



The Ferris State Torch

95 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

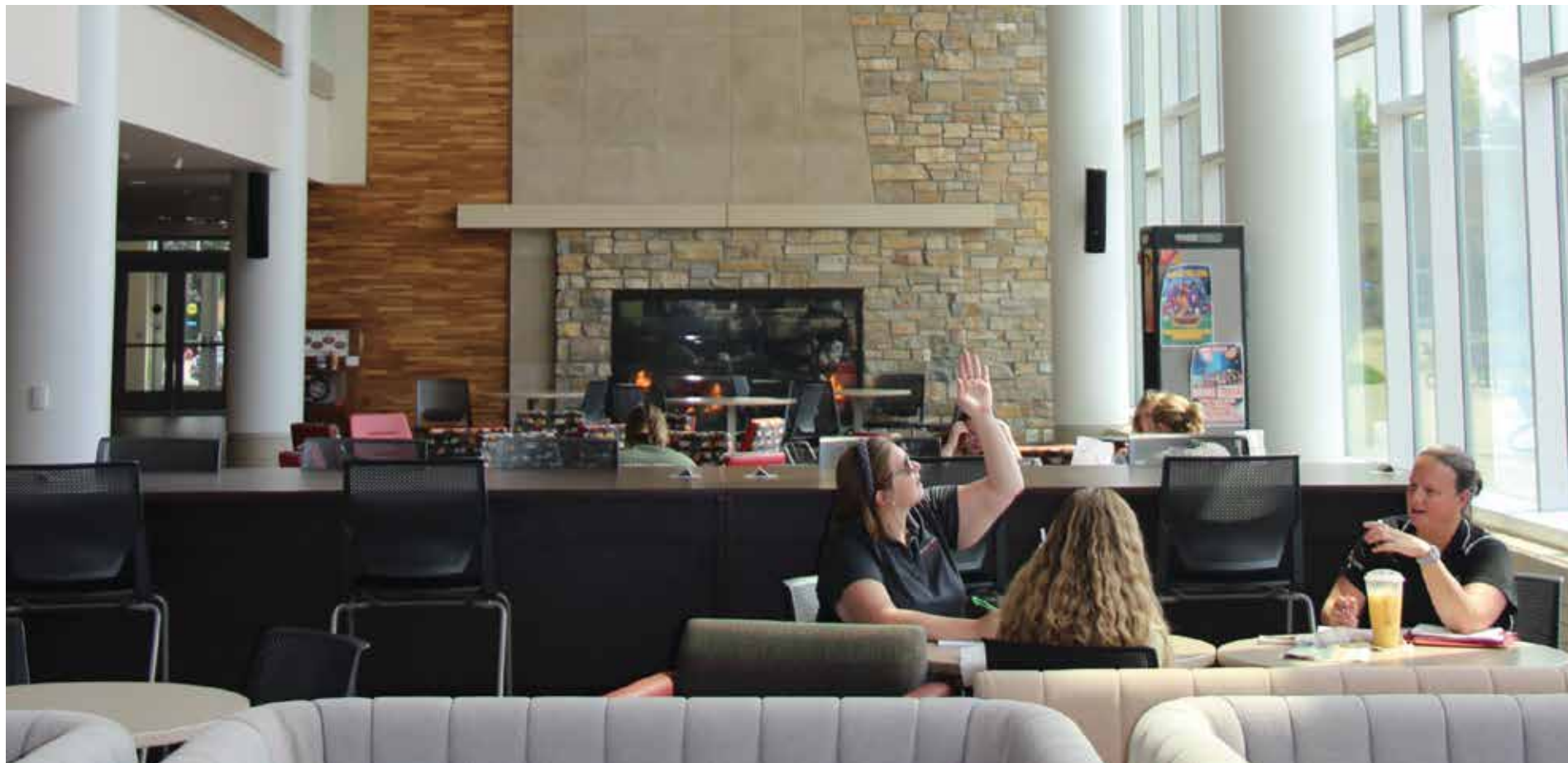
Week of Dec. 3 - 10, 2025

www.fsutorch.com

FALL 2025



A SEMESTER IN FOCUS



Photographic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

News

Want a recap of what we've covered this semester? Check out our semester in review! **PG. 4**

