

## **Governmental Relations and General Counsel**

### **Major Expectations for Fiscal Year 2019**

#### **Compliance**

*University Strategic Plan Focus: Collaboration, Excellence*

Each year there is more regulation impacting the operation of the University including state and federal mandates and other regulatory and compliance burdens (Title IX, HIPAA, FERPA, FOIA, Clery Act, ADA, HEOA, etc.). Compliance at Ferris State University is widely distributed in a decentralized way across divisions and across the University. Use of existing staff or outside counsel and resources assist divisions in addressing compliance burdens within their divisions and across campus. In response to the President's request for a review of how the University meets its compliance burden, a compliance matrix was prepared with vice presidential input. The division will continue to assist divisions in meeting the University's growing compliance burdens through day-to-day advice and support and the retention of outside counsel when necessary.

#### **Title IX Compliance and Sexual Assault**

*University Strategic Plan Focus: Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community*

The division will continue to support the University's efforts to address and combat sexual assault and to support the University's efforts regarding compliance with Title IX. The position and employee of Title IX Coordinator is now in its third year and work has progressed. Title IX by itself will continue to require a substantial portion of time in the foreseeable future as external agencies are increasing investigations targeting all areas of civil rights. The division will continue to collaborate with Student Affairs and the Title IX Coordinator to strengthen this function of the University and assist in building a successful operation.

#### **Continuing Education**

*University Strategic Plan Focus: Collaboration, Diversity, Excellence, Learning, Opportunity*

Proactive/preventative education continues to be an important aspect of the division's function. Consistently, new issues arise and laws are evolving regarding legal, labor, equal opportunity and student matters. Reviewing current offerings and those areas where attention is most needed and focusing on areas of particular interest or of high impact will guide divisional efforts. A review of offerings by other content providers may determine whether some continuing education can be provided by partnering with other organizations. Other divisions can help by identifying those areas where continuing education or training on legal, labor, and equal opportunity topics is most needed.

#### **Professional Services**

*University Strategic Plan Focus: Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence*

With a seasoned and very capable team, the division provides efficient, effective, and high quality professional services to the University through consultations and advice in legal, labor relations, and equal opportunity areas. The division's work supports the academic and business needs of the University and the work is reactive to and driven by the strategic plans of other divisions. The work is balanced between reactive/responsive and proactive/preventative services, but heavy workloads challenge the opportunity to increase the number of proactive and preventative services. Providing proactive/preventative education may reduce the volume of matters. Reviewing current workloads and realigning some responsibilities may yield more efficiency and productivity to the general operations of the division. The division will continue to provide professional services in an effective and high quality manner to meet the needs of the

University's business. Other divisions can help by identifying those areas where they most need services on legal, labor, and equal opportunity topics. Other divisions can also help by thoroughly researching University policies, procedures, and past practices to be prepared and understand their topic before seeking advice and review by the division.

### **Build Relationships**

*University Strategic Plan Focus: Collaboration, Diversity, Opportunity*

The division has a well-established routine of annual events and building community and legislative relations through Town/Gown activities, the Legislative Luncheon, and the Ice Cream Social. Event planning becomes intensive shortly before an event and challenges are presented when resources are scarce for a short period of time. As well, day-to-day workloads prevent outreach activities and attendance at community and legislative events on a regular basis. The division will review current events and outreach activities to look for efficiencies and more advance planning. In addition, the division will look for ways to participate in activities and events of constituents to further the presence of the University in the Grand Rapids area. Suggestions by others on ways events or activities may be improved and enhanced is always welcome. Partnership opportunities may also exist to further divisional efforts on relationship building.