

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
May 14, 2013

Commencement

This past weekend was a remarkable reminder of the importance of our purpose as an institution of higher education. Each of our six commencement ceremonies were displays of the deep emotion associated with the awarding of a college degree. It is especially moving when we confer diplomas upon graduates who are the first in their families to reach this milestone, which is not only significant for our graduates but their parents, siblings and relatives. Attending commencement one also learns that earning a college degree is a source of accomplishment to not only the graduate, but also to his or her family and friends.

Many people contribute to the commencement ceremonies, just as each of us in our way contributes to the success of our students. It is easy to see the pride on your faces at commencement. If you participated in Friday or Saturday's commencement ceremonies, thank you for taking time to help our ceremonies run smoothly. Many people comment on how special commencement is at Ferris and how we place the emphasis in the ceremonies on our students. Certainly this is one of the most important moments in a person's life. On behalf of our recent graduates, thank you for making commencement an extraordinary and memorable experience for our graduates and their families.

There are many noteworthy stories about our graduates, their successes, challenges, and the character they display in reaching this milestone. At each ceremony I highlight the struggles and achievements of one or two of our graduates. These are individuals who often must overcome great obstacles to reach their goal of earning a Ferris degree. This year we celebrated the tenacity of students who exhibited bravery in war, bravery in difficult home situations, and bravery in pursuing their passion when it would have been far easier to quit. When you have a moment I would encourage you to take a few moments to read about these remarkable graduates. I find their stories both humbling and inspiring -

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/presentations/2012-13.htm> .

Here we also post remarks by our honorary doctorate recipients, Joel Robertson, Richard Antonini, and Lupe Ramos-Montigney. They also represent extraordinary stories of success.

Finally, there are many good photos of commencement on our Photo Services Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/FSUPhotoServices#!/FSUPhotoServices/photos_stream . Thank you for making this a very special day for the more than 1,750 newly minted Ferris alumni who attended the ceremonies.

Tuition

Last Friday at their meeting on our campus the Board of Trustees set tuition rates for the 2013-14 academic year. Approving tuition at this early date helps our students by providing certainty as to the costs they will face for the fall semester. The decision was to raise tuition by a very modest 2.24 percent, the second-lowest increase in the past decade. All of us at the university have worked very hard on cost containment, and these efforts have made it possible to restrain

tuition during a time when state funding is still significantly less than in the past. We have worked diligently to meet the performance-based standards for funding set by the state. Having done well on these metrics last year, we are positioned to do well again as Gov. Snyder and state lawmakers finalize this year's budget. I will share the state action on our budget as it becomes available.

More information about the board's action on tuition is available on our news site, <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2013/may/tuition.htm> .

Rankin Center Renovation

Over the past few days I found myself reflecting that this would be the last time I would do a particular activity in the Rankin Center. The building is now closed and we have begun the process of renovating it into a University Center that will better meet the needs of our students, faculty, staff and community. In conjunction with the building renovation, we will also be making modification to our roadways as well as bike and pedestrian paths. This is being done to fulfill the vision set out in our master plan to create a vibrant and cohesive central campus and to enhance safety by having traffic routed to the perimeter of campus.

All of this will call for some patience on the part of everyone in the Ferris community. Information about the project and its progress is available on the Ferris website devoted to at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/physical/renovation/> .

When completed, the University Center will be a wonderful addition to the central core of our Big Rapids campus. The concept of creating interaction beyond the classroom is one of the guiding principles of the renovation. This builds upon the success of the FLITE building and the establishment of a campus Quad in defining a community center for our University in Big Rapids. Thank you for your understanding during the months ahead while this transformation takes place.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, president