

# Ferris State University New Faculty Transition Program

The university has initiated this yearlong program to assist all new-to-Ferris faculty in making a smooth and positive transition to Ferris State and the Big Rapids Community.

## Program Goals

There are three goals for this program:

1. To assist faculty in the development and refinement of their teaching skills and strategies.
2. To assist faculty in developing the background and skills necessary to become excellent student advisors.
3. To assist faculty in developing peer relationships that can support their professional growth and development.

## Time Table for the Program

The Program begins with a daylong session the Thursday before the start of fall semester classes. This session focuses on understanding the Ferris student population, the university culture, and the Ferris community. The session includes

assistance in obtaining all of the passwords and ID's needed to work at FSU.

The yearlong program is divided by semesters. Seven sessions are held each semester. Sessions meet every two weeks beginning Thursday of the second week of the semester. The session format combines a discussion with peers on how the transition to FSU and the classroom teaching experience is progressing with a specific topic related to teaching, student learning or student advising.

## Session Topics

As a teaching institution Ferris' expectation is that all faculty will excel at on what they do in the classroom. Given this priority the Transition Program sessions will focus on the current research on teaching and learning and its application to the classroom. Sessions are designed to be of value to both new and experienced teachers.

Session topics include:

- Writing fair and effective tests
- Current theories on the brain's role in college student learning
- Cognitive and social/emotional theories of college student development
- Advising (SIS) Student Information System

- Effective lecturing
- Conducting small and large group discussion
- Using online resources to communicate with students
- Introduction to WebCT
- Developing an effective and fair grading system
- Helping Students Improving their Learning Practices
- Using the Diversity of Your Students to Enhance Classroom Learning

## Workshops and Conference Opportunities

By fully participating in the orientation program, faculty receive full financial support to attend a national conference that addresses the issues of teaching and/or student advising. In March of 2004, the group of new-to-Ferris faculty attended the Lilly International Association of Teaching Scholars Conference on Teaching in Higher Education in California.

## Support from the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development

As part of the transition program, each faculty member will be offered the opportunity to have his or her teaching confidentially assessed using the Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) system each semester by a member of the CTL&FD. Faculty can also have a teaching session video-taped. The taping is followed by a consultation that uses the tape to improve classroom practice. Both of these assessment tools have proven track records in helping instructors with their teaching.

## Evaluation of the New Faculty Transition Program

Over 140+ faculty have participated in the transition program during the past six academic years. Their responses to the program have been very positive. Eighty percent found the overall program to be very beneficial. Ninety percent found the program to be very beneficial in building positive professional relationships with colleagues on campus.

Comments included:

“Knowing I am not the only one who is completely overwhelmed was a great help.”

“Understanding the culture of the FSU community—how things worked at Ferris—was so helpful.”

## Other Offerings of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development

- Weeklong Summer Institutes (including PDI stipends)
- Food & Thought discussion groups
- Book Discussion Groups on Topics of Teaching and Learning
- Courses designed specifically for teaching faculty on topics such as, Testing and Assessment, Creating Community in the Classroom, Teaching Methods, Learning and Student Development Theory and Application
- Workshops (2-4 hours) on teaching, learning, communicating, using media in instruction, assessment, and on a variety of instructional techniques
- Individual consultations
- Departmental consultations
- Small Group Instructional Diagnosis SGID

Contact CTLFD:  
Phone: (231) 591-2440  
Email: [doylet@ferris.edu](mailto:doylet@ferris.edu)  
Website: <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/academics/center/center.htm>



**Center for  
Teaching, Learning  
& Faculty Development**

**New Faculty  
Transition  
Program  
2004-2005**