

April 3, 2007

Dear Colleagues:

One of the strategic goals identified by the Diversity Planning Committee (DPC) relates to creating a diverse workforce. The DPC recommends that Ferris “hire, retain, and promote a diversified workforce: faculty, staff, and administrators.” The DPC believes that a truly diverse institution achieves excellence in many ways, including having a heterogeneous workforce--with talented, well-qualified workers from many backgrounds.

One of the recommendations of the DPC was that a diversity statement should be placed in all job advertisements and job postings. After much discussion, the Diversity Office recommended this statement: “Ferris State University is sincerely committed to being a truly diverse institution and actively seeks applications from women, minorities, and other underrepresented groups.” This statement will be placed in a “stand alone” category near the top of all postings. It will not be placed in “Preferred” or “Qualifications” categories. The purpose of the diversity statement is two-fold: 1) to tell the nation that we are committed to being a diverse institution; and, 2) to let women, minorities, and other individuals from underrepresented groups know that we want them to consider applying to Ferris. This diversity statement does not violate Proposal 2. Placing a diversity statement in all job postings is a small, symbolic act, but symbolism matters. We believe that becoming an institution with an earned reputation for embracing diversity includes both long range planning and small, immediate actions.

On June 6, Ferris State University will begin its annual Summer University. The first day is devoted to diversity. Dr. Frank Hale, one of this nation's leading experts on diversity, will give the keynote address on the benefits of diversity for a campus community. If you have ideas for presentations/presenters for the concurrent sessions that day please send them to the Diversity Office, CSS 312 or email me at pilgrimd@ferris.edu . Here are some of the proposed ideas:

1) Proposal 2 and Ferris

Discusses what affirmative action is--and is not. The discussion may center on the way that the passing of Proposal 2 will impact Ferris.

2) Diversity at Ferris

The discussion will focus on the diversity issues most pressing at Ferris.

3) Body Image

The discussion will probe the way perceptions of body images are shaped by the culture--and impact on individuals' lives.

4) GLBT Issues

This discussion may center on issues facing GLBT members of the Ferris community.

Again, I encourage you to send ideas for topics and presenters to the Diversity Office. It would help to have the ideas within the next two weeks.

David Pilgrim
Chief Diversity Officer