Welcome back for the spring semester. In this issue you will find some recent updates on a number of projects and services underway in Administration and Finance.

✓ The **Rapid Shuttle Bus Service from Grand Rapids** is in its fourth year of operation. The university has continued to subsidize the shuttle as part of its commitment to creating opportunities for West Michigan youth to be able to attend university classes here in Big Rapids. Through numerous efforts on the part of Jim Hessler, Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Enterprises, and his staff, I am pleased to be able to report that the average weekly ridership this fall is up 23% over the same weeks last year. We are very pleased to see more individuals taking advantage of this service.

✓ The new **2015-19 Administration and Finance Strategic Plan** is now available on the Vice President’s website at [http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/docs/2015-19-Strategic-Plan.pdf](http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/docs/2015-19-Strategic-Plan.pdf) Thank you to the many individuals inside our division and beyond who provided helpful feedback and suggestions during the development of the new plan.

✓ I would like to encourage all Administration and Finance employees to read the **updated mission, vision, and new strategic plan** and to regularly reflect on the contents of this plan to help guide our work over the next several years as we work diligently in our service to the campus community.

✓ A reader of a recent Scoop asked how the Administration and Finance Division is contributing to the university **efforts to keep student debt low**. Here are just a few examples.

- The most powerful example is the use of over 553,000 hours of **student workers** in Administration and Finance during 2013-14. These wages totaled $4.27 million. The A&F student employment provides critical wage opportunities for these students to earn income while they are students and help them afford the outstanding Ferris education. This is also absolutely critical in the delivery of the services we provide for you.
- A second example includes **“holding the line” on room and board rate increases**. The average annual increase over the last three years has been 1.6%. These represent the average increases for 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15.
- A third example is the division created a new position in 2010 for the sole purpose of realizing **energy savings** with the explicit understanding that the new base savings each year have to exceed the amount of the compensation for that position. We continue to realize energy savings and Kara Pellerito, our Energy Conservation Manager, has also successfully applied for and received energy rebates through DTE. The energy consumption dashboard can be found on the Physical Plant website at [http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/physical/docs/FSU-Energy-Trends-Poster-2012.pdf](http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/adminandfinance/physical/docs/FSU-Energy-Trends-Poster-2012.pdf). One such example shows that our usage of natural gas
has gone down 18% over the last decade. During this same period our expenditures for natural gas have gone down 30%.

✔ The “new and improved” New Employee Orientation program offered through Human Resources and the Staff Center for Training and Development as expanded content and beginning this month is now a program that runs from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

✔ We are completing the third year of the University Plan for IT, and have recently launched the planning process for a new 2015-18 plan. The planning process will include focus groups, open forums and surveys for the community to provide input into the plan. Over the next few months we will be reaching out to the University community to listen to your ideas on how we can improve existing services, enhance existing technologies and how to use our IT resources on new technology initiatives to meet the University’s IT needs. If this is a topic of particular interest to you, please visit the new IT Planning Site at www.ferris.edu/itscomm for more details.

✔ The new Big Rapids Campus Master Plan continues to evolve. The draft plan is being edited and will be available on our web site by mid-February. We will do a UWN to let you know when it is available, and look forward to hearing your feedback on the draft plan.

✔ IT is in the process of replacing MyFSU with new Luminis 5 software. The new version of this is tentatively scheduled to rollout into production in June. Given the Advancement and Marketing’s web redesign efforts, IT will be coordinating the MyFSU replacement implementation with the web redesign. The portal analysis and design will include open forums and focus groups to build the new design and content for MyFSU. One of the likely outcomes of the Advancement and Marketing redesign of the ferris.edu website is that some of the content that currently resides on the public website will be moved to the MyFSU site. Please watch for future announcements on how to participate.

✔ Administration and Finance and IT Services is sponsoring a promotion to encourage additional RAVE text alert signups. This is open to students, faculty, and staff, and there will be prizes for winners of the drawings. The goal is to increase the number of individuals signed up to receive emergency text alerts. The promotion will begin on Friday, January 16th and it will run through Friday, February 13th. Please help us promote the text alert signups to your co-workers and student employees.

✔ The planning team for the renovation and expansion of the Swan Annex for Welding Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing is nearing the final completion of the design and development phase. We anticipate asking the Board of Trustees for authorization to proceed with the balance of the planning and all pre-construction services in an effort to be “shovel ready” when the Joint Capital Outlay Subcommittee, the legislature, and the Governor approve the Swan Project.

✔ The Board of Trustees recently approved up to $500,000 for the resurfacing of the track at Top Taggart Field. This project, scheduled for the spring and summer of 2015, will
include the removal of the existing track surface and the installation of an inch and a half of new asphalt, a new running track surface and improved drainage.

✓ During the spring semester the **first floor of Cramer Hall** will be renovated for the Housing and Residence Life offices so that they can relocate from Helen Ferris Hall before the end of the semester.

✓ We received authorization from the Board of Trustees in December for pre-construction services to design up to **four additional buildings at West Campus Apartments**. These will be added to Finch Court and will be located on the north side of this court near the West Campus Community Center. The plan is to start this construction in 2015 and have them ready for occupancy in August of 2016.

✓ Thank you for participating in the Dining Services soft opening days at the new Quad Café in the UC. While those of us that attended received some great free food, this was a very important time of training for our employees and working through the start-up issues with new equipment. As a reminder, the **faculty and staff discount** is 25 percent in the all-you-care-to-eat side, 10 percent in the retail food court side, and 10 percent at the new Starbucks.

✓ While noted in a Scoop in the fall this is simply a reminder that **desktop and laptop computers** ordered for the university beginning January 1, 2015 will be Sehi (Hewlett Packard) rather than the Dell equipment that had been the preferred vendor over the last decade. This move was made largely made as a result of concerns about Dell quality, and this change will also achieve an estimated $60,000 of savings annually.

*I greatly appreciate all the work by our staff and student employees, who make the difference in the projects and services we provide for you. I want to extend a big thank you to the many dedicated employees in Administration and Finance who work hard each day, throughout the year to provide quality services to the campus!*

*Jerry L. Scoby*

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Vice President for Administration and Finance