

# President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President  
September 8, 2008

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Last week we experienced a very busy and exciting start to the new academic year. The hard work that the entire University community has put in not just this past week, but all summer and all year, has resulted in news that again this year we have achieved a record in terms of enrollment.

As figures became official this week, we are able to report that system-wide Ferris has 13,532 students – a 445 student increase over last year's fall enrollment of 13,087. Enrollment on the Big Rapids campus remains stable at 9,667. First time freshmen are at 2,403 – an increase of 51 students over last fall, with an increase in the residence hall count as well. Kendall College of Art and Design and our off-campus sites saw especially strong growth. KCAD gained 172 students over last year to have a record 1,352 students (a 14.6% increase). Off-campus enrollment increased 286 to stand at 2,513. Although there are many factors in this, it seems clear that the state's economy is playing a significant role with students staying closer to home and their employment. Above all, these very positive numbers continue to keep us on the path of growth and new opportunities.

With this positive enrollment news, I believe Ferris State University will remain the fastest growing public university in Michigan. Again, my deep thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to create those opportunities for our students and to make the value of a Ferris education clear to those who are coming here to study.

## Founders Day

For Founders Day last Thursday, Dr. Robert von der Osten and I talked about the strategic planning process, our mission, vision and core values statements, and University history. If you were unable to attend the presentations, I encourage to take a look at the overview of where we have been and where we are headed. Robert's slides are posted on the Ferris website at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/speeches/sparc.html> . My slides and remarks are posted at <http://www.ferris.edu/president/speeches/FoundersDay2008.pps> . More information is available at the Strategic Planning website - <http://www.ferris.edu/president/strategic/> .

## Office of Multicultural Student Services

My remarks for Founders' Day included a historical review of some of the mission statements – both official and unofficial – that have helped guide our institution over the years. One of those dated from 1924: “Who is wanted at Ferris Institute? Men and women of all races, men and women from all walks of life, are wanted.” We reinforced this sentiment this past year by developing and adopting our first-ever University-wide Diversity Plan.

For many years, our Office of Multicultural Student Services on the Big Rapids campus has worked to advance our goal of making Ferris a place for people from all walks of life, and they continue to play a central role in our current discussion about diversity and inclusiveness. For

some time the OMSS has needed a physical presence on campus that would help make it more visible, and therefore advance its mission.

To that end, an OMSS Relocation Project Committee has been formed. I want to thank the faculty, staff, and student who will serve on the committee: Amber Balmer, Rick Bearden, Ann Breitnewischer, Kim Carlton-Smith, Matt Chaney, David Pilgrim, Mark Schuelke, Todd Stanislav, Matt Stanke and Janice Weaver. David Pilgrim will lead this group, and I look forward to a new campus location for the OMSS, opening by the beginning of the spring semester.

### **This Weekend**

Congratulations to our football team which defeated Ashland Saturday 25-24. With our team 2-0, this weekend's home opener against Findlay provides a perfect opportunity for the University to show off improvements on the Big Rapids campus - including Top Taggart Field's new surface - and, of course, extend our hospitality to alumni, friends and competitors.

This weekend will be the first time that the Ferris community at large will get a look at our renovated Ewigleben Sports Complex. The ice arena will hold a re-opening event Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Besides seeing the upgraded rink, there will be free ice skating and skate rental.

The new Starbucks in the Interdisciplinary Recourse Center will have its grand opening celebration at 3 p.m. on Saturday. The new café has now been open for a week and has furthered the goal of making the common area in the IRC/Business connector a place to study and collaborate - and sometimes just relax.

I am especially proud of our Student Government Association, which is sponsoring their inaugural Blues and Barbecue pregame party Saturday at the stadium beginning at 4 pm. The proceeds from this event will be used to fund need-based student scholarships. This week's game is Ferris' Community and Health Care Night. This is an occasion when our Allied Health, Optometry and Pharmacy Colleges, together with the Birkham Health Center, Racquet and Fitness Center, and the Student Recreation Center, help raise health awareness and sponsor screenings for the public. The full day of activities concludes with a fireworks display after the game.

This should be an excellent afternoon and evening of events. For more information, visit <http://www.ferris.edu/sports/football/08news/homeopener.htm> or check the campus calendar on the Ferris home page.

### **Clerical Technical Association Contract**

Finally, I'm pleased to announce that the Board of Trustees has approved a 5-year contract with the Clerical Technical Association. Among other aspects of the contract, new language has been included to increase communication and information-sharing between the CTA and the University. This is in accordance with our strategic plan's goals and initiatives, especially our drive to "develop a University community where all are valued, welcomed and informed." I want to thank the negotiating teams on both sides for their hard and fruitful work.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler  
President