Culture

Want to know about concerns regarding changes in professional degrees? Feel free to look at the culture section to learn more and to become more aware. **PG. 6**

Opinions

With graduation looming, why is it important for seniors to look forward to the next semester and to reflect on their time here? **PG. 8**

Sports

The Bulldogs move on once again, this week they take on the Minnesota State Mavericks, see how they stack up for this weeks matchup. **PG. 10**

Contact us
torch@ferris.edu
231 591 5978

Visit our website
www.fsutorch.com



Like us on Facebook
Ferris State Torch



Subscribe to us on Youtube
@theFSUTorch



Follow us on Instagram
@fsutorch

News

Emma Walters | News Editor | waltere8@ferris.edu

Michigan

Emma Walters
News Editor

Flint, MI – Last week, Flint City Council members reached a final compromise to fund the North Flint Food Market, agreeing to provide \$150,000 in federal stimulus funds. Approval of the funding comes after several requests failed to gain traction at City Hall. Previous requests ranged from \$300,000 to \$600,000. The grocery store opened its doors to shoppers for the first time about three weeks ago on Clio Road, a location that has previously hosted several other failed grocery retailers.

National

Emma Walters
News Editor

Washington D.C. - An immigration judge fired by the Trump administration has filed a lawsuit against the administration. Tania Nemer has alleged that despite top performance reviews, she was dismissed from her position because of her gender, dual citizenship status and her previous attempt to run for municipal office in Ohio as a Democrat. Nemer was abruptly fired in February while on probationary status. The administration has responded, stating that the president's power to oversee the executive branch overrides the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Global

Emma Walters
News Editor

Georgia – Georgian authorities have been reported by the BBC to have used a World War One-era chemical weapon to control anti-government protestors. Demonstrators against the government's suspension of its EU status complained of symptoms such as shortness of breath, coughing and vomiting following exposure to the chemical. The compound is known as Camite, was deployed by France against Germany during WWI. Not much is known about its circulation after, but it was eventually replaced by tear gas in World War Two.

Associate professor arrested by ICE

Department of Homeland Security claims professor as sex offender



Photo courtesy of the Torch Archives

The arrest of Sumith Gunasekera has prompted shock and concern across campus.

Emma Walters
News Editor

An associate professor at Ferris State University was arrested by ICE on Nov. 12. News of the arrest was announced on Nov. 25. Sumith Gunasekera has been employed at Ferris as an associate professor of marketing in the College of Business, where he taught statistics courses. According to the official press announcement from the Department of Homeland Security, Gunasekera is reported to be a “criminal alien sex offender”. The announcement states that Gunasekera has several charges against him with his criminal background, including uttering death threats, uttering threats to cause death or bodily harm and sexual interference during his time in Ontario, Canada. These charges were made against him in 1998. Gunasekera was later charged in 2003 for open lewdness and in 2004 for disorderly conduct in Las Vegas, Nevada. Gunasekera also has a charge against him for invitation to sexual touching and sexual interference in Ontario, allegedly relating to conduct with a minor.

This case saw him sentenced to one month in jail and one year of probation. Gunasekera first entered the U.S. in 1998, where he then left for Canada and returned a year later on a student visa. He originates from Sri Lanka. It was discovered in 2012 while applying for a change in status that Gunasekera was convicted of crimes during his time in Canada. Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications at Ferris State University, David Murray, explained that the university was made aware of the situation on Nov. 25. “Ferris State University leaders on Tuesday became aware of accusations regarding Professor Sumith Gunasekera,” Murray said. “He has been placed on administrative leave while the university regards more information. This is a personnel issue and it would be inappropriate for the university to further discuss the matter.” Information on Gunasekera was limited on the Ferris website. In the press report issued by the Department of Homeland Security, Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin

