At Ferris we focus on educating Michigan citizens for careers. This is precisely what Michigan needs now.

Budget Reductions – We have reduced budgets intelligently - to preserve our focus on careers, to emphasize high quality instruction, and to position our campus to help the state and its citizens.

- The impact of a 15% reduction in state funding has been substantial. We have eliminated 90 positions at Ferris State University, 8.4% of our workforce.
- We do that in the context where our enrollment is among the fastest growing in the state. From Fall 2000 to 2003, the number of students at FSU grew 16.71%, the fastest of any Michigan public university.
- In this period of challenge we return to our values, for Fall 2004 administrators throughout the campus have volunteered to teach a class.

Tuition Restraint – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees has approved my recommendation that we accept Governor Granholm’s tuition restraint proposal. We did not raise tuition mid-year and will not exceed the rate of inflation for next year.

- To do so we will impose a 5% reduction for next year’s budget
- We feel strongly that a college education must be accessible and affordable. For 2003 our tuition and fee increase was 4th lowest among Michigan public universities.

Other Areas of Concern – Help us keep Ferris strong so we can follow our mission of preparing individuals for careers and providing access for a wide range of students.

- Student Support – Support for students is a significant concern. Ferris students average $5,601 in financial support, second only to U-M.
- Even in times of reduced finances, we are redirecting funds to student support. Your support of MERIT and the Tuition Incentive Program is vital.
- MPSERS – We have no control of the increased costs in the unfunded mandate of MPSERS. Our cost for University retirement programs average 12%; MPSERS is currently 23.7%.
Now is the time for higher education to provide leadership in helping to create Michigan’s future.

Vision for the Future - Education is about creating hope and opportunities for our citizens. Now is the time for higher education to provide leadership in helping to create Michigan’s future. Over the coming months we will work to implement the Michigan Career Initiative.

- **Recruitment** of highly qualified students to technical fields through a coordinated network of career counselors and opportunities.
- Development of seamless **articulation** among vocational technical centers, community colleges and the university.
- Creation of **specialized certificate and degree offerings** designed to provide lifelong opportunities for career growth and development.
- A copy of the Michigan Career Initiative is included in your packet and I would enjoy the additional opportunity to visit with you in the future regarding this.

Reality of Our Present - The Reality of Our Present includes the challenges faced by citizens in Greenville.

- Our University is committed to working with Montcalm Community College, Michigan Works!, and other partners in **helping displaced workers prepare for new careers and employment**.
- **Our commitment is do whatever is possible in** this challenging situation, not to advance our University, but rather to make a difference for these people.

Through a model of high quality education, a commitment to student access, and a strong focus on careers, Ferris State University is working to make a difference for our state and its people.

Thank you for the opportunity to visit with you. It is truly an honor to be back in Michigan and to be a part of Ferris State University.

Sincerely,

David L. Eisler, President

For additional information on the readings and data used in the development of this presentation –
http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/president/presentations.htm