

To: Student Affairs Division

From: Daniel L. Burcham, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs

Subject: University-Wide Diversity Planning Committee

Date: March 9, 2007

I am writing to you today to express my enthusiastic support for the work of Ferris State University's new Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. David Pilgrim, and the University-wide Diversity Planning Committee. The work of this committee is important and I urge everyone in our division to help this committee accomplish its goals.

As you may know, I recently approved the creation of the Student Affairs Diversity Committee. The purpose of this committee is to support the efforts of the University Diversity Planning Committee, and to make progress at the departmental level on a multitude of diversity-related activities, projects, and events.

The first major project of the Student Affairs Diversity Committee is to engage in an audit of the division's diversity-related activities, projects, programs and events. We want to be welcoming and inviting to all students, staff and community members, and we need your help to accomplish this goal. We want to communicate that we genuinely value diversity.

We will enhance, foster and encourage professional development relative to diversity within each department of our division. I want us all to learn more about how to best meet the needs of our minority, international and GLBT students. We want to make sure that diversity is reflected in all that we do within the division and that we assess our progress.

We will address issues such as:

1. Does each department have a mission statement, and if so, how is diversity reflected within the mission statement?
2. Does each department have a brochure, handout or web site that addresses diversity issues?
3. How does each department support diversity?
4. Does each department have specific plans for recruiting a more diverse staff in the future?

We are in the initial stages of planning a summer retreat that will focus on diversity. We plan to use the results of our diversity audit for this retreat. We also want to make sure everyone within the division has an opportunity to tour the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia.

If you have any additional ideas or suggestions for how our division might enhance, support and encourage diversity, please let me know. Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation as we continue to make progress toward our goal of making Student Affairs a division that is genuinely welcoming to students, faculty, staff and others, and that celebrates and supports diversity.