The Goings On with Projects and Services in Administration and Finance

We have decided to provide you with a monthly update on the projects and services we are working on in Administration and Finance. This is the inaugural issue. Please provide praise or criticism on the document to Jackie Warner in my office regarding whether this was helpful, and suggested topics for the next issue. We are looking for a “catchy title” for this monthly communiqué so please send your ideas. The winner will receive a $25 Starbucks gift card.

✓ The search process to hire our next Director of Public Safety was closed out in February 2013 without a replacement for Marty Bledsoe. The Search Committee reconvened late February and we will be re-launching the search in early March 2013. The Search Committee includes a cross-section of stakeholders including representatives from the Department, Criminal Justice, the Big Rapids DPS department, Student Government, Student Affairs, and Administration and Finance.

✓ The University Center planning team, along with partners from Neumann Smith and Christman, has recently completed the value engineering/value analysis process and the final project scope and budget have been set. Given the scope of the project the completion date has been reset from August 2014 to December 2014. The bidding process will begin over the next several weeks with the earliest visible work on the project starting shortly after Commencement in May 2013.

✓ The bookstore will be relocated into the northern end of the strip mall on the south end of town where Enterprise Rent-A-Car and Save-A-Lot are located. This temporary location will include an opening in May 2013 and they will remain there until the University Center reopens.

✓ As part of the University Center project, the East Campus Drive from the Rankin loading dock to North Campus Drive will be closed and will remain closed indefinitely. A new extension of the East Campus Drive from the Rankin Center loading dock area will be extended to the east to connect with the intersection of Ives and Magnolia. This new road will open before classes start in August 2013.

✓ Administration & Finance will be announcing to our divisional staff in the next week or two a new Grant Program to seek proposals on ways to improve our customer service and to further improve our productivity as a way to improve our services to the campus.

✓ The Health Care Committee was launched in late 2012 and has made some significant progress in reviewing the current health insurance plans available to staff and considering alternative plan designs. This group includes representatives from AFSCME, police, police sergeants, nurses, Kendall College of Art & Design, and administrators and has been a great demonstration of collaboration on an incredibly important topic for the University. The committee will be looking at additional employee education initiatives in the coming months.
✓ The **Email/Calendaring and Collaboration System** selection committee is continuing its work to develop a final recommendation for a replacement for the Lotus Notes system. Three vendors were invited to campus to do live demonstrations of their systems. These demonstrations included Office 365, Google Applications for Education, and Merit. At this point the choice of vendors has been narrowed to Office 365 and Google Apps for Education. Several sub-committees have been created to dig deeper into the functionality of these systems to evaluate which system will best serve the University for the future. The committee’s target date to develop a final recommendation is the end of March. If you would like to learn more about the Email Replacement efforts click [here](#).

✓ We are moving from a Novel directory service to a Windows based product called **Active Directory**. This new system will make it easier to change your password, allow users to access their network services via mobile devices without the need of a VPN, and will also provide more support for MAC users for additional Apple products. A number of departments have already been migrated to this new system and others are being moved on a department-by-department basis with a target of finishing this by Fall 2013. You can follow all of the IT Services initiatives and projects [here](#).

✓ After completing a recent assessment of the progress on the **PC Replacement Program** for this year it is clear that this project for 2012-13 is behind schedule. We are sorry for the delays in this roll-out. The IT staff is currently reviewing options to reassign resources to complete this cycle by May 2013. You can follow all of the IT Services initiatives and projects [here](#).

✓ If you are an active **WiFi** user on campus you know that we have migrated to a new “FerrisWiFi” system. If you are an infrequent user you may have missed the communications about the new system. This is simply a reminder that after you go through a one-time registration process with your wireless devices (laptops, tablets, or smart phones), any time your device can see the network named “FerrisWiFi” you will be using our network with no further hassles. This WiFi system is a secured (encrypted) wireless network and the system will allow you to register up to five devices. It is available to all students, faculty and staff on the Big Rapids campus.

✓ **A big Thank You** to each of you that is sensitive to our energy consumption on campus. In the most recent fiscal year we spent over $6.4 million on utilities. In the last year and a half Administration and Finance created a new position that is dedicated to identifying and managing energy conservation projects to reduce our consumption of electricity, gas and water. The continuation of the position is based on achieving new base utility savings each year. Our current Capital Renewal and Deferred Maintenance program includes $2.5 million of resources for additional energy conservation projects on campus. Significant progress has been made in this area over the last several years and we have high expectations for additional progress in these areas. For some very informative graphics on our utility consumption please go to: [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)
I want to close this communication with a big Thank You to our grounds crew for their significant efforts to have our campus open and safe after the many episodes of snow and ice we have had over the last 3-4 months. While many of us are enjoying a good nights rest, our grounds crew has often been called in at 3am, 4am, or 5am to ready the campus. When you see our grounds crew on campus, please share your appreciation with them. In addition, I would like to extend a big Thank You to our custodians for all their extra efforts cleaning up the snow, sand and salt that tracks in our buildings during the winter.

As you know, our people make the difference. I want to express my deepest appreciation for the many dedicated employees in Administration and Finance,

Jerry L. Scoby
Vice President for Administration and Finance