

Message to University Community

November 17, 2016

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

Woodbridge and Helen Ferris founded our institution on opportunity – opportunity for all who yearn for an education and the chance for a better life. Our University is considered “home” to many people from all walks of life, including those who belong to different cultures, races, ethnicities and religious groups. This is one of our greatest strengths.

We aspire to live up to our core values. These values represent the very fibers that bring us together and provide the kind of environment where everyone can thrive and achieve. However, over the past weeks there have been incidents of incivility at colleges and universities throughout the nation. And, we are aware there have been scattered reports of incidents of intolerance involving some members of the Ferris community. We are deeply concerned about how students and employees are being treated here and across the country.

Our University believes in welcoming the diversity of ideas, beliefs and cultures. We also believe in inclusion. Respect. Civility. We strongly value an ethical community, one in which we recognize the inherent dignity in each and every one of us. We will not be a place where acts of hatred, racial intolerance, or other disrespectful actions are tolerated. Classrooms, office spaces, living areas – all areas of campus – are places where respect and civility are expected. We do not condone the discrimination of anyone at our University.

While we have many differences and viewpoints, we also have many similarities. We are all here to learn. We are here to encourage and support one another, and provide a welcoming and inclusive environment. Now is the time for us to come together as a University, to ensure everyone has that safe and supportive environment. Let us be mindful of how our words and our actions can affect those who may be feeling uncertain or anxious about their futures. All of us have the power to positively impact and influence our fellow colleagues and students.

If you are a witness to or have been affected by any form of discrimination, harassment, racial or religious intolerance of any kind, or any uncivil conduct exhibited at our University, please report it to a supervisor or a faculty member. For anyone who is looking for additional support, the Diversity and Inclusion Office is ready and willing to be of service.

Sincerely,

David Eisler,
President

Paul Blake,
Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs

David Pilgrim,
Vice President
for Diversity and Inclusion