Ferris State University
Guidelines for an Improved Faculty-Administration Relationship
August 8, 2008

Broad Objectives

1. Respect, understand, and value the union and administrative roles within the university
2. Open communication to build trust
3. Develop a relationship beyond the union contract and administrative objectives
   - Respect for the rights of individuals
   - Respect for the contributions of individuals
4. Work together to move the university forward
   - Commitment to the education of our students
   - Commitment to the community
5. Problems are resolved...
   - When both sides are content to drop them
   - In a timely manner
6. Recognition that a problem for either is a problem for both
7. Underscore the importance of good communication in solving problems
8. Early involvement of the union and administration in consideration of problems and
determination of potential solutions is important

Specifics

1. Communication
   - No surprises
     i. Major issues
     ii. Major decisions
     iii. Major actions
   - Regular communication
   - Communicate frankly but with sensitivity and respect for others
2. Questions get answers
   - When answers change, new answers proactively shared within the constraints of
     confidentiality
3. Emphasize and enhance that “we are in this together”
   - Relationship is “we” focused, collaboration not confrontation
   - Recognition that “we” need each other to make real progress
4. Focus on interests, not positions
   - Working relationship of participants deals with “interests” rather than “positions”
     i. Positions are statements of demands
     ii. Interests are the reasons for our positions
     iii. Do not lose interests and allow them to become positions
   - When participants create solutions that satisfy each others’ interests, their future
     relationship is greatly improved

(OVER)
5. Lead by example
   - Do not ask others to do things you would not do
   - Actions demonstrate values
   - Good behavior leads to mutual trust and respect
6. Praise publicly and honestly; criticize privately
   - When this does not occur we initiate a discussion of the systematic issues
7. Help requested is help given
   - Be specific to ensure the participants understand what is being requested
8. Respect decision-making process
   - Solutions should occur at the appropriate level
9. Assure continuity of the relationship
   - Participants need to educate new members about the process
   - Participants need to set expectations for others on campus
     i. Define the process
     ii. Support the desired relationship
     iii. Mentor members of the campus community

Developed and signed on August 8, 2008 by:

Robert L. Carter, FFA Executive Board
R. Thomas Cook, Board of Trustees
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To be endorsed by:

FFA Executive Board: 10/08/08
                    (Date)
Board of Trustees:  8/11/08
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President’s Council: 8/27/08
                    (Date)