speech said cuts appear inevitable, no matter how much they want to spare universities.

Bill Nowling, spokesman for senate majority leader ken sikkema, rwyoming, said the presidents should have focused less on the need to keep state funding flowing.

"We also think there's room to be more efficient on the expenditure side," he said. But university presidents said they cut all they could without harming education quality. Grand Valley State University President Mark Murray said students want access to instructors and professors, and that could be threatened by more cuts "Students do not want class after class after class of 400 students crammed into a lecture hall," Murray said.

Western Michigan University President Judith Bailey said her university cut all "discretionary." spending.

"If you're traveling, you're traveling on other people's money," she said of staff still taking professional trips.

Bailey said the potential of another 10 percent cut in university funding - roughly \$150 million - would mean a mid-year tuition increase at her school.

"I'm not going to dance around it," she said.

Pioneer

Thursday november13, 2003

Ferris state women picked third by league

By sandy Gholston pioneer sports writer

Big Rapids - the only poll Ferris State women's basketball coach Tracey Fisk is concerned about is the one at the end of the season.

But, if the preseason poll is any indication, Fisk's head coaching peers in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference have a high opinion of her bulldogs. Ferris was picked third in the north division in the 2003-04 preseason coaches poll released this week by the league office. The bulldogs, led by preseason all-American guard Lucy Demartin, had 26 points and one of seven first-place votes. Grand Valley State was tabbed the favorite with 33 points and three first-place votes. Lake superior state, the defending league champion, was second with 28 points and three first-place votes.

Below Ferris, Northern Michigan, featuring former Reed City star guard Emily Samuelson, was fourth with 24 points; Michigan Tech was fifth with 19 points; Northwood was sixth with 11 and Saginaw Valley State was seventh with six.

"I don't think the preseason polls mean a thing," Fisk said.

Ashland was third with 20 points and two first-place votes Findlay was fourth with 13 points, Hillsdale fifth with nine and Mercyhurst sixth with five.

"It doesn't matter where you are at the start of the season, but where you are at the end. ... That's what really matters in the end."

But, there was at least one surprise with the poll that caught Fisk a bit off guard.

"I was a little surprised that one of the coaches voted us no. 1 in the conference," she said. "that just tells me there are some other coaches in the conference who believe we have the talent on this team capable of winning the conference.

"The thing we have to figure out is how we are going to define ourselves so we can separate ourselves from the other good teams in the conference."

In the GLIAC'S south division, Wayne State was picked to finish first with 22 points and two first-place votes. Gannon finished a very close second to the warriors with 21 points and two first-place votes, Ashland was third with 20 points and two first-place votes, Findlay was fourth with 13 points, Hillsdale fifth with nine and Mercyhurst sixth with five.

Demartin averaged 20.2 points last season to lead Ferris on the scoring chart. Bridget Horwitz, a 6-foot-2 post penciled in as one of the team's starting frontcourt players, averaged 16.8 points and 8.4 rebounds, a year ago. Her status this season is in doubt, however, after a wrist injury suffered in a preseason scrimmage. Erin Miller, who was GLIAC freshman of-the-year last season, returns to the lineup after averaging 12.5 points as the team's starting point guard.

Fisk's Bulldogs (15-11, 10-8 last season) open their season this Saturday afternoon in Romeoville, ill., in a non-conference game against perennial national power Lewis.

Pioneer

Tuesday November 18, 2003

Fraternity lends hand to community

Members of Ferris State's Pi Lambda Phi fraternity spent three days in October doing charity work in the Big Rapids community. On oct. 17 and 18, fraternity brothers bounced a ball for 24 hours to raise money for Big Brothers and Big Sisters. The fund-raiser earned \$145. on oct. 26, Pi Lambda Phi cleaned the historical Berglin house. Work there included raking, pulling shrubs, relocating dirt and completing a walkway behind the house. The fraternity helps with the historic home twice a year.

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Online service sought to recruit freshmen for UVSC

Despite recruiting at every Utah high school, Utah Valley State College officials haven't managed to lure as many freshmen as they'd like.

