

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
September 10, 2012

Social Fest

If it has not done so already, sometime soon Facebook will reach one billion members. This is nothing short of amazing for a service that started in February of 2004. The influence of Social Media on our society continues to grow in importance. This week, Sept. 10-15, the Ferris State University Social Media team is presenting SocialFest 2012 to highlight the many ways social media impacts the university community. Events include a presentation by Ferris alumnus Luke Wyckoff in Williams Auditorium on Tuesday, Sept. 11. This 6-8 p.m. event will also include a panel discussion on social media. Also scheduled are a You Tube student film festival, foursquare scavenger hunt, and more. A full list of activities is available at <http://ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/advance/Social-Media/socialfest/homepage.htm> .

Please join me in thanking the Social Media Team for their efforts in making this series of events possible: Sandy Gholston, co-chair, Mary Kay MacIver, co-chair, Shelly Armstrong, Michelle Balliet, Amber Balmer, Rob Bentley, Jennifer Hegenauer, Betsy Musolf, Todd Stanislav, Greg Wellman and Paul Willard. I am hopeful you will attend and encourage others to also help support these efforts.

SPARC Meeting

The first meeting of the Strategic Planning and Resource Council will take place this Tuesday, Sept. 11, 3-5 p.m. in the West Campus Commons Center Multi-Purpose Room. The meeting agenda includes a presentation of divisional initiatives for the academic year by vice presidents and an update from the student debt task force. SPARC meetings are open to everyone in the university community and all are encouraged to participate in the meetings. If your schedule permits, I hope you will attend and lend your perspective to our planning processes.

Changes to Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPSERS)

Earlier this month the legislature and governor passed and signed SB 1040, which makes major changes in MPSERS, the retirement plan for a little over 200 employees at Ferris. MPSERS employees should have received both electronic and written correspondence regarding these changes.

If you have followed the news regarding these MPSERS changes you know that an injunction was granted to stop the implementation of this bill. A hearing on this is scheduled for November. However, the state is moving forward with the administrative steps needed for implementation of the changes. All MPSERS employees should have received communication from the State Office of Retirement Services (ORS) informing them of the retirement decisions they need to make by Oct. 26.

To help our MPSERS employees we have scheduled an information session for Oct. 11 from 4:30-6 p.m. in the Rankin Center Dome Room. In addition, our Human Resource Office will respond to questions and ORS/MPSERS may be contacted directly at 800-381-5111.

Volunteer for ArtPrize

Much of Grand Rapids, including our Kendall College of Art and Design is preparing for ArtPrize 2012. The hugely successful art competition begins Wednesday, Sept. 19 and runs through Sunday, Oct. 7. ArtPrize has done much to make Grand Rapids a center for art and tourism, and the university's role in the competition expands this year with the historic Federal Building serving as a major public venue for entries. You may recall that Open Water, the winning entry in the inaugural ArtPrize was shown in the former Federal Building, drawing 80,000 visitors to that venue alone.

ArtPrize has attracted about 1 million visitors to Grand Rapids in the past three years. This is a unique and exciting event that attracts national and international attention. An undertaking of this scope requires the help of many people. Kendall needs people to volunteer about 3,000 hours this year as exhibition guards, at registration stations, in the retail store and more. If you can help, please do. To sign up, visit <http://www.kcad.edu/artprize/artprizevolunteers/>. A Volunteer Kickoff/Training Party will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 17 at Kendall's Fountain Street building.

In addition to serving as an exhibition venue, this year we will again sponsor the ArtPrize Speaker Series, which opens with filmmaker John Waters on Tuesday, Sept. 25. Other speakers include artist Theaster Gates, art critic Jerry Saltz, Alison Gass, curator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum and artist Elaine Tin Nyo. For more information about Kendall's involvement, visit <http://www.kcad.edu/artprize/>. For more about ArtPrize generally, visit <http://www.artprize.org/>

Ferris Sports Update

Ferris Sports Update, a weekly review of Ferris athletic news which highlights people and activities at our university, is now in its fourth year of airing on FOX 32 at 10:30 p.m. on Thursdays. This reaches many viewers across the northern lower peninsula and the upper peninsula. The show, hosted by Rob Bentley and supported by the participation of coaches and student athletes, is the result of a partnership of several departments across campus.

One of the most impressive aspects of the show is the way senior Television and Digital Media Production students fulfill production roles as part of their capstone course - providing them with great material and credit to place on their resumes. This is exactly the kind of hands-on, real-world learning that our founder envisioned when he founded his school.

In noting the partnerships that have helped keep this program on the air, Glen Okonoski, coordinator of our School of Digital Media, stressed the support of Kristen Salmonson, Kathy Lake, Michelle Johnston, Perk Weisenburger and Jon Coles. Many other faculty, staff and students are involved in the ongoing success of this project. The Fox Sports News segments and other Ferris State TV productions are available through the "Ferris Resources" tab on the university's home page.

Athletics

Congratulations to our men's football team who earned a 49-21 away game victory over Lake Erie. The team opens its home season this Saturday, Sept. 15, at 7 p.m. against Ashland University.

Our women's soccer team played a third straight overtime contest, fighting to a 3-2 win over Madonna College last Friday, Sept. 7. They face Grand Valley State in a non-conference away match this Wednesday, Sept. 7, 7 p.m. in Allendale. This Friday, Sept. 14, they play Ohio Dominion here in Big Rapids at 4 p.m.

The 19th-ranked women's volleyball team won three of four matches in the Minnesota-Duluth Classic in Duluth, Minn., losing only to 6th-ranked host Minnesota-Duluth. The team plays away matches this week against Northwood on Friday the 14th at 7 p.m., and against Hillsdale on Saturday the 15th at 2 p.m.

Congratulations to all of our teams. A full, composite list of results and upcoming contests is available at www.ferrisstatebulldogs.com under the "Schedules" tab. Please attend one of these exciting games in support of our student-athletes.

Closing Thoughts

This coming Saturday is an especially busy evening. In addition to the fall home opener for our football team, The Capital Steps will be appearing in Williams Auditorium at 6 p.m. as part of the Arts and Lecture series, and Card Wildlife Center will be hosting a benefit at the Holiday Inn also beginning at 6 p.m. I encourage you to support these events.

On a final note, there appear to be more traffic accidents this fall than in the past. I want to encourage faculty, staff and students to take a little extra time and care on the highways, in town and on campus.