

President's Memorandum to Faculty and Staff

Office of the President
October 26, 2015

Budget Forum Information

Last Thursday I presented an open forum on our university budget and want to thank everyone who attended. In the presentation I touched upon a number of issues including federal and State economic trends and budgets, analysis of the university's 2015 budget, information on the 2016 budget, Michigan's higher education funding formula, enrollment, MPSERS and a look forward to 2017.

Unique to our financial position this year is the impact of GASB 68, a new accounting standard that caused a review of university payments to the Michigan Public Employees Retirement System to determine our liability for the pension costs of our present and retired MPSERS employees. This placed an additional liability of \$65 million on our unrestricted net position. That review also discovered that a portion of our payments to this system had been misreported by the state. This resulted in our university receiving a \$17.3 million rebate of payment this year, with an additional \$1.3 expected later this fall.

There are other significant developments affecting Ferris. Positive developments include record enrollments, continued support for Pell Grants, declining state unemployment and gradually improving state revenues. Negative factors include uncertainty over the federal budget, the cumulative impact of a decade of state disinvestment in higher education, the elimination of Perkins loans and the continuing challenge of student debt.

As I have in previous years, I detailed how our university allocates its money. The PowerPoint slides I used during the presentation along with some explanatory "sticky notes" are available at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/budget-pres/forums/2015Fall-Budget-Forum-with-sticky-notes.pdf>. If you were unable to attend the forum, I hope you will take a few minutes to review this information online. If the "sticky notes" don't work when you access the file with a browser, you can save the file and then access it using an Adobe product.

Ferris Foundation Benefit

The 17th annual Ferris Foundation Benefit will take place on Friday, Nov. 6, in the Devos Place Convention Center. The evening begins with a reception starting at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. followed by a program featuring legendary long distance endurance swimmer Diana Nyad. You may recall that at age 64, on her fifth attempt, she swam from Cuba to Florida, a distance of 110 miles. She has chronicled this effort in an inspiring book, "Find a Way."

The Ferris Foundation endowment now exceeds \$48 million and funds a wide range of programs that support our students and faculty. During the evening we will be highlighting our 2015 student Foundation Opportunity Scholars. We will also feature our 2015 faculty Merit Grant recipients: Katie Axford, Kimberly Beistle, Amy Dinardo, Patrick English, Greg Gogolin, Sarah Hinkley and William Koepf.

The Ferris Foundation Benefit is a remarkable evening that celebrates our University, its people and programs and helps support our students and faculty. Tickets for the event are \$250 and available online at <http://www.ferris.edu/giving/benefit.htm>. I hope to see you there.

Campus Events

This week on campus there are a range of events designed to inform, challenge and entertain. On Wednesday at 7 p.m. in Wink Arena, retired Captain Luis Carlos Montalvan, author of “Until Tuesday,” will speak about his struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder and the unique and mutually healing bond he formed with Tuesday, a Golden Retriever service dog. For more information about this event contact Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services at 591-5039. More information about Captain Montalvan is available at <http://www.until-tuesday.com/> .

Also on Wednesday, from 6-9 p.m., in UC 202A the Office of Multicultural Student Services presents its fall featured movie and discussion. “Dear White People” is a satiric 2014 film about racial conflict at a fictional, predominantly white school. A flyer for this event that includes contact information is available at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/studentlife/Minority/DWPFlyer.pdf> .

Thursday Oct. 29, through Saturday Oct. 31 at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday Nov. 1 at 2:30 p.m., Ferris Theatre presents the musical “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels” at Williams Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 for students, \$10 for adults and \$7 for seniors. They can be purchased on-line at <http://www.ferris.edu/arts/> by clicking on “Ticket Box Office.”

Athletics

Our student-athletes continue to have a remarkable fall season of competition. On Saturday our men’s football team overcame both Michigan Tech and bad weather to win by a score of 24-14 in a nationally televised home game. The win keeps the team unbeaten with an overall record of 7-0. Going into the game the Bulldogs were ranked third nationally, while Michigan Tech was ranked 17th. The team’s final regular season game is Saturday, Nov. 14, when they host Walsh University.

The women’s volleyball team, also ranked third in the nation, swept a pair of home matches this weekend over Findlay and Hillsdale, both by scores of 3-0. Special congratulations goes to setter Stephanie Sikorksi, who last week was recognized as the American Volleyball Coaches Association National Player of the week. Before Friday’s contest Stephanie was recognized for the 3,000th set of her career. These two wins raise the team’s record to 22-1 overall. The team’s final regular season home series is Friday and Saturday, Nov. 6 and 7, when they host Lake Superior State and Northwood.

The hockey team skated to a tie and a win over the University of Wisconsin at Ewingleben Ice Arena this past weekend. On Friday the team overcame a 4-2 deficit to earn a 5-5 overtime time. On Saturday our Bulldogs beat the Badgers 2-1. They also next play at home on Nov. 6 and 7 when they host Minnesota State.

Sunday afternoon our women’s soccer team defeated Ohio Dominican to raise their record to 13-3-1 overall and 8-1-1 in the conference. They are currently second in the GLIAC, behind Grand Valley who they play in an away match this Friday evening. This is the winningest soccer team in school history and the women have already earned home field advantage for a quarterfinal GLIAC tournament match on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

David L. Eisler, president