The number of new freshmen at UVSC each fall has dropped for three consecutive years and four of the past five, a trend that disturbs new President Bill Sederburg and Cory Duckworth, vice president of Planning and Student Services.

Concerned that the market might become more competitive for high school seniors over the next five years, Sederburg and Duckworth have convinced UVSC's board of trustees to approve \$100,000 for a national online recruiting service.

"We think we've lost out on occasion to Utah State University and other schools of late because the message is lost that we have good programs here," Duckworth said.

The slippage was masked as overall enrollment continued to rise with the infusion of transfer students and adults returning to college.

Sederburg and Duckworth, who worked at Michigan's **Ferris State** University before coming to UVSC, said 57 percent of high school students who sought information about **Ferris State** through the recruiting system eventually enrolled. Last year, freshman enrollment at the school jumped by 700.

Duckworth is rushing to take bids on the project to position the school in time for the winter recruiting season that begins in earnest in January.

Recruitment has been an institutional afterthought; UVSC employs just one full-time recruiter because overall enrollment has increased for 17 straight years.

Sederburg and Duckworth also see the system as a way to lure higher-quality students. As an open-enrollment school, UVSC must accept all applicants.

"This recruitment marketing system is sophisticated enough to target high-end students and bring them in so we can raise the entire educational and academic dialogue on campus," Duckworth said.

The Internet-based recruiter would glean names from the ACT that many potential UVSC students take and that will be required by the college in 2005. UVSC would send an e-mail to prospective students inviting them to engage in the interactive system that could then track their interests and answer their questions.

Tuition payments from 40 additional students from Utah would pay for the system, said Linda Makin, UVSC's budget director.

Pioneer

Wednesday November 18, 2003

Local man works to rewrite history; Michigan man flew five years before Wright brothers

Senior Staff Writer: By Andy Rogers

BIG RAPIDS - Mark Bolek cannot pilot an airplane. He doesn't bungi jump or parachute for fun, but the Big Rapids man has logged a decade in the air - flying against the forces of widely recognized aviation history.

Bolek has spent a decade researching early flight, working to prove a Michigan man, not Wilbur or Orville Wright, who should be recognized as the true pioneer of human flight.

It's a 1,000 mile journey begun in northern Michigan but more likely to end in a library or a museum than an airstrip. Stops along the way have included Lansing, Washington D.C. and a spot along Lake Michigan Bolek believes is the true birthplace of flight.

"In 1993 I decided to continue my education so I moved down from Traverse City and enrolled in the printing program at Ferris State University," Bolek explains. "Toward the tail end of my first term there, I had an English class and Dr. Charles Bond was my instructor and he was quite interested in Michigan history."

When the assignment for a term paper was made, Bolek knew only in general terms what his topic would be, and he had no idea how the paper would affect his life. He knew even less of how the simple class assignment would lead others to question the pedigree of the first airplane.

"I had a love of aviation," Bolek said, "... and I had been told about this gentleman, Augustus Moore Herring.

"So I started my search ... I found a small article from the (Historical Society of Michigan's) Chronicle dated 1974 (about Herring) and I thought there has to be more out there.

"The search led me to many, many places that I had no idea it would take me to - the Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C, and the National Archives ..."

Bolek's research has shown Herring successfully tested a heavier than-air machine on Silver Beach in St. Joseph on Oct. 11, 1898, and again on Oct. 22 - five years before the Wright brothers successfully flew their aircraft at Kittyhawk, N.C.

Bolek's research flies in the face of conventional aviation historians who discredit Herring's flights and who fail to recognize his contribution as a pioneer of human flight. "I think Mr. Herring was indeed the first to fly, even though it wasn't so glamorous and probably can't be considered sustained and controlled flight, which he didn't achieve," Bolek said.

No photographs were taken of the first two flights of Herring's compressed air pressed air engine powered by a heavier-than-air machine in St. Joseph, Michigan at Silver Beach on the shore of Lake Michigan, on October 11 and 22, 1898; and, powered machine though St. Joseph Newspaper reports from 1898 exclaim Herring's test flights to be "successful."

