

June 9, 2016

Good Morning,

I hope everyone's summer is going well. No one told me that Frostburg State was on the edge of a rain forest! Throughout the summer, I will share a biweekly email listing some of my activities and sharing issues that are coming before us.

My top priority is to listen and learn. Prior to graduation I held three campus listening sessions. In addition, I travelled to Baltimore and other towns in between to meet with alumni and FSU Foundation Board members. I've also met with the Foundation Board as a group and members of the Allegany Chamber of Commerce. We have hosted visits of Sen. Edwards, Delegates Beitzel, Buckel, McKay; representatives from the Governor's Office; and the Allegany County Commissioners. Much of these discussions focused on how we can partner with organizations and agencies in the region to provide greater opportunities for student learning and engagement and learn where we can expand our outreach. Individuals have been very complimentary of FSU, and I sensed their pride in having FSU in Western Maryland.

Facilities Improvement & Budget. There are several items to share. First, Dave Rose and I will be meeting with the Department of Budget and Management in July to discuss the plans for an Education Professions and Health Sciences Center. Planning money has been recommended in making the Center a reality. Second, the USM has a proposal from FSU for a new residence hall. We have also asked for money across several fiscal years to renovate and upgrade six of our existing residence halls. These improvements to residence life are intended to make FSU more attractive to students. I'll keep everyone informed as the approval process on these initiatives proceeds. Third, we are going to meet the Board of Regents requirement that we expend a defined percentage of our annual budget on facilities and grounds maintenance and improvements. This is essential for the long-term viability of the campus. Finally, construction has begun our much-needed new Public Safety Building at the corner of College Avenue and University Drive.

Communication and Governance. This will be a continuing topic as we move forward. These emails will be one way of enhancing the communication process. I am in the process of establishing an ad hoc University Council. The council, which will meet monthly, will focus on "campus-wide planning and implementation of those plans and facilitate real-time understanding and discussion of pressing matters affecting the mission and operations of the university." Members will be the president, vice-presidents, three students, three staff members not represented by a collective bargaining unit, and three faculty members. The students, faculty, and staff will be selected respectively by the SGA president, Faculty Senate chair, and CUSS (Council of University System Staff) representatives. The Council is ad hoc in that we will try it and see how it works. At the end of the fall semester we will evaluate its effectiveness.

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