expressed disgust over Gunasekera's employment with the university. “It's sickening that a sex offender was working as a professor on an American college campus and was given access to vulnerable students to potentially victimize them,” McLaughlin said. “Thanks to the brave ICE law enforcement officers, this sick is behind bars and no longer able to prey on Americans. His days of exploiting the immigration system are over. Under President Trump and Secretary Noem, criminals are not welcome in the U.S.” Design senior Emma Eling is a student participating in an online statistics course taught by Gunasekera. On Nov. 17, Eling received a Canvas message from director of the Data Science and Analytics programs, Elies Kouider, stating that Gunasekera had been in an accident on Nov. 10 and was in the ICU as a result. Kouider took charge of the course and has been providing material to the students participating since Nov. 17. According to Eling, it was alarming to receive the message, with several questions arising regarding course completion and the development of Gunasekera's situation.

“It's crazy to see that a professor is being affected by [ICE], and having a professor that is not a U.S. citizen is not as upsetting to me as seeing that he had some prior history with sex offender crimes,” Eling said. “That is very frightening to see a professor in that situation, especially having that power over students. That's more alarming to me than anything else.” Eling noted that she is a Big Rapids native and has known several individuals who have worked for the faculty and been involved in administration. She expressed that she felt that this was a secular incident and not something to demonize the university. “I was flabbergasted, but I don't think that it was anything vindictive or more conspiracy than just human error where something was overlooked. There's a conversation to be had about those checks and balances so that things like this don't slip under the radar, but I don't think it was anything malicious.” At the time this article is written, the results of Gunasekera's immigration proceedings remain unknown.

Movie theater confirmed to open in 2026

New updates made available regarding long awaited theater



Photo courtesy of the Torch Archives

After years of waiting, the dream of a movie theater returning to Big Rapids is finally in sight.

Davaria Pharr
News Reporter

According to a Facebook post from the Big Rapids Theater, the venue is expected to open in the first quarter of 2026.

Job postings are anticipated to be available in early January.

Psychology junior Kya Adams expressed that the theater would add to the college experience for students in the community.

“This will be a breakthrough and expand our sense of enjoyment and community,” Adams said. “This can make it much better for those students who really want to leave campus but are stuck due to a lack of friends or transportation.”

She further expressed that having a theatre downtown will provide her and her friends more opportunities to enjoy themselves and have fun.

She said that most students leave campus on the

weekends, and for those who stay, the theater provides an alternative option.

She explained that some students may have difficulty making friends, and an empty campus on the weekend can feel isolating.

A cinema can offer more opportunities for community and social engagement.

It has been several years since the Big Rapids theatre was in operation, with 2020 being the last year it was open before the cinema closed down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Communications junior Tiondra McDaniel explained that with the stress of college, the movie theater will provide a helpful break for students.

“It would be a great opportunity for me and other students to have a place to unwind, relax and have fun,” McDaniel said. “The theater would be a special addition to my college memories.”

The reopening can give students a new place to hang

out and enjoy their college experience.

Another important point that McDaniel emphasized was the opportunity for student autonomy and having something for students to be interested in off campus.

“Having a close entertainment option would definitely reduce how often boredom strikes as well as increase student autonomy,” McDaniel said.

Students are not the only ones on campus who are excited to hear the announcement about the movie theatre opening early in the new year.

Theatre professor Dennis Henry explained that having a theatre downtown will make it easier to go see movies on a whim.

“Since the nearest theater is in Cadillac, having the theatre downtown will definitely have me going to the movies a lot more,” Henry said. “It will be a lot easier to just go on short notice.”

He further emphasized that having that convenience

makes it easier to make plans with colleagues and friends.

Henry noted that Ferris does a good job creating events on campus and giving students the college experience, and added that having more activities in town, especially artistic ones, makes Big Rapids a better place to live.

“I went to a lot of movies with friends when I was in college in the 1990s,” Henry said, “I am glad students will again have that opportunity.”

He explained how important it is for college students

to build those bonds and make those precious memories.

