

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
May 2, 2011

The past few weeks have been filled with many celebrations, award ceremonies and opportunities to recognize extraordinary achievements by our students as we complete a very successful academic year. Amidst the rush of the end of the semester, thank you for taking time to celebrate excellence and commitment on the part of our faculty, staff and students.

Employee Service Awards

It was a pleasure to see so many people turn out for our Employee Service Awards ceremony Wednesday. In addition to the recipients of the Distinguished Staff and Distinguished Team awards announced last week, there were several other important awards recognized at the ceremony. Please join me in congratulating these recipients:

- Registered Student Organization Advisor of the Year - Dan Cronk
- Initiative 125 Service Awards - Nick Campau, Carrie Adams, Jon Shaffer
- Outstanding First Year Advocate - Kent Sun
- Distinguished Teacher of the Year - Greg Gogolin

If you were unable to attend the ceremony, we recognized more than 2,000 years of collective service to the University including Chris Jacobs, who received a standing ovation for her 45 years of dedicated commitment to Ferris. The listing of employees attaining significant 5-year increments of service to the University can be accessed at

<http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/forms/Awardees2011.pdf> .

Kendall Presidential Search Committee

A committee has been formed to help search and screen applicants for the presidency of Kendall College of Art and Design. This position will be available at the end of the 2011-2012 academic year when Oliver Evans retires. The KCAD Presidential Search Committee is ably chaired by Max Shangle and Cindy Todd, and consists of Barb Boltman, Sandy Britton, Nicole Dekraker, Brent Hulburt, Jon McDonald, Phil Renato, Ron Riksen, Val Schneider and Olivia Snyder. I want to thank the members of this committee for their willingness to devote significant time and energy to this process.

Academic Senate

On Tuesday the Academic Senate selected their leadership for the 2011-2012 academic year. Congratulations to the following faculty on their selection -

Doug Haneline - President
Mike Berghoef - Vice President
Melinda Isler - Secretary
Sandy Alspach - Executive Committee
David Marion - Executive Committee
James Nash - Executive Committee

I appreciate their willingness to serve in this important role and look forward to working with them.

Office of Multicultural Student Services 25th Anniversary

Friday evening was a 25th anniversary celebration of the creation of the Office of Minority Affairs, now the Office of Multicultural Student Services. This was a wonderful occasion to look back at the powerful, positive impact the people in this office have had on our University and our students. There were many heartfelt stories of the difference the Office of Multicultural Students has had on students, and their success at Ferris and in life. Founding Director, Raymond Gant, was a special honoree at the ceremonies. It was great to have him and his family present on this very uplifting occasion. Congratulations to Director Matt Chaney and his staff on a memorable evening. During this weekend we also celebrated the 45th Anniversary of the founding of the Ferris chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, the first predominantly African American fraternity on campus.

Budget

The state budget continues to make its way through the legislature. Although the State House and Senate are still working on final versions of the budget that will then have to be reconciled before Governor Snyder can sign it, progress is being made. The cut to higher education remains as proposed, at 15 percent. At Ferris we will not raise tuition to the level that would trigger the higher cut of 21 percent as proposed in the tuition restraint language. This 15 percent cut in state support will be the largest reduction in state support in our history. These cuts have been made and next year's budget is being prepared with the expectation of that 15 percent reduction.

Questions still remain, especially with the funding sources for education. The governor wants to move from a K-12 system (kindergarten through high school), to what he describes as a "P-20" system, covering pre-school through an undergraduate degree. As part of that move, community colleges and state universities would be funded, at least in part, by the School Aid Fund, which previously had exclusively funded K-12 education. The portion of SAF money that would go to higher education is still uncertain.

Compromise is occurring in Lansing and it seems possible the state budget could be approved before July. I want to thank you for your willingness to work so very hard as we continue to provide our students the high quality education and support they deserve, even in the midst of this historic decline in state support.

Alumni Reunion Awards

Thursday evening is the annual Alumni Reunion. We will recognize 2011 Distinguished Alumni Rich Antonini, John Matlock and Curt McAllister, and 2011 Pacesetters Jason Mitchell, Ryan Pohl and Corey Wiggans. The Class of 1961 will be awarded their Golden Eagles, in recognition of fifty years since their graduation from Ferris State University. It is always exciting to welcome alumni back to our campus and I look forward to a very special evening of remembrances as we recognize the lifetime achievements of these graduates.

Commencement

On Friday, May 6, and Saturday, May 7, we celebrate the achievements of the Ferris State University class of 2011 with our Commencement ceremonies, one of the high points of the academic year. Alumnus Eric Weeks recently said it well. When asked about his favorite memories of Ferris, he first mentioned graduation, saying “It was an opportunity to have so many of my friends and family – as well as my family at Ferris – come together to celebrate.” I know that we are all very proud of our students as they complete their education at Ferris and prepare for the next successful stage of their lives. This is also a time when we can see firsthand the difference our efforts have made for our students. I encourage you to take time this week to congratulate a graduating student on this achievement.

At Commencement we will be conferring an honorary doctorate upon Ken Mooyman, president and CEO of Leica Geosystems, North and Central America, in recognition of his work in geospatial technologies and support of our University. Our Surveying Engineering students are especially well prepared and familiar with the most up-to-date surveying technologies thanks to extraordinary support from Leica Geosystems.

On behalf of all of us at Ferris, I wish all the best to the class of 2011 as they prepare to make their mark on the world.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President