

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
October 20, 2014

Sexual Assault Awareness Video

The topic of sexual assault on college campuses is much in the news. The focus of many such reports is that some incidents, perhaps most, are not reported. Our goal as an institution is not just to have better reporting of incidents, but to change behaviors so these situations do not occur in the first place. In doing so we need to impress on our students, especially our new students, the dangers of alcohol consumption and other risk factors.

In early September I shared with you the report of our sexual assault task force. After receiving your feedback, I have accepted this report, which is a blueprint for how we will address this challenge. If you have not referenced this report recently, it is accessible at http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/docs/Sexual_Assault_Task_Force_Report_with_Appendicies_Added%208-29-14.pdf. Beyond again highlighting this report, I want to share with you two additional resources as we continue to address this problem.

Two senior Television and Digital Media Production students have collaborated on making a video that helps raise awareness of the problem of sexual assault. Kyle Panek served as producer on the video, and Anthony Brock as production and editor. Both are enrolled in TDMP 499, Advanced Producing and Directing.

The video was produced as part of the "Ferris in Focus" half-hour magazine show that students in this class produce weekly. During this fall semester, one of the segments of "Ferris in Focus" has been a Bulldog Health segment produced in collaboration with Renee Vander Myde and counselors from the Birkam Health Center. The sexual assault awareness video was the fourth feature produced this semester. It and the other Bulldog Health segments can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTfa49SgYS5WGsG9xhttcSbSUW4A5wqob>.

The video contains contact for the national organization RAINN – The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. Professor Glen Okonoski contacted RAINN about the video, and the group posted it to their Twitter and Pinterest accounts. The video's message is consistent with the national "It's On Us" campaign, launched by President Obama and Vice President Biden. More about the "It's On Us" campaign is available at <https://www.rainn.org/>.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities has joined in a partnership with an independent, nonprofit organization founded by a group of parents called Culture of Respect. I believe this can be a very helpful resource in furthering dialogue at our university. The website is accessible here - <https://cultureofrespect.org/>. Culture of Respect's website provides tools and resources that create an actionable framework. I encourage you to review this content. It is founded on the idea that sexual assault can be greatly curtailed on campuses by offering content that ranges from talking points for parents, to breaking down complex legal information for survivors. Please forward this link to any and all people who you think could benefit from access to this information.

Most importantly, if you know someone who is the victim of sexual assault or needs additional information on our university's resources to assist victims and others, they are collected at this website - <http://www.ferris.edu/title-ix/>.

Diversity Events

Beyond Diversity has scheduled a number of engaging events for the next two weeks. On Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m., in the Center for Latin@ Studies (IRC 131), there will be a Latin Film Night screening of the movie, “No se Aceptan Devoluciones,” (Instructions Not Included).” The film is about a man making a new life for himself and the daughter left on his doorstep years ago – a life threatened when the birth-mother resurfaces. The movie is free and open to the public. On Friday, Oct. 24, 4-6 p.m., IRC Connector, The International Student Organization will have its annual Diwali Festival featuring Indian food, games, songs and dance, and a brief introduction of the history of this Hindu festival.

On Tuesday, Oct. 28, the College of Health Professions, the Diversity and Inclusion Office, and the Office of Multicultural Student Services is sponsoring a performance by “Las Cafeteras,” a Chicano band from East Los Angeles, which starts at 7 p.m. in COB 111. This group’s songs deal with wide-ranging themes including civil rights, the conditions of farm workers and immigration reform, among others. They approach music as a mechanism for creating positive change and inspiring others.

On Wednesday, Oct. 29, from 7-9 p.m. in IRC 107, the Ladies of Alpha Kappa Alpha and Black Leaders Aspiring for Critical Knowledge host a program about domestic violence. On Thursday, Oct. 30, from 11-11:50 a.m. in FLITE 133, Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services will give a presentation on working with students with disabilities; also on Oct. 30, the panel discussion, “Caught in the Crosshairs: The Impact of Poverty and the War on Drugs on African Americans” will take place in IRC 121, from 6:30-8 p.m.

More detailed information about these events is available by clicking on the Campus Calendar link on the Ferris homepage.

Open Forums

At last Tuesday’s Strategic Planning and Resource Council meeting I made an updated presentation on student debt at Ferris and received excellent suggestions, ideas, and feedback. This is an important conversation we need to continue, as 80 percent of our graduating seniors have student debt. While we have slowed the growth of this debt, their average debt load now exceeds \$37,000. I will be presenting this revised material at an open forum on student debt for Thursday, Nov. 6 at 11 a.m. in IRC 115. I hope you will attend.

On Thursday, Nov. 20, also at 11 a.m. in IRC 115, I will be presenting the annual fall budget forum. If you would like to know more about our finances, and the opportunities and challenges ahead, I encourage you to attend. My hope is to get these forums on your calendar early to help you make time in your busy schedule so you can attend. These meetings are open to all members of our community, and your input is both sought and welcomed.

Athletics

The Bulldog football team continued its unbeaten season with a 34-19 road victory Saturday over nationally 7th ranked Ohio Dominican. Ohio Dominican was last year’s GLIAC champion and came into the game with a 21-game regular-game winning streak. With the win our team’s record improved to 7-0 overall and 6-0 in the GLIAC. After the game, one poll ranked the Bulldogs 2nd nationally. The team next faces nationally ranked Michigan Tech in Houghton this

coming Saturday, Oct. 25. Congratulations to head coach Tony Annese and our football squad for dominating this nationally ranked and undefeated opponent. This truly is a season to remember.

While football is away, both hockey and volleyball will be at home this weekend. After splitting a series against St. Lawrence, our hockey team plays Michigan Tech Friday and Saturday evening. Our volleyball team has a trio of home games coming up: Friday against Michigan Tech at Noon; Saturday against North Michigan at 3 p.m.; and Tuesday, Oct. 28, against Grand Valley State at 7 p.m.

Thanks for supporting our Ferris athletes as they enjoy considerable success this fall.

David L. Eisler, president