

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
August 18, 2014

Welcome Back

The beginning of a new academic year is always an exciting time, wherever at Ferris you may be - the Big Rapids campus, Kendall College of Art and Design or one of our many other locations across Michigan. Our new students, both freshman and transfers, bring energy and enthusiasm that is genuinely palpable. The sense of renewal that the beginning of classes brings reminds us of the importance of Ferris State University for our students, who come here looking to fulfill their potential, broaden their understanding of the world, and gain the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in life.

We are now in our 130th year of educating students, and are unique among Michigan public universities by being named for our founders. This provides a connection to our history that is both tangible and relevant. Despite the transformation of our university over these 130 years, we remain focused on providing education that is high-quality, practical and transformative.

There is much to be excited about for the academic year ahead. Some of these changes are physical, especially the new University Center under construction in Big Rapids. Other changes are curricular, such as new programs and majors, master degrees in architecture and social work and a bachelor degree in public health. We also have new faculty and staff joining our university. I feel strongly that our university is well-positioned to lead on issues of higher education and academic innovation as we welcome the class of 2019 to Ferris.

Faculty Welcome Week

It is a great pleasure to welcome all faculty back to our campuses. One of the joys in working in higher education is the opportunity to be in the company of faculty who are experts in many different fields, people who are dedicated to their students and those students' futures. We are fortunate to have extraordinary faculty members who are engaged in our university and their disciplines in many ways - as skilled teachers who have helped us raise academic standards while mentoring struggling students; as scholars and artists producing both academic and creative work; as professionals with liaisons to business and industry; as Fulbright Scholars teaching around the world; and as active members of our university community contributing to the strategic vision we have for our future. I look forward to learning about and sharing the new successes of our faculty as the 2014-15 academic year unfolds.

This past week we welcomed one of the largest groups of new faculty in recent memory to the university. I had the opportunity to meet and visit with this new group of academic colleagues this past Monday, and they are truly remarkable both individually and collectively. Many people contributed their time and expertise to make last week's orientation sessions so successful, and I am very grateful for their efforts.

Please join me in welcoming our new full-time faculty members to Ferris. In these first days of the academic year, please make our new faculty members feel comfortable on campus and help them in whatever way possible.

Barbara Barney-McNamara, College of Business
Robin Barraco, College of Business
Felix Bollou, College of Business
Thomas Brennan, College of Arts and Sciences
David Bright, College of Pharmacy
Juli Brode, Kendall College of Art and Design
Sara Bush, Michigan College of Optometry
Kelli Cummings, Retention and Student Success
Christopher DeFraia, College of Arts and Sciences
Jennifer Dirmeyer, College of Business
Stephen English, College of Arts and Sciences
Blair Entenmann, College of Business
Antionette Epps, College of Health Professions
Scott Fischer, College of Education and Human Services
Brady Flachs, College of Education and Human Services
Lucero Flores-Paez, College of Arts and Sciences
Eric Fradette, College of Engineering Technology
James Furstenberg, College of Business
Jessica Gladden, College of Arts and Sciences
Leah Gose, Kendall College of Art and Design
Donna Green, College of Business
Stephanie Gustman, College of Health Professions
Joan Hazelton, College of Arts and Sciences
David Hebert, College of Business
Peter Hector, College of Arts and Sciences
Henry Ho, College of Business
Kenneth Homa, College of Arts and Sciences
Emmanuel Jadhav, College of Health Professions
Beth Kalkman, College of Health Professions
Jennifer Lamberts, College of Pharmacy
Nathan Leatherman, College of Engineering Technology
Wendy Lenon, College of Health Professions
Gerard Lucas, College of Engineering Technology
Gary Maixner, Ferris Library for Information, Technology and Education
Ted Mattis, College of Business
Daniel Meyers, College Engineering Technology
Erin Miltzer-Benander, College of Arts and Sciences
Kora Millard, College of Health Professions
Erica Morawski, Kendall College of Art and Design
Penney Nichols-Whitehead, College of Arts and Sciences
Anuli Njoku, College of Health Professions
Eric Nybo, College of Pharmacy
Timothy Powers, College of Business
Michael Reger, College of Health Professions
Kristi Scholten, College of Arts and Sciences

