

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
December 5, 2016

This past week incidents on two university campuses reminded us of the stark reality that violence can happen anywhere. Last Monday 11 people were injured and the assailant killed at Ohio State University. Friday a professor was killed at the University of Southern California. It is sobering to all of us that acts of violence occur at institutions dedicated to learning. I know you join me in support for our colleagues and students at these campuses who have been impacted by these attacks.

For each of us there is a point when we become aware of the reality that university campuses can be a place where unspeakable, senseless violence can occur. Historically, one of the first incidences was at the University of Texas in 1966 when 43 people were shot by an assailant firing from a tower on their campus. Thirteen of these people died. Many of you will recall your reaction in 2007 when 32 people were killed at Virginia Tech. The following year this was followed by a similar incident at Northern Illinois University. When a tragedy of this nature happens, we are reminded of the critical importance of campus safety. Should an incident ever occur on one of our campuses, each of us needs to be prepared and ready in the event of the unthinkable.

In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech incident we invested considerable time and resources to ensure our campuses are prepared to deal with violence should it occur. We also continue to look for and implement ways to make our campus communities as safe as possible. The simple reality is that should an incident occur, any of us could be the person first on the scene. There are some simple ways you can help and be prepared.

Our Department of Public Safety has produced an active shooter video that is viewed by new faculty and staff and first-year students. If you have not seen this, or want to refresh your awareness, I encourage you to watch the video, which is online [here](#). Being observant, prepared and being ready to “run, hide, fight” just as colleagues and students did at Ohio State last week is something each of us should know.

An important aspect of campus safety is the communication channels available to inform the campus community of an emergency, emergency instructions and other time-sensitive information. One of the quickest and easiest ways to be alerted of an on-campus emergency is through text messaging. If you have not done so, sign up today for our emergency text messaging system (RAVE). This can be done online [here](#).

Beyond this, we have enabled multiple communication methods to quickly inform students, faculty and staff of any kind of emergency on campus. These include:

- The Internet, including the FSU homepage, e-mail and social media, which can be mobilized as information sources.
- Campus computers have the capability for emergency messages to be broadcast to the desktop.
- Our emergency outdoor broadcast system can deliver public address messages to people outside of buildings on the campus grounds.
- Campus video boards and the campus television channel are designed to deliver messages.

The University Behavior Review Team is composed of staff members from across campus and meets Mondays or as needed to discuss student behaviors observed or reported to University officials. Our Threat Assessment Team meets immediately when there is potential for

an anticipated escalated threat or emergency. Throughout the University, emergency and continuity plans have been developed and are updated on a regular basis.

In Big Rapids, our Department of Public Safety has undergone special training for emergency situations and additional security measures have been put into place. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones are installed in classrooms. Blue light phones have been installed across campus. Security cameras have been installed in selected locations. Every residence hall requires card key access. Campus lighting is reviewed and improved annually. Each year, campus security stages tabletop exercises with community emergency officials. While we do not like to think of violence occurring on our campus, we know the best defense is to be prepared.

Our Department of Public Safety is committed to educating the Ferris community about Active Shooter Response, Emergency Preparedness and Prevention through presentations taught by police officers and emergency preparedness officials. If your department has not done this recently I encourage you to contact them and schedule a session after the first of the year.

Finally, in Big Rapids if you ever witness anything that is suspicious or someone who is acting out of character on campus, at any time of day or night, alert our Department of Public Safety at ext. 5000. In other locations contact the campus or local police. In all locations, in an emergency, do not hesitate, dial 911 immediately.

It is my sincerest hope that none of us will ever experience an act of violence or other emergency situation. Please help your colleagues, students and our University by being prepared should this ever occur.

End of the Semester

This week is one of the most intense at the University, with final class sessions and preparation for final examinations. This is a time when our students can use extra support as they reach the end of the semester. Every day each of us works to help our students. If there is something extra you can do for students during this period, I encourage you to do so. On Monday, Dec. 12, I will be serving pancakes to our students at The Rock Café beginning at 10 p.m. This is an event I look forward to every year, as it provides an opportunity to visit with students and it gives them a much needed break from studying for finals. If you would like to assist, please contact our office at ext. 2500. Thank you for taking time to help our students in this and other ways.

As we prepare for the end of the fall semester, it is also time to celebrate the holidays. I encourage you to join us on Tuesday, Dec. 6, and Thursday, Dec. 8. As a reminder, Tuesday's holiday reception will be held at the Woodbridge N. Ferris building located at 17 Pearl St. NW. in Grand Rapids, while Thursday's reception will be held at the University Center on the Big Rapids campus. I look forward to seeing you between 4 and 7 p.m. at either location to relax, socialize and celebrate the holiday season.

Athletics

Saturday a very successful season for our women's volleyball team came to an end at the NCAA Division II Midwest Regional Championship. The women lost at home on Saturday to Lewis University on the last day of championship play after earlier scoring victories against Truman State on Thursday and Saginaw Valley on Friday. The team had won 26-straight matches entering the regional championship and ended the season with a 30-6 overall record while reaching the regional championship match for the third time in four years. Stephanie Sikorski, Ayanna Buckley and Allyson Cappel were named to Midwest Region All-Tournament Team. Congratulations to Coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm, her coaching staff and student-athletes on a remarkable, memorable season.

Saturday our men's football team had one of the biggest and most memorable wins in the history of the program as they defeated Grand Valley on the road. With a thrilling, dominant 47-32 victory, our football team won its 8th game in a row and tied a school-record with its 12th win of the year. In doing this they claimed the Super Region Four Championship and will now advance to the NCAA Semifinals for only the second time in school history. It was wonderful to see many student, alumni and community members in their Crimson and Gold at Grand Valley cheering our football team to victory. Thank you to all who came out to support our student-athletes.

Earlier in the week the team had six players named to the 2016 Division II Conference Commissioner's Association All-Super Region team. Honored were first-team region picks offensive lineman Jake Daugherty, defensive end Zach Sieler, linebacker Anthony Darkangelo, cornerback Tavierre Thomas and punter Trevor Birmingham. Offensive tackle Devon Johnson was named to the second team. Congratulations to these players on this special recognition.

Our team will be on the road this Saturday to face defending national champion Northwest Missouri State in Maryville, Mo., at the National NCAA Division II Semifinals. Kickoff is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. eastern time. The game will be nationally televised online by ESPN3. A fan bus from Big Rapids is being organized, leaving on Friday and returning after the game Saturday. Congratulations to Head Coach Tony Annese, his coaching staff and football student-athletes on this historic success and best wishes on Saturday in Missouri.

David L. Eisler, president