Adams echoed this sentiment, explaining that more options downtown open opportunities for students.

“Many students miss home due to minimal options in Big Rapids compared to their hometown,” Adams said.

She added that the theater could really be an asset for students adjusting to life away from a larger city, where there are always more activities.

Adams noted that this lack

of options can contribute to an empty campus on weekends, and bringing the theatre back could help students stay local while still enjoying social activities.

Many students said having a theater nearby will make weekends more enjoyable and give them something to do without leaving campus.

The reopening will provide more opportunities for social and cultural activities in downtown Big Rapids.

Updates will be made available on the Big Rapids Theater Facebook page.

THOPTER ACADEMY
GAMES & COLLECTIBLES

MAGIC: THE GATHERING • POKÉMON
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS • WARHAMMER AND MORE!!!



(231)629-8045 | 14313 NORTHLAND DR BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307

2025 FALL SEMESTER RECAP

Ferris celebrates Founder’s Day Ferris State University commemorated its annual Founder’s Day event with carnival games, an ice cream social and a speech from university president Bill Pink.	Compensation changes In an informal closed session, members of the Ferris State Board of Trustees voted to grant university president Bill Pink’s a \$60,000 bonus.	Rolling into the future The Automotive department of Ferris’ College of Engineering Technology began a sustainable transportation technology certificate program that emphasizes electric vehicles.
“Wild About Ferris” homecoming show Students participated in a variety show hosted by Conceited, Justina Valentine and Radio Big Mack, from the MTV comedy series “Wild ‘n Out”.	Construction underway Students in Ferris’ construction program were contracted to build a pavilion in Northend Riverside Park by the city of Big Rapids.	Charlie Kirk vigil held on campus Some students and community members memorialized the political commentator, while others protested statements he made throughout his career.
Ferris mourns death of Dylan Marek Students mourned the loss of accounting and computer science freshman Dylan Marek, and Fatbelly Deli and Creamery donated profits from a special dinner to his family.	‘No Kings’ protest hits Big Rapids Hundreds of students and Big Rapids citizens participated in a nationwide protest movement that began over the summer.	Beware of barnacles Ferris’ Department of Public Safety announced plans to use the Barnacle parking service, a program designed to manage how long people park in a spot, starting in the spring semester.
Pickell and Hallisy halls scheduled for removal Two housing halls on campus were announced to be closing before next year, and students expressed confusion about the reasons.	First Gen Den open for students The opening of a program designed to assist first-generation college students was commemorated with an event featuring faculty and students.	PGM celebrates 50th anniversary Ferris’ Golf Management program, the first of its kind in the country, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a weekend event that involved students, faculty and alumni.

Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

On the record

Emma Walters
News Editor

Dating violence

Nov. 24, 4:19 a.m. - Deputies responded to reports of yelling and possible domestic disturbance from West Campus apartments. Ferris State University officers arrived shortly after to investigate. The couple involved stated that they had been arguing and pushing each other, with both individuals acknowledging slapping and shoving during the altercation. Minor injuries were reported, and both of the individuals had been drinking. Following the investigation, both individuals were arrested for domestic assault.

Where is my cologne?

Nov. 22, 9:30 p.m. - Nov. 24, 11:45 p.m. - A student reported several bottles of cologne as stolen from inside an unlocked vehicle parked in Lot 4H near East Campus Suites. The theft was estimated to have occurred sometime between the evening of Nov. 22 and late morning on Nov. 23. Signs of forced entry were not observed, and other visible items such as a laptop and a backpack, were not taken. Suspects were not identified, and security cameras did not capture the incident.

Disorderly conduct

Nov. 23, 5:40 p.m. - Ferris State officers responded to Bond Hall after a resident reported concerns involving a hall staff member. Previous similar reports from the same resident were investigated and found to be unfounded. Upon speaking with the resident, officers determined that the report was not based upon an actual incident. Due to safety concerns related to statements the resident made toward another individual, university staff issued an interim suspension and arranged temporary lodging and transportation for the student.

