

# President's Message to Campus

Office of the President  
January 12, 2018

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## Enrollment

Yesterday was the 4<sup>th</sup> day enrollment count for spring 2018. The downward trend experienced this fall has continued, and enrollment is down University-wide. The most critical numbers are student credit hours (SCH). Compared with last spring, University-wide SCH are down 5,757 (3.9%), Big Rapids SCH are down 3,657 (3.3%) and online is down 979 SCH (6%). All of the above declines are a larger percentage than fall 2017.

Student retention has also dipped slightly from last year, with 90% of new fall semester bachelor degree students and 85% of associate degree students returning for spring semester. This results in an overall first semester retention rate of 87%, compared to an overall 89% retention rate last year.

Dual enrollment continues to increase significantly and is up 28% from a year ago, with 1,037 high school students taking classes from Ferris State University. In addition, the number of transfer students on the Big Rapids campus are up from last year.

Much effort has been made by many people across campus to recruit and retain students. Thank you to everyone who works hard every day to help students benefit from the opportunity a Ferris State University education provides. We will continue to work to stabilize enrollment in the context of decreasing numbers of Michigan high school students. The complete Spring 2018 [enrollment report](#) is available online.

## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

Next week the Diversity and Inclusion Office, Office of Housing & Residence Life Harmony Project, and Entertainment Unlimited are organizing multiple events to honor the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This is a wonderful opportunity for students, faculty, staff and the Big Rapids community to come together and pay tribute to a man who stood against injustice, championed nonviolent protest and fought for freedom. A [preview video](#) of the celebration is available on our YouTube Channel, and more information can be found at [www.ferris.edu/mlk](http://www.ferris.edu/mlk). I encourage you to attend this special series of events.

## Summer Opportunities Fair

Provost Paul Blake and Academic Affairs are hosting a Summer Opportunities Fair on Jan. 18 and Jan. 19 inside the University Center. With the changing of federal regulations, students now have the opportunity to receive Pell Grant support for summer study. Information and assistance will be available for summer courses on campus and online, internships, research opportunities, Study Abroad, scholarships and financial aid. Again this year, students electing six credit hours or more will be eligible for free summer housing. Taking classes during the summer semester is a wonderful way for students to reduce time to graduation and save on college costs. Please encourage your students to attend. Thank you to Provost Blake, the academic deans, faculty and staff for helping organize this fair for our students.

## Strategic Planning

Dr. Patricia Cormier will return to our Big Rapids and Grand Rapids campuses Tuesday and Wednesday to facilitate strategic planning listening sessions. These are a continuation of the sessions she began with faculty, staff, students and community members in November.

If you have not had the chance to attend, there will be an open forum on the Big Rapids campus on Tuesday from 3 to 4 p.m. in the UC Room 203. All are invited. Please come and share your thoughts about our next strategic plan, which commences in 2019.

### **Athletics**

With wins over Wayne State and Davenport last weekend, the men's basketball team has moved up in the national rankings among the country's best this week, now standing at #7 in the National Association of Basketball Coaches Division II poll. The men won 85-66 last night against Michigan Tech and are now 17-1 overall with the most victories of any team in NCAA Division II. They play Northern Michigan at home on Saturday at 1 p.m. Northern Michigan is one of the top teams in the Northern Division of the GLIAC, so this should be an exciting matchup. On Saturday, former head coach Tom Ludwig and players from the "Ludwig era" will be honored as part of a special Bulldog reunion.

Last evening the women's basketball team came very close to defeating the #16 team in the country, Michigan Tech, before falling short in the final seconds, 80-77. Their game against Northern is at 3 p.m. on Saturday. Our student athletes appreciate very much your help and support.

David L. Eisler, president