

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
October 31, 2016

This fall has included much discussion and focus on enrollment. These conversations have been broad, wide-ranging, and in a variety of settings both small and large across the University. A common characteristic has been the willingness of people throughout our campus communities to offer their best thinking about how we can address the continued decline in the number of students graduating from Michigan high schools. A theme often heard in these discussions is a belief in the powerful connection with prospective students our academic programs and education can provide.

As one better understands the many efforts underway to recruit and retain students, it is easy to develop a strong appreciation for the efforts put forth by our faculty and staff. With this understanding is also a realization that this is a very competitive environment. For further success we must continue to evolve and innovate, and to provide support for the many people engaged in these efforts.

Whether it has been at an open forum, in a college or department meeting, in a council or committee meeting, or in a conversation with colleagues, I am grateful and appreciative for your willingness to help and contribute to our recruitment and retention efforts. While challenges do exist, there is a strength to your efforts that builds confidence for our future. Whenever each of us reaches out and engages with a current or prospective student, we can make a difference.

Throughout this semester we have solicited and received many ideas and suggestions to enhance current recruitment and retention efforts. These are collected and accessible [here](#). As a part of continued discussions on enrollment, the Strategic Planning and Resource Council (SPARC) will be reviewing and prioritizing these items at their meeting next Tuesday, Nov. 8. This is in the University Center 202B, beginning at 3 p.m. All are welcome to attend; you need not be a member of SPARC to participate in the meeting or discussions.

Also this fall we have been working through the challenges of reductions in our education and general budget, as well as the housing and dining budget. These are difficult and challenging discussions that require hard choices. Candidly, it is far easier to not make these decisions, instead taking one-time resources and using them to replace base budget funds. From experience at other institutions, taking this easier path would potentially mortgage our future and ultimately make these hard decisions much more difficult and painful the longer they are deferred. Our University, and its financial future, is solid and financially strong when we thoughtfully and purposefully address our challenges, making decisions to ensure our long-term success.

Each fall I host a budget forum to share information on our finances, examining federal and state economic trends, results from last year's budget, our current budget and factors that could affect next year's budget. As part of this year's presentation, I will also be discussing the budget reduction process and efforts. This year's forum will be on Thursday, Nov. 10, at 11 a.m. in University Center 202C. Everyone is invited to attend. I look forward to sharing this information with you and answering your questions. These materials will also be posted online.

Foundation for Excellence Benefit

Friday we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of The Ferris Foundation and the profound impact the Foundation has on our students and educational efforts. This year's Foundation for Excellence Benefit, held at DeVos Place in Grand Rapids, will be our

largest and most successful benefit ever with over 660 tickets sold and support from 70 sponsors.

During the evening we will be honoring student scholarship recipients and faculty merit grant recipients. This year's program will include a very special presentation as we honor Phil and Jocelyn Hagerman with the Foundation's Humanitarian Award. This is the third time in the history of the Foundation this award has been given. The evening will include some special announcements and will be capped by our keynote speaker, Mr. Archie Manning.

Many people have and are working very hard to make this a very special night. If you have not purchased tickets to attend yet and would like to do so, there is still time to make your reservations online [here](#). Proceeds from the evening are used for student scholarships and faculty merit grants.

Wege Prize 2017

Kendall College of Art and Design's Wege Center for Sustainable Design, in partnership with the Wege Foundation, is accepting entries for the Wege Prize 2017. This is a yearly student competition that challenges teams to collaboratively design and propose a product, service, business/non-profit organization, or other solution that can help transition from a linear economic model to a circular economic model. Thirty-thousand dollars in cash prizes are awarded in this competition, with the top team splitting \$15,000. The Wege Prize is an international competition and attracts student teams from across the country and world. Last year's winning team was from the Netherlands. Registration is open now, with team introductions and research plans due by Nov. 30th. If you have undergraduate or graduate students who may be interested in this competition, please encourage them to get involved. More information can be found [here](#).

United Way

Many have already contributed to the United Way fundraising campaign currently underway. If you are looking for a way to support the campaign, payroll deduction is available. Additionally, there are activities happening all across the University to provide opportunities for you to give, or to contribute your time and talents. With the United Way, one gift supports many deserving causes in our community. Thank you for your support of this very worthwhile effort.

Faculty Listening Sessions

Throughout October I have had the opportunity to sit down with faculty to listen and hear their thoughts about Ferris - what they value most, the challenges we face and to offer their advice for me. I have learned much from these sessions and am very grateful to everyone who has taken time to attend. If you missed a scheduled session, we have two make-up sessions: Tuesday, Nov. 8, 11 a.m. or Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2:30 p.m. Please call our office at extension 2500 to RSVP. I truly enjoy hearing from you and listening to your thoughts and ideas. Thank you for attending.

Athletics

Our women's volleyball team has now won 16 matches in a row after home victories this weekend against Michigan Tech (3-1) and Northern Michigan (3-0). They lead the GLIAC conference and host Grand Valley State Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. I encourage you to attend and see this exciting and talented team.

Saturday was a beautiful fall day for a football game at Top Taggart Stadium. The Bulldogs defeated Wayne State, ranked 19th in the country, with a strong 42-20 win, keeping our team's post-season playoff hopes alive. The football team is on the road this Saturday against Hillsdale College before returning home for Saginaw Valley on November 12th. Finally, on the

road Saturday evening, the men's ice hockey defeated the #9 team in the nation, Minnesota State Mankato.

Last year's senior All Americans Jason Vander Laan and Megan Vander Meer were honored at events this weekend as recipients of the Dean Davenport "Bulldog of the Year" Award. This is the first time in the history of these awards that both athletes have been unanimous selections. Both Jason and Megan are extraordinary examples of the best in Ferris student-athletes.

This is another extraordinarily successful year for our athletic programs. It is wonderful to see our student-athletes succeeding inside the classroom and in their respective athletic activities. Thank you to all the students, faculty and staff who support these young men and women.

David L. Eisler, president