Freshman fall in review

How Ferris freshmen have navigated their first semester



Photo courtesy of the Torch Archives

Smiling through the choas, freshmen celebrate making it through their first semester and finding their place on campus.

Blase Gapinski
Editor in Chief

As the fall semester winds down, freshmen are looking back on their first semester at college with a mixture of relief and disbelief at how quickly it all went by.

Students at Ferris described the transition to college as uneven but improving. Several said the first weeks were marked by homesickness and difficulty keeping up with coursework, but most noted that by mid-semester, they had established routines, found support networks or connected with student organizations.

Criminal Justice freshman Manuel Tiffany described his first months on campus as “difficult but surprisingly pleasant,” a mix of independence, adjustment and small

victories.

“It’s more on your own than I thought. You have to figure out a lot by yourself,” Tiffany said. “I could be basic and say the food is the best part, but the best thing has been being able to spend time with the friends I have made. I probably shouldn’t have as much free time, but I usually cram all my schoolwork into one day so I have that time.”

Though he knows it might not be the most effective approach, Tiffany said he often crams all his schoolwork into a single day to maximize the amount of time that he has for himself and with friends.

Tiffany’s experience isn’t unusual. Many freshmen at Ferris say their first semester involves learning to balance academic expectations with new social opportunities.

Digital Media and Televi-

sion Production freshman Dominic Kramer shared this sentiment as well. One of the most challenging things for him was realizing how much time he had to dedicate throughout the day to his classes and work.

“For my major, I have to be in one specific spot to work on projects. I can’t just casually do things throughout my day as I used to,” Kramer said. “I have to plan time to go work in one place and stay committed.”

As Kramer settled into those new routines, the campus itself became part of what shaped his experience.

“It’s been really enjoyable here. I really like the way that the campus is laid out,” Kramer said. “Unfortunately, my dorm is kind of in the worst spot possible compared to where all my classes are, so it’s a lot of walking

back and forth across the street.”

Kramer said the hardest part of his first semester has been managing the high expectations he sets for himself, especially when time or access to resources keeps him from meeting them. Even so, he said the experience has pushed him to reflect on how he learns best, a process he’s still figuring out.

“It’s been interesting getting to learn about myself and how I educate myself,” Kramer said. “A lot of people show up thinking college will be just like high school, but it’s not quite that easy.”

Kramer’s perspective is just one of many, as other students recalled their first months on campus with their own insights.

Surveying Engineering freshman Isaiah Spriensma also expressed the diffi-

culty of balancing being involved and enjoying himself throughout this first semester while also ensuring he spends enough time studying and preparing for classes.

“I’ve worked really hard to a schedule using my calendar and sticking to what I know I need to prioritize,” Spriensma said. “The amount of time I spend studying has really surprised me the most.”

His experience so far has been shaped by all of the groups he is a part of on campus, from joining Ferris’ Burt and Mullet chapter, playing intermural flag football, joining the disc golf team and also becoming a member of the pickleball club. This is where Spriensma has been able to find a sense of belonging and encourages other new students to become a part of the cam-

pus in one way or another.

“I would tell them to get involved because there is no worse feeling than just simply existing,” Spriensma said. “Regardless of how scary it may seem, you will never ever regret it. The relationships you build and the way they help you develop as a person are by far the best parts of my college journey so far.”

As the semester closes, their stories echo a common theme. The first months of college are as much about self-discovery as academics. While each freshman’s path looks different, most say the challenges of the fall semester have already begun to give way to confidence for what the spring semester has in store.

Concern over professional degree changes

Students in affected programs raise questions over what these changes could mean



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Harmony Goodman
Production Manager

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Education made changes to the list of professional degrees. Marking Nursing, Education, Social work, accounting and a few other health care degrees as “unprofessional.”

This list of professional degree changes followed as part of President Trump’s “Big Beautiful Bill,” which was recently passed earlier in July.

These changes mean that there will be a cap on student loans as part of an act aimed at reducing tuition costs. However, these changes are affecting students nationwide. Students coming from low-income households and backgrounds rely on financial aid and loans to pay for their education.

