

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
January 19, 2015

Enrollment

The official enrollment figures for spring 2015 semester are in and university-wide enrollment is up. Our university increased both in terms of headcount and student credit hours (SCH) over spring 2014. Our total student headcount is 14,146, up 143 (1.2 percent) over spring 2014. The bulk of this headcount growth is in the dual-enrolled classification, high school students who are also taking university classes. There are 828 dual enrolled students university-wide this semester, as well as 999 students who are only enrolled in on-line classes, a growth of 4.4 percent.

Total student credit hours for the University are 157,633.5, up slightly, by 331.5 over last year (.2 percent). There is a continued decline in SCH in Big Rapids, with this campus down 1,100 (2.54 percent). This is offset by continued growth in online enrollment, up 1,450 SCH, or 4.4 percent. Online represents 10 percent of all spring SCH. Student credit hours are up significantly in the College of Engineering Technology (1,396 or 8.63 percent), Kendall College of Art and Design (319 or 2.3percent) and what was formerly called University College (228 or 22.29 percent). Student credit hours are down in the College of Arts and Sciences (811 or 1.4 percent), College of Education and Human Services (269 or 1.82 percent), College of Business (269 or 1.02 percent), and the College of Optometry (216 or 8.2 percent).

We continue to attract a more diverse student body. There is continued strong growth in the number of International students, up 24 percent; Hispanic students, up 11 percent; and students reporting two or more races, up ten percent.

More information on our enrollment figures is available from the Spring 2015 Summary, which is posted at http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/newsletters/memos/docs/Spring2015_Enrl_Summary.pdf. A note of explanation is useful in understanding the changes in first time in any college (FTIAC) and continuing student numbers in the section entitled Spring Enrollment by Student Type. With the continued growth in dual-enrolled students, this past fall we split dual-enrolled students from FTIAC and continuing student numbers. Dual-enrolled students are still in high school and typically take one or two classes. Before classes begin we do enrollment projections based on headcount numbers, and including dual enrollments in these numbers inflates what the SCH will be. As a result, when comparing, it is useful to remember that the spring 2014 FTIAC and continuing numbers did not split out dual-enrolled students.

If you have attended one of my budget forums, you are aware that the number of graduating high school students in Michigan is declining and will continue to decline. We are reaching out to students to help them begin their college education earlier, which can be a major factor in speeding up how quickly they earn their degrees, reducing their student debt, and also helping them choose Ferris to continue their college education.

Thank you for your efforts to help make sure that Ferris State University is the first choice for students seeking a high-quality education. We are a place where people truly care about students, and where theory meets practice in the classroom and beyond.

MLK Celebration

Today marks the start of our Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. Dr. King is one of the towering figures of the 20th century, not just for his passion for civil rights, but for his fight against economic inequality, against violence, and for tolerance and understanding. His life and his continuing legacy have helped us see the world differently. Through his words, his deeds, and what he stood for, he continues to challenge us to be better human beings. I encourage you to attend one of this week's activities, either on our campuses or in our communities, and to commit yourself to one act of public service this week.

Dr. King once said, "Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." As an institution of higher education, it is our duty – not just this week, but all the time – to become more aware. I am always impressed that the Ferris MLK Celebration includes many events that incorporate discussion and dialog. Please join me in thanking the Office of Minority Student Services and the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion David Pilgrim for sponsoring MLK events, and for facilitating positive communication throughout the year.

Provost Candidate Visit

Last week the Provost Search Committee sent out a university-wide note about Dr. Karl R. Kunkel, who is the first candidate for Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to visit Ferris for on-campus interviews. I want to remind you that Dr. Kunkel's open sessions are tomorrow, Tuesday, Jan. 20 – one at 10-11:30 a.m., and the second from 3-4:30 p.m., both in the University Center, Room 203. To review Dr. Kunkel's resume, please go to <http://www.ferris.edu/fsuintranet/karl-r-kunkel.pdf>. This is a Ferris Intranet address, so you must be connected to the university's network to access this site. The open sessions are excellent opportunities to meet the candidates and hear from them about their vision for Ferris' academic future.

Festival of the Arts

Next week begins the 2016 Festival of the Arts with an opening reception in our University Center on Friday, Jan. 30. It is exciting to see the ambitious schedule of events taking place both on campus and throughout Big Rapids. There are hard copy schedule booklets at various locations in Big Rapids and you may also access the information on-line at www.brfota.org.

This annual festival has established a well-earned reputation for hosting a wide range of events meant to appeal to the broadest possible spectrum of the Ferris and Big Rapids community. That eclectic spirit continues. This year's festival offers everything from a reception/talk about the resort town of Idlewild, to an Introductory Welding for Artists Workshop with Dave Murray, to a Valentine's Evening Concert by the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, to a performance of "The Complete Works of Williams Shakespeare (Abridged)."

I find it useful to review the events well in advance, so I can get them on my calendar. Please take a moment to take a look at what Festival of the Arts 2016 has to offer. As usual, most of these events are free and open to the public.

Mentor Awareness Month

Our university's SCHOLAR Peer Mentor Program is promoting and highlighting the importance of mentoring as part of National Mentor Awareness Month. Ferris' Peer Mentor

Program works to help first-year students by matching them with sophomore, junior and senior student volunteers.

Some of the events celebrating the importance of mentoring include

- Thursday, Jan. 22 and Saturday, Jan. 24, mentors will be recognized during half time of the men's and women's basketball games.
- Friday, Jan. 23, "Mentors Around the World." Mentors will have their home state/country listed on the Peer Mentor Program webpage.
- Thursday, Jan. 29, Scholar Program Mentor Appreciation Reception.
- Saturday, Jan. 31, "Mentor Bulldog Challenge." Mentors and mentees will be challenged to locate bulldog statues in the community, take a picture with each, and post them on the SCHOLAR Program's Facebook page ("Scholar Peer Mentor Program at Ferris State University").

For more information about the Peer Mentor Program, along with a link to a flier that contains more details about these events, visit

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/colleges/university/peer/>.

Text Alerts

Ferris' Information Technology services is encouraging students, faculty and staff to verify their cell phone information - or set up a new account - in order to receive emergency text alerts and weather updates. These text alerts can be very helpful in keeping you aware of any weather-related campus closure, as well as other information that could impact the safety of the Ferris community.

To sign up for new service or update your existing information, go to MyFSU and look for the Emergency Text Alerts channel. From there, you can click on the Emergency Text Alert link to enter new or updated information. There is also a link for Frequently Asked Questions.

We have worked hard to establish multiple ways to provide information to the Ferris community in emergency situations, and text messaging is an important part of that strategy. Please take a moment to ensure that you can receive information in a timely manner when necessary.

Athletics

Our men's basketball team continued their remarkable play this past weekend, defeating Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan University in a pair of away games in the Upper Peninsula. These results extend the team's winning streak to 14, and keeps them unbeaten in GLIAC play at 10-0. This past week they were ranked 19th in the nation, the first time we have ranked in the top 20 in the past decade. Both the men's and women's teams play at home this week, facing Northwood University on Thursday, Jan. 22, with the women's team starting at 6 p.m. and the men at 8 p.m. On Saturday the 24th, the teams will play Lake Superior State, with tip-off for the women's team at 1 p.m., and the men's team at 3 p.m. Come out and support our student athletes at their home contests.

David L. Eisler, president