James Shimko, College of Business
Dale Skornia, College of Arts and Sciences
Melissa Smith, College of Arts and Sciences
Minji Sohn, College of Pharmacy
Carrie Thompson, College of Arts and Sciences
Olivia Timmons, Kendall College of Art and Design
Daniel Underwood, College of Arts and Sciences
Fathima Wakeel, College of Health Professions
Rita Walters, College of Arts and Sciences
Margaret Wan, College of Health Professions
Eric Warner, College of Arts and Sciences
Margaret Waters, College of Health Professions
Natalie Wetzel, Kendall College of Art and Design
Austin Williams, College of Engineering Technology
Danielle Wyckoff, Kendall College of Art and Design

This week Provost Paul Blake has scheduled a series of events for Academic Affairs. The first is a meeting focused on strategic priorities this afternoon at 1:30 p.m. in Williams Auditorium. Tuesday evening from 5-7 p.m. there is a faculty celebration scheduled in the Granger Center Atrium and Courtyard. On Wednesday morning Dr. Blake and I will be visiting each of the colleges in Big Rapids for their opening meetings. That same afternoon is the Annual Student Research Fellows Symposium beginning at 2 p.m. in Science 126. At 3 p.m. in IRC 121 there is an open meeting for faculty input on our provost search. This session is repeated the next morning, Thursday, at 9 a.m. in Business 111. There are many, many more sessions throughout the week. I encourage you to attend those of particular interest to you.

Kendall President Search

During this year we will be searching for the next president of the Kendall College of Art and Design. I am very pleased that Cindy Todd, Program Director for Art Education, and Ron Riksen, Academic Dean and Professor of Graphic Design have accepted my invitation to chair this very important search. Both Dr. Todd and Mr. Riksen have many years of service at Kendall and a strong commitment to its success. I am confident they will provide superb leadership to the Committee and the College in this role. Over the next month Cindy and Ron will be visiting with Kendall faculty and staff to identify the other members of this search committee.

Welcome Students

One of many remarkable aspects of the start of the academic year is the work of Bulldogs in Action. This program organizes returning Big Rapids Ferris students to assist new students with the move-in process. Those taking part in Bulldogs in Action earn volunteer credit for themselves and their Ferris organization. If as a parent you have helped your children move into college, you understand how much this assistance is appreciated. It is a great example of the practical ways in which student volunteers help both the university and the community.

In addition to Bulldogs in Action, incoming students receive information and a welcome to campus from volunteers at our First Impressions sites. New students and their families often have questions about campus and the Big Rapids community. First Impressions volunteers are a

valuable resource for those new to Ferris, and also help make sure that our university makes a positive and lasting first impression on the Class of 2019.

First Impressions booths are staffed on Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Monday from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. If you would like to be a part of this effort, please contact Laura Monahan at ext. 3905. First Impressions is a great way to be a part of the excitement of students returning to Ferris. I hope you will consider taking part.

Bulldog Beginnings is an engaging series of events for our students. These begin with Bulldog Welcome, Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. at Top Taggart Field, the Backyard Bash Saturday at 3 p.m. on South Quad near the Rock, and Meijer Madness that evening at 7 p.m. You are encouraged to attend. A full listing of events is available at <http://ferris.edu/bulldogbeginnings/>.

Most importantly, I hope you will take extra time next Monday and Tuesday on the first days of classes to help our new students as they adjust to our campuses. Just a moment of assistance can make a big difference for our students in feeling at home in this new educational environment.

Founder's Day

Looking ahead, next Thursday, Aug. 28th is our annual Founders' Day celebration in honor of Woodbridge and Helen Ferris. We will begin with a special ceremony at 11 a.m. with the dedication of a Michigan Legal Milestone on our campus. This celebrates Governor G. Mennen Williams and the Great Ferris Fire. The ceremony will be on the new Quad performance stage in front of the University Center. Our traditional Founders Day Luncheon will begin at noon.

A series of events continue from 3-7 p.m. in the Campus Quad. These include the Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social from 4-7 p.m. sponsored by the Governmental Relations and General Counsel's office, as well as many different activities and informational booths. This celebration is free and open to students, staff and community members.

Welcome back for the beginning of the Academic Year. This is an exciting time on each of our campuses. I am glad you are here and look forward to working with you on behalf of our students and their future success.

David L. Eisler, president