For students at Ferris, these concerns are sending students home for break with nervous minds.

Nursing sophomore Will Hatt is facing a similar situation as other students across these affected fields.

“My girlfriend, who’s a national security major, texted me articles about it because she has to read the news every morning for her

discussion post. Let’s just say that it was not a good morning,” Hatt said. “I’m first gen, I have zero generational wealth, I don’t have a mom or a dad, I have my great grandma, my grandma, my papa, and that’s it.”

Students who rely on loans to get an education are left wondering how they will be able to afford it. While students in other programs are allowed to take out student loans without restrictive caps because their degrees are still on the federal list of professional degrees.

“I don’t think most of them who are making these decisions are processing the fact that in the end, they are going to need these same people who they’re calling unprofessional eventually,” Hatt said. “[For example], if you got into a car accident. Who are you going to? Who’s going to help you? Nurses, doctors, you see 20 minutes max, the nurses are the ones caring for you.”

Hatt expressed that the main distress of it all is that most of the degrees that were taken off the list of professional degrees are health care-related professions, professions that just a few years ago were considered essential workers.

“Nurses were called heroes during COVID; it goes from hero to unprofessional,” Hatt said. “What do they want us to be?”

Students across other fields are left feeling this same confusion. Such as Social Work junior, Lily Johnston, who feels discouraged after she found out about the professional degree changes.

“Hearing the word unprofessional was so confusing,” Johnston said. “I’m going to college for this, it’s something I’m really passionate about and all of a sudden I

hear the word unprofessional and it feels disheartening.”

Johnston expressed that one of the biggest impacts these changes could bring is that we could see fewer people going into these professions, leaving gaps in professions such as education and nursing, which are already dealing with national shortages.

“We’re in a time where we need social workers; there’s already a shortage. I just don’t understand how this will help the shortage,” Johnston said. “Incoming

students looking into these degrees are going to feel that financial cost and feel they’d rather go into something else, like business.”

Social Work senior and president of the Social Work Association, Syd Richardson, shares the same concern for students who are looking into these professions and those who have just started studying these professions.

“Students are going to see workers in their field dipping into poverty, and they’re going to wonder if this degree is really worth going into

debt over,” Richardson said. “I mean, if I were a freshman or sophomore, now would feel like the prime time to switch majors, but since I’m a senior, I’ll be finishing out the program.”

While we’re still waiting to see the full outcome of these professional degree changes, Associations such as the National Association of Social Work are already fighting back with petitions. What we do know is that students nationwide are already feeling the weight.



Join us at The Torch

Now Hiring

Looking for:

- Culture Reporters
- News Reporters



Contact The Torch Editor-in-chief Blase Gapinski for questions and more.

Gapinsb@ferris.edu

Theatrical arts at Ferris

Ferris theatre program continues to give students opportunities



Photo courtesy of Dennis Henry

Students from the cast of “A Midsummers Night Dream”, put on last Spring, practicing their lines.

Marc Stoufer III
Freelance Reporter

This spring, the Ferris State theatre program will present its production of “The Guy Who Didn’t Like Musicals,” bringing together 32 students from various majors.

Uniquely, though, none of them are majoring in theatre. This is because Ferris doesn’t offer either a major or minor in theatre, a decision that traces back to the school’s founding in 1884 by Woodbridge Ferris.

“It was more of an industrial school when Ferris started,” explained Dennis Henry, director of the program. “(Woodbridge Ferris) had music and theater as part of the program from the very beginning, but never wanted people to focus on it... I think the school sort of kept the same thing. There’s no ma-

jors in music either, but we have choir and we have concert band and jazz band and now a marching band, and all those folks don’t have it as a major.”

Jason Zawacki, part of the School of Digital Media, believes another reason for the program’s size is the limited number of faculty who are part of it.

“We only have two professors teaching theater classes, which means there’s not enough credit hours for it to be a major or a minor,” Zawacki said. “There’s not enough faculty that Ferris has brought into theatre.”

