

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 3, 2017

State Budget

Last week the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittees in both the House and Senate moved recommendations forward to their respective Appropriations Committees. In doing so both reduced the funding increase recommended by Governor Snyder. The recommendation in the Executive Budget was for an overall higher education increase of 3.45%. This included a 2.5% increase for universities and a 14.69% increase to state financial aid. The Senate committee's recommendation was for an overall increase of 3.01% including a 2% increase to universities and 14.96% to financial aid. The House version was for less, an overall 2.34% increase with a 1.9% increase to universities and a 9.28% increase for financial aid.

Both committee recommendations split the university increase between across the board and performance funding. The Executive Budget contained a \$1,669,458 (3.19%) increase to Ferris. The Senate version is \$300,091 less (a 2.62% increase in state funding over last year) and the House version is \$400,671 less (a 2.43% increase).

The area of greatest concern for Ferris in the Executive Budget was the proposed reduction in funding for university students in the Tuition Incentive Program. This was intent language for the 2019 budget. Currently TIP covers full tuition for the courses our students take toward their associate degree. The Executive Budget recommended TIP be limited to twice the community college in-district rate, approximately \$200 per credit. The Senate recommendation removes this language entirely. The House recommendation moves this to three times the community college rate. This funding is vital for our TIP students, and I am encouraged by these changes, although more work remains to be done.

There is still far to go in the budget approval process. The legislature is currently on a two-week break and will return on April 18. From the respective Appropriations Committees, the budgets are then sent for approval by the full House and Senate. Given the differences between the House and Senate bills they would move to conference committees to reach a single agreement together, including the Governor's Office in these discussions. The compromise bill moves back to the House and Senate for final approval and signing by the Governor, hopefully in late May or early June.

Over the next two months I will continue to advocate for higher education support in Lansing and especially promote support for our TIP students. As the budget process proceeds we will continue to provide updates for you. Our annual legislative luncheon in Lansing is Thursday, April 20. If your schedule permits, I would encourage you to join us. A bus will be departing from Big Rapids at 8 a.m. for those interested in attending. To reserve a seat on the bus, please contact Jody Greco with Governmental Relations at jodygreco@ferris.edu.

National Public Health Week

To celebrate National Public Health Week, the College of Health Professions is hosting three lunch and learns this week from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the West Campus Community Center. They include:

- Monday, April 3 – “The Dangers of Distracted Driving and The Dangers of Social Media” presented by Deputy Victor Vandertol of the Mecosta County Sheriff's Office

- Tuesday, April 4 – “It’s Summer, and It’s Hot!” presented by Tim Kearney, certified safety professional, 3M Personal Safety Division
- Wednesday, April 5 – “How Much is Enough – or Excessive?” presented by Dave Greydanus, FSU School of Criminal Justice

In addition, on Tuesday you can participate in a community health fair from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the IRC connector, and at 5 p.m. view the documentary, “A Day’s Work,” in the IRC, Room 120. This film is focused on the health risks of temporary workers across the U.S. You may also participate in a fitness challenge inside the SRC on Wednesday from 10 a.m. to noon. All of these events are free and open to all. For more information, contact Margaret Wan at margaretwan@ferris.edu or ext. 3131. Thank you to the Public Health faculty for organizing these educational and informative events.

FSU/KCAD Faculty Exhibit

This week the Fine Art Gallery inside the University Center will be hosting the annual FSU/KCAD Faculty Exhibit. The Gallery is collaborating with Academic Affairs to host a joint opening reception from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 6. This exhibit runs from April 6 to May 6 and showcases original works created by Art and Design faculty from Ferris and Kendall. I encourage you to attend the reception or the exhibit at your leisure and view the creative work of your colleagues.

International Festival of Cultures

On Sunday, April 9, from 1 to 5 p.m., the 29th annual International Festival of Cultures will be held inside the University Center. Hosted by the Office of International Education, this signature event celebrates the food, art and music from over 30 countries. Attendees also will have the opportunity to view various displays and performances by students representing their home countries. Please come out and join the many people who will be celebrating the diverse cultures represented on our campus.

SPARC

The Strategic Planning and Resource Council will meet on Tuesday, April 11, at 3 p.m. in the University Center Room 202B. Provost Paul Blake will be presenting and explaining the Quality Initiative we will pursue in preparation for our next accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission during the 2020-21 academic year. At the core of this Quality Initiative is the development of a Center for Academic Literacies, a holistic approach to address student retention, which Paul is leading for our University.

The HLC accreditation process has changed substantially since our last review in 2010-2011. Our accreditation will be conducted under the Open Pathways option. More information on this is accessible [here](#). You need not be a member of SPARC to attend, as everyone is welcome. Please join us for this very important presentation and discussion.

Athletics

The men’s tennis team, currently ranked 15th in the nation, defeated Grand Valley State on Tuesday 8-1, Lake Superior State 9-0 on Saturday and Michigan Tech 9-0 on Sunday. Their record is now an impressive 12-2. The men are at home this coming weekend, hosting Northwood on Friday at 2 p.m. and Wayne State on Sunday at 10 a.m.

Our women’s soccer program is participating in the National Soccer Coaches Association of America Open Training Week. This is part of a nationwide initiative to provide

coaches from all levels and backgrounds the opportunity to observe high-level training sessions and learn from one another. This will take place in the newly renovated Soccer Complex on campus from 6:45 to 9 a.m. on Friday.

Saturday morning beginning at 11 a.m. our men's and women's outdoor track team will host the 2017 Bulldog Invitational at Top Taggart Field. Also this coming weekend our women's softball will host doubleheaders with Tiffin on Saturday beginning at 1 p.m. and Findlay on Sunday at noon.

David L. Eisler, president