A biography of Herring from the Priscilla U. Byrns Heritage Center in St. Joseph explains the first flight of Herring's machine

Aviation historian Mark Bolek-has sp Michigan man's contributions to early was 50 feet and the second was more than 70 feet. Bolek described how he imagines the tests as "a short hop using a glider." Both flights are said to have been against a strong headwind.

"It was flat ground," Bolek explains. "There was an amusement park there and a concession stand that had just opened up. Why (it was opening) that late in the season I don't know.

"So there were kids off in the bushes kind of watching what was going on. They saw this guy coming out of a boathouse with this crazy looking thing with a compressed air engine and he was trying to get that thing to fly.

"I can only imagine what these people must have been thinking," Bolek said. Despite the research and the accounts of Herring's heavier-than air- machine, Bolek says many aviation historians do not accept Herring as the father of human flight.

But Bolek believes he may have found a smoking gun when he searched the National Archives. What he discovered were files of a patent-infringement lawsuit between Herring and the Curtiss-Wright Corporation including a sworn affidavit of Herring's that attested to his two successful flights in 1898.

Bolek has been unable to uncover detailed information about the lawsuit, but believes Herring's "airfoil" design may have been replicated as other aviation pioneers attempted to create flying machines.

"They knew of Herring's work," Bolek said of the Wright Brothers. "There was some correspondence back and forth and I guess (Herring) appeared a few times out in Kitty Hawk. "I'm not really positive how much (the Wright brothers) really consulted him, but something must have been exchanged somewhere along the line when you consider there was a so-called patent infringement."

Pioneer

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Ferris' Shanahan opens some eyes against Central

By Sandy Gholston Pioneer Sports Writer

BIG RAPIDS - After tearing a tendon in one of his thumbs near the end of his senior prep season of basketball at Flint's Kearsley High School, Jeffery Shanahan was all but forgotten by some recruiters statewide as he had it surgically repaired.

The 6-foot-6 sophomore recalls getting a few looks from Division III schools and even some Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference coaches. But, Shanahan had his sights set on wearing Ferris State's crimson and gold. Like so many other high school kids, who have the same dream of college athletic scholarship dollars, the Flint native embarked on a sort of major "Recruit Jeffery Shanahan" publicity campaign to showcase himself to Bill Sall, who had just recently been hired as head coach at Ferris in the spring of 2002.

"I pursued it," Shanahan recalled. "I kept working to keep in contact with Ferris, because that was the school I really wanted to go to, and I kept sending them tapes so they could see me." His efforts paid off.

The Bulldog men's basketball program finally made Shanahan an offer he couldn't refuse. He signed.

Last year under Sall, in his first season as head coach, Ferris earned an 11-15 record in 2002-03- the team's first double-digit win total since it won the GLIAC Tournament championship in 1997-98 with a 21-12 record. For all the progress the team made last season, Shanahan believes the program is ready to take yet another step forward this winter.

"I think we have a legitimate chance to win the GLIAC if everyone comes out every day in practice and in games and does what the coaches say and works hard," he said. "Everybody has to go out and compete every day."

The Bulldogs competed hard Monday night in Mount Pleasant in a 73-58 loss to Central Michigan in Rose Arena. In spite of the defeat, Ferris managed a 37-36 rebounding edge against the bigger Chippewas' front line. The Bulldogs hustled their way to 15 offensive rebounds vs. 12 for Central. Willie Thomas led Ferris with nine rebounds, Terrance Shaw added six and Shanahan five to go with 10 points, one block and three steals.

Though Ferris is 0-2 to start the season. Shanahan is not discouraged and, like his teammates, remains confident about the balance of the 2003-04 campaign.

"I think this team plays a lot harder than we did last year and that's something we knew we were going to have to do," he said. "The thing we have to do is continue to work hard like that and get everyone healthy for the conference."

Shanahan's play, at this early stage of the season, has been a positive for the Bulldogs, according to Sall, who inked Shanahan as his first recruit at Ferris.