Some students would like to see the program expand.

Management Major Brooke Boron expounded on similar sentiments.

“I’d love to see it grow... With the bigger budget and everything, we could do a

lot more,” Boron said. “But I think how it is right now, we make it work.”

The faculty hasn’t considered expanding the program, though, since things are pretty good according to Henry.

“Every year, we get folks from about 2 dozen different majors from across campus... who work both on stage and backstage,” he said. “They’re all studying other things and doing theater because they love it.”

The program is growing over time, but remains small compared to the many other theatre programs throughout the state.

“We probably have between... 50 or 60 people who work on the shows each semester,” said Henry, between people who work backstage, as ushers, onstage and in the tech crew.

Including those who take

the available theatre classes, Henry estimates that a total of 100 students are involved in the program each semester. For reference, Ferris has a total student population of over 9,000 people.

For some, membership in Ferris’ chapter of Alpha Psi Omega, a national theater honor society, expands the experiences they can have in the program. This applies to Interdisciplinary Studies major Jordan Bos.

“My sophomore year of college, I did tech for ‘She Kills Monsters.’ And then, I got inducted into Phi Alpha Theta after that show, because I also attended some of their events,” said Bos.

Bos also performed in Ferris’ productions of “Working,” “Radium Girls,” “Urinetown,” “Midsummer Night’s Dream” and this semester’s “Monkey House,” as well as taking

Ferris’ Introduction to Theatre and Acting classes.

For many, the program represents a sense of community more than a potential career path.

“I think the quickest way to get to know somebody, and get to know a lot of people, is to be in a play, because (of) the time you spend together... I’ve seen, over my lifetime, so many friendships form... It’s a tight-knit group, but it’s also not exclusionary, because... everyone is always sure to welcome in the new people and make them part of the group,” said Henry.

Students involved in the program feel it could be beneficial to several people.

“It’s a really great opportunity to meet a bunch of new people from all kinds of different majors... To have a place you feel like you can always go back to,” Zawacki

said.

Bos thinks theatre classes would specifically be helpful for students involved in the Television and Digital Media Production program.

“Honestly, there’s a wide array of people that could benefit from theater,” Boron said. “Anyone who wants to get involved in a community of people that have differentiating personalities. A group of fun, lively people.”

For students interested in learning more, Henry suggests attending Ferris’ production of “The Guy Who Didn’t Like Musicals” from March 26-29, following Ferris State Theater on Instagram or Facebook, or emailing DennisHenry@Ferris.edu.

Opinions

Jackie Moglia | Opinions Editor | mogliaj@ferris.edu

The Ferris State Torch is published on 27 Wednesdays throughout the academic year. This student-run newspaper is printed by The Pioneer Group.

Our Location:
Arts and Science Commons 1016
820 Campus Drive
Ferris State University
Big Rapids, MI 49307

The Ferris State Torch welcomes comments on topics of interest to the general readership. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length and The Torch reserves the right to edit for length. Letters will not be edited for grammar, punctuation or spelling. The Torch will not print letters deemed to be libelous or obscene. All letters must be signed by their authors and include his or her phone number.

Unsigned editorials appearing on this page are the opinion of The Torch and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the university's administration, faculty or staff. Signed columns represent the opinion of the writer. Inquiries regarding editorial content should be directed to the Editor in Chief at (231) 591-5978. To advertise with the Torch, contact Danette Doyle at the Pioneer Group at (231) 592-8359 or Danette.Doyle@hearst.com.

Student media retain the same rights, responsibilities, privileges and protections afforded by the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and under applicable state laws.

The Torch and fsutorch.com, the student newspaper and its accompanying online version focused on Ferris State University, are public forums for student expression. Student editors have the authority and responsibility to make all content decisions without censorship or advanced approval for both the print and online editions of the student newspapers.

Torch Staff

Editor in Chief Blase Gapinski gapinsb@ferris.edu	Copy Editors Carly Judge Jack Jamerino
Production Manager Harmony Goodman	Podcast Manager Liz