

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
April 28, 2006

This final week of the semester has included a steady stream of award banquets, student recognition ceremonies, and retirement celebrations. In attending these events I am continually reminded of your dedication to the University and your students. And the results are obvious in the extraordinary achievements of our students and their comments on how much they appreciate your efforts for them. I want to take this opportunity to share with you updates on continuing efforts, special recognitions, and some of the incredible accomplishments of our students.

Legislative Update

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education released its preliminary budget on Wednesday. I am very pleased the House chose to follow the formula it developed last year. This approach rewards universities for growth and for educating students in high-cost and high-need professions. The House recommendation for Ferris State University is a 4% increase, \$1,945,400. This is significantly more than the Executive budget and Senate budget, which had recommended 1.7% or 1.8%, about \$850,000.

The Subcommittee took an important first step toward addressing our increased retirement costs from MPERS. In their budget they recommended an allocation of \$1,683,400 for increased costs at the seven MPERS universities. Our share of this would be \$235,000. It is significant that in doing so the committee adopted the approach we proposed, and used the data collected by Sally DePew in our budget office. In addition the Subcommittee recommended increased funding to help cover institutional costs for the Native American tuition waiver. Figured at \$3,000 per waiver, our share from this would be \$135,000.

While all of this is very good news, there is still a long way to go. There are possible changes to this budget at the Subcommittee, at the Committee, and then by the full House. This is before the higher education budget goes to committee discussions with the Senate and resolution with the Governor. The proposal as it stands now will be controversial, as it recommends 2% cuts to Wayne, Northern, and Lake Superior. Besides Ferris, other universities recommended for the maximum 4% increase are Central, Grand Valley, Oakland, Saginaw, U-M Dearborn, U-M Flint, and Western. Michigan and Michigan State would receive an increase of 3.5%, Eastern 2.7%, and Michigan Tech 1.9%. We are very pleased the House has responded so positively to our message for support and will work with them to promote this budget.

Faculty Recognition

Last Thursday was a wonderful recognition evening for faculty achievement, tenure, promotion, and merit. Vice President Michael Harris and his colleagues in the Academic Affairs Office created an evening themed around the seashore and ocean. Special awards were presented to the following faculty -

Distinguished Teacher - Pasquale DiRaddo
Academic Excellence - Andrew Kantar
Diversity Enhancement - David Pilgrim
Distinguished Service - Doug Haneline
Outstanding First Year Advocate - Richard Griffin
International Educator - John Caserta
Outstanding Fully On-Line Course - Tom Jorsch
Outstanding Mixed Delivery On-Line Course - Kimn Carlton-Smith
Outstanding Web-Enhanced On-Line Course - Warren Klope

Congratulations are extended to the following faculty who were recognized for promotion in rank-

Professor Dan Adsmond, Arts & Sciences
Professor David Hanna, Technology
Professor Roger Kamen, Optometry
Professor Elies Kouider, Business
Professor Bruce Morgan, Optometry
Professor Susan Morris, Arts & Sciences
Professor Kathy Palazzolo-Miller, Arts & Sciences
Professor James Rumpf, Technology
Professor Joseph Samson, Technology
Professor Carl Shangraw, Technology
Professor Lee Ann Westman, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Mark Brandly, Business
Associate Professor Blane Danley, Technology
Associate Professor Kim Daugherty, Pharmacy
Associate Professor Michael Dekker, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Anita Fagerman, Business
Associate Professor Mary Forintos, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Thomas Hollen, Technology
Associate Professor William Koepf, Technology
Associate Professor Denise Mitten, Education & Human Svc.
Associate Professor Matthew Nikkari, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Jody Ollenquist, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Cecil Queen, Education & Human Svc.
Associate Professor Cami Sanderson-Harris, Arts & Sciences
Associate Professor Holly Schalk, Arts & Sciences

Associate Professor David Scott, Library
Associate Professor Benjamin Upham, Technology
Associate Professor Helen Woodman, University College
Associate Professor Matthew Yang, Technology
Librarian/Associate Professor Yuri Konovalov, Library
Level II Shari Chamberlain, Admissions
Level IV Tyrone Collins, Admissions

The following faculty were recognized for their accomplishments and achievements by the awarding of tenure at Ferris State University -

Marietta Bell-Scriber, Allied Health Sciences
Sandra Brigance, Arts & Sciences
Margaret de Voest, Pharmacy
Rhonda DeLong, Education & Human Svc.
Yaron Felus, Technology
Jayadeva Hettiarachchy, Business
Reinhold Hill, Arts & Sciences
Hengli Jiao, Arts & Sciences
Paul Kammerdiner, Library
Yuri Konovalov, Library
Roy McLean, Business
Connie Meinholdt, Arts & Sciences
Cecil Queen, Education & Human Svc.
Connie Randle-Morcom, Education & Human Svc.
Wendy Samuels, Arts & Sciences
Cami Sanderson-Harris, Arts & Sciences
David Scott, Library
Bakhodirzhon Siddikov, Arts & Sciences
Steven Symmes, Arts & Sciences
Gareth Todd, Technology
Heather Vandenbussche, Pharmacy
Jim VanTreese, Arts & Sciences
Shaw Walker, Arts & Sciences
Janice Weaver, Arts & Sciences
Erin Weber, Arts & Sciences
Margaret Genevieve West, Arts & Sciences
Elizabeth Wilson, Arts & Sciences
Joseph Wist, Technology
Jerome Zmyslowski, Technology

Finally sixteen faculty members received merit awards for outstanding achievement -