"Jeff is really doing a good job of stepping in for us and giving us a nice spark that we need to have and some energy," Sall said of Shanahan, who averaged 8.4 points, 12.5 rebounds and 2.5 steals as a senior at Kearsley High School.

As a freshman a year ago, Shanahan played in 26 games, averaged 3.5 points and 2.2 rebounds in 10 minutes a night as he shot 54.8 percent from the floor.

Even though he worked hard during the season to refine his shooting, footwork and other aspects of his play, Shanahan quickly realized he had to put in a lot of work in the so-called off-season as well. He spent time in the weight room and on the court back home and even made several trips to Big Rapids to hit the court with his teammates.

"I realized I needed to work hard on all aspects of my game," he said. "I knew I had to bust my butt to become a bigger contributor to the team."

Two games into this season, Shanahan's work already has paid dividends. In 28.5 minutes per game, he is averaging 10.5 points, second on the team, and is the Bulldog leader on the glass with six rebounds. Moreover, he is shooting 64.3 percent from the field.

He's hoping for a big year from Ferris State.

"We know we're capable of competing with any of the teams we're going to face this season if we come out and play the way we're capable of playing and keep working hard," Shanahan said.

Pioneer

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Fuel to heat up Autumn aLIVE at FSU

BIG RAPIDS - The alternative rock band Fuel will play Ferris State University's Wink Arena tonight (Wednesday) at 7 p.m. in the annual Autumn aLIVE concert. Ticket prices are \$5 for Ferris students with a valid Bulldog ID card. General public tickets are \$15. Tickets are on sale at the Timme Student Center and Wink Arena on the Ferris State campus. Fuel first got noticed playing venues in and around its hometown of Harrisburg, Penn.

On the strength of their live performances and a self financed EP, Epic Records signed the band in 1997.

Their debut album "Sunburn" appeared in 1998 and became a certified platinum seller. Fuel's second album "Something Like Human," included the song "Hemorrhage (In My Hands)," which became the band's first No. 1 single and helped the album go double platinum. "Natural Selection," Fuel's third CD, was released this past September.

Opening for Fuel are special guests Revis and Sloth. Revis contributed the song "Caught in the Rain" to the sound track for the movie Daredevil. The video to "Caught in the Rain" has been in rotation on MTV and the band has released a DVD single of the song.

Sloth, a band that honed it chops in the L.A. club scene. recently released its debut album "Dead Generation" on the Hollywood Records label.

Any person with a disability who needs special accommodations to attend this event should call (231) 591-2888 or (231) 5912606.

Autumn a LIVE is sponsored by the Music Industry Management Association and student activities fees as allocated by Ferris State Student Government.

The Detroit News

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Colleges expand help for suicidal kids

Jed Foundation links students to resources to combat campus deaths.

By Steve Giegerich Associated Press

NEW YORK - Devastated by their son's suicide during his sophomore year in college, Donna and Phillip Satow channeled their grief into reaching other students who have contemplated taking their own lives.

Now, three years later, the Jed Foundation is working with 120 colleges and universities across the country, providing resources that include Ulifeline, a free Web site linking students to mental health centers and confidential help. It's one sign, some experts say, that colleges are becoming more attuned to the issue - even if it's just one step.

"A Web site doesn't solve the problem," said Donna Satow, whose son, Jed Satow, was at the University of Arizona when he died in 1998. "But it might help one or two kids."

Second only to automobile accidents, suicide is the leading killer of college students - claiming the lives of an estimated 1,100 each year, according to the Jed Foundation. The American Association of Suicidology reports on its Web site that the suicide rate for 15 to 25 year olds is 300 percent higher than it was in the 1950s.

In the aftermath of three apparent suicides this fall at New York University, nearly 100 colleges and universities contacted the Jed Foundation about offering the nonprofit's services to their students.

The Jed Foundation also recently joined with Columbia, Harvard, Yale and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to begin developing more effective suicide prevention programs on campuses.

Ron Gibori, the executive director of Ulifeline, credits schools for recognizing the problem.

Some schools are focusing on the causes of suicidal tendencies. Counselors say perfectionism - in combination with the long-recognized problems such as depression, bipolar disorder and drug abuse - is starting to play a larger role in college-age suicides.

"The good sign is that (students are) driven, they're motivated and they're highly conscientious," said Connie Horton, the director of counseling and consultation services at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington.

"But the downside is that they can be really hard on themselves and normal failures can be viewed as disasters."

Pioneer

Thursday November 20, 2003

Ferris State funds could fall 6 percent

LANSING (AP) - Michigan's 15 public universities could see their state funding drop by up to 6 percent under Gov. Jennifer Granholm's budget cutting proposal, sources said Wednesday.

However, universities could see a smaller reduction of 3 percent if they don't increase tuition, or if they keep tuition hikes within a certain range, two sources close to the budget negotiations told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. Details of the tuition stipulation were unclear Wednesday.

The reductions to universities were among those presented by Granholm's budget director Mary Lannoye to Republican legislative leaders and minority Democrats at a closed-door meeting in the executive office building on Tuesday.

Granholm and lawmakers need to resolve a \$920 million deficit in this year's overall \$38.6 billion budget.

The university funding reduction could mean this year's overall \$1.79 billion higher education budget would be cut by about \$88 million.

If the Republican-controlled Legislature agrees with the Democratic; governor's plan to reduce university funding, it would come on top of roughly 10 percent in cuts over the past two years. Universities increased their tuition an average 10 percent this fall to offset the lost state revenue.

The governor's proposals, also included a 6 percent reduction to state revenue sharing payments to local governments, the sources said.

Such a cut would come on top' a 3 percent reduction local governments took in a deal reached this summer to resolve what was then a \$1.7 billion deficit in the budget for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1.

Petoskey News

Tuesday November 11, 2003

University Center will enrich NCMC

It's been coming little piece by little piece over the years, but the recent announcement of a University Center at North Central Michigan College is great, historic news indeed. Six universities - Central Michigan, Ferris State, Lake Superior State Lawrence Technological Michigan State and Spring Arbor signed on to offer advanced degrees at the local college. What that means is no more traveling to the Sault for business courses, to other towns for education classes, to Traverse City for that master's degree.

It's not that some classes weren't held in the area, because they were. With the University Center, however, the college has formalized relations with the six universities and made a commitment to have them on campus.

The offerings are wide-ranging and rich: a master's degree in counseling from CMU; bachelor's degrees in social work, computer information systems and secondary education, along with education certificates, from FSU; bachelor's degrees in accounting, liberal studies, nursing, business administration, engineering management and individual studies from LSSU; a master's in business administration from Lawrence Tech; a plant science certificate from MSU and a bachelor's and master's degree in education from Spring Arbor.

College officials note that with state budget difficulties, funds from the state for a University Center building are not in the cards. But the student needs remained.

So the University Center is up and running now, with some of the programs starting back in July.

Congratulations to officials at North Central who looked to the future for the students in this area, and worked so hard to make the University Center a reality.

The Grand rapids Press
Thursday, November 20, 2003

Survey foresees more jobs for grads

By Judy Putnam Grand Rapids Press Bureau

LANSING - Those earning bachelor's degrees this year may find the tough job market easing a bit, a Michigan State University survey released today concludes.

"The bottom line is we see a turnaround in the college labor market," said Phil Gardner, the author of the 33rd annual "Recruiting Trends" survey. "After four years of negative news, this is good."

But it won't be the big rush of hiring experienced in 1996-97 on the heels of an early '90s recession, said Gardner, the director of the Collegiate Employment Research Institute at MSU's Career Services and Placement.

"This job recovery is going to be slow. It's still competitive. (Graduates) still have to position themselves well, and they have to be aggressive about finding employment," he said.

The study looked at 450 employers nationwide. Of 353 employers providing hiring information, 41 percent said they will definitely hire new graduates. That compares with 36 percent last year.

Those with master's degrees face the biggest hurdles - employers are finding many positions formerly held by those with graduate degrees can be handled with a bachelor's degree. The job market also is difficult for those with degrees in engineering and computer fields, Gardner said.

The survey found fewer technical jobs, especially in manufacturing. U.S. companies are sending technical work to India, China and Russia, where costs are much lower, Gardner said. He cited the example of a computer technician from India answering computer help calls from U.S. residents. "Off-shoring of jobs, nothing new for blue-collar and low-paying positions, has finally hit the college labor market," the report concluded.

Thomas Wolff, associate dean of undergraduate studies in the MSU College of Engineering, said a few years ago students planning to graduate in May had their jobs lined up by Thanksgiving, after turning in resumes at fall job fairs.

That has changed. He said students have to do more work to find jobs, and they may have to work for a supplier when they had their heart set on the Big Three.

"The job-search business is much messier than it used to be," Wolff said. Gardner said grads will do better in the fields of business, biotechnology, retail, finance, administrative and hospitality services. People skills will get you a job in retail, likely on a management track, he said. But some with B.A.S might have to start at the bottom.

Large employers are expected to hire the most new grads. Small employers report they will target the existing labor pool rather than new graduates. And while the federal government is hiring, it will not offset job losses at the state and local levels.

Gardner said one striking trend is that jobs held during college, as well as paid and unpaid internships, are critical to getting permanent positions.

Amanda Carra, 20, an MSU senior from Portage, said she is using internships to position herself for a job in public relations when she graduates next spring.

She said students have to face the fact that they might not find their ideal job right out of college. "I think any work experience will help you," she said.

The Pioneer

Friday, November 21, 2003

New Nursing Education Certificate, MSN, meet changing needs

BIG RAPIDS - Seeing the need for graduate programs to meet new challenges in the rapidly changing world of health care, Ferris State University has developed a new graduate certificate in Nursing Education, and a Master of Science in Nursing program that offers the option to specialize in education, health care informatics or administration.

Ferris' new MSN and certificate in Nursing Education addresses a severe shortage of nursing faculty in academia. The MSN concentration in Education prepares graduates to teach at the undergraduate level, or to function as an educator within a health care agency.

The Nursing Education certificate fits into the master's education track. Twelve credits of education coursework can be "pulled out" as the Nursing Education certificate. Students can get the certificate in the context of earning the MSN, or they can complete just the certificate.

"For someone who already has a MSN, earning the education certificate will give them a stronger academic background," says Julie Coon, head of Ferris' Nursing and Dental Hygiene programs.

One of the greatest changes in health care in recent years has been the increased emphasis on privacy requirements-specifically the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Ferris' MSN specializing in informatics will prepare nurses both for the new regulations and the technologies hospitals and other institutions need to meet the demands of these new laws.

"Record keeping and documentation has become more challenging for health care providers with these new laws," says Coon. "In addition, more hospitals are using bedside computer charting, resulting in a need for more expertise in the management of information technology. This is one of the newest areas of nursing."

Ferris also is offering an Administration track to the MSN. Both the informatics and administration tracks are offered collaboratively with Ferris' College of Business, which brings additional resources and faculty experience to the program, further enhancing the interdisciplinary perspective that is so important in today's health care setting.

The new programs will initially be offered at Ferris State's Big Rapids campus in a mixed delivery format that will include three on-campus weekends per semester, with the rest of the program on-line. The University expects to offer the program at its satellite campuses as demand grows.

Merit scholarships too costly to maintain

In the front page article dealing with the budget crisis ("What would you cut?" Press, Nov. 12), I agree with Mr. Zuiderveld. Using every penny during good times, often foolishly, has caused the problem. The solution is to identify and eliminate all the unnecessary foolishness.

Even considering the possibility of reducing the state annual per-student allocation for school operation, while continuing the Merit Award scholarships is a classic example of stupidity. That relatively recent program was former Gov. Engler's bribery device to induce more students to submit to the useless, time-consuming and costly MEAP testing procedure, which, arguably, has probably contributed more confusion and misinformation than improvement in education. If the truth were known, I expect a large majority of those scholarship funds are being given to students with absolutely no financial need. Turn the problem over to someone with a modicum of common sense.

DEAN BATCHELOR, Douglas