Ashraf Afifi, Business
Connie Boogaard, Arts & Sciences

Jeff Ek, Business
Dennis Finney, Technology
Ron Greenfield, Business
Mike Klepser, Pharmacy
Gloria Lukusa Barnett, University College
Edward Muccio, Technology
Vivian Nazar, Business
Terry Nerbonne, Education & Human Svc.
Dan Noren, Arts & Sciences
Clayton Rye, Education & Human Svc
Prabhakara Shetty, Arts & Sciences
Robert von der Osten, Arts & Sciences
Ted Walker, Arts & Sciences
Maureen Watson, Library

Staff Recognition

In last week's campus memorandum I omitted Barb Spedowski's name as a Distinguished Staff Awardee. Barb does outstanding work for us as a secretary in residential life. Our listing for members of the Martin Luther King team did not include two members - David Pilgrim and Okia Strickland. Finally I mistyped the first name for Judy Elsey, enrollment specialist at FSU-Grand Rapids, another Distinguished Staff awardee. I am truly sorry for these errors.

Tuesday afternoon's Employee Recognition Awards was a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge the many contributions of our people at Ferris State University. Thank you for attending and celebrating these achievements.

Support for Students with Disabilities

During the year concerns have been raised regarding support and accommodations for students with disabilities at our campus in Big Rapids. Many of these issues were brought forward through the efforts of a concerned group of students. Other ideas and concerns were raised by faculty and staff across campus.

As a result a work group was established to address these concerns and to examine carefully efforts for students with disabilities. This group included representation from areas across our campus. They solicited and received input from students, faculty, and staff through open discussions, email, and telephone. I want to thank the members of this group for their willingness to examine these issues and to consider how best we create solutions for them.

Marty Bledsoe - Director of Public Safety
James Cook - Assistant Director of Public Safety
Mark Eichenberg - Assistant Director of Physical Plant
Lori Helmer - Director of Dining Services

Cindy Horn - Director of Student Leadership and Activities
Mike Hughes - Assistant Vice President of Physical Plant
Kathy Lake - Director of Enrollment Services
Tom Liszewski - University Counselor with Counseling Center
Miles Postema - General Counsel
William Potter - Dean of University College
Jon Shaffer - Associate Director of Housing
Leroy Wright - Assistant Director of Residential Programs & Services
Louise Yowitz, Chair - Director of Employee Relations and Affirmative Action

The work group proposed a new service delivery system with a single point of initial contact for students with disabilities. It is my intention that we will implement this by the beginning of fall semester. Additionally they identified eighteen projects to help make our campus more accessible. More information and a progress report on these efforts is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/masterplans.htm/> under "Students with Disabilities Progress Report."

Student Success and Achievement

Over the past two weeks I have received some wonderful examples of student achievement. I am especially impressed by the success of our students working together collaboratively in teams. Here are some of the remarkable successes you have helped create with our students -

- Three math students won the Lower Michigan Math competition. In doing so they placed ahead of teams from Calvin College, Hope College, Kalamazoo College, and Grand Valley State University. This is the first time this competition has been won by a team from a public university. These students were advised by Mike Dekker.
- At the Conference of Associated Schools of Construction, the Ferris chapter of Sigma Lambda Chi received their top award, International Outstanding Chapter. They are sponsored by Ed Brayton and John Schmidt.
- Our women's golf team captured the GLIAC conference championship by three strokes. They are coached by Brad Bedortha.
- Advertising students competed in the National Student Advertising Competition, placing second. In doing so they earned praise from judges and the competition director for their excellent preparation and good sportsmanship. Their advisor is Tom Mehl.
- Digital animation students at FSU-GR recently completed a game project to help teach school students about the Michigan Supreme Court. They have also placed their first international intern in digital animation - in Singapore. This group was advised by Marty Lieber.
- Students from the HVACR program received the Jeff Forker for Training Excellence at the convention of the Air Conditioning Contractors of America. Their advisor is Joe Compton.

If you are aware of other examples of student achievement I would enjoy hearing of them so that I can share these stories of success.

Wednesday evening I had the opportunity to attend the Torchbearer Leadership Awards Ceremony. This program recognizes ten graduating students for their service to the community and our campus. By the end of the evening I was inspired by our students and their contributions to others. These ten truly outstanding students represent the best ideals of an engaged campus -

Holly Atherton, Music Industry Management
Ryan Boysen, Mechanical Engineering Technology
Amanda Bryer, Public Relations
Mike Finch, Public Administration
Sarah Jennings, Psychology major, Criminal Justice
Barbie Kolar, Public Relations
Samantha Krause, Elementary Education
Katherine Lombardo, Pharmacy
Bret Muter, Environmental Biology
Vanita Sanders, Social Work

Engagement efforts are truly making a difference for our students and for Ferris State University. Special congratulations to these students and to the faculty and staff who have helped encourage and mentor them.

Closing Thoughts

End of the year ceremonies help feature, emphasize, and reinforce the extraordinary education, service, and commitment here at Ferris State University. It is truly remarkable to observe firsthand the achievements and accomplishments that you are creating with our students, both inside and outside the classroom.

This success exemplifies the quality of students we are attracting to our University, people with talent, ability, intellect, and the ambition to succeed. These achievements result from the extra care and attention you take with our students. Your personal involvement helps foster, encourage and support excellent learning and development for our students. This combination of talented students and a caring faculty and staff creates these extraordinary results.

Thank you so very much for making a difference in the lives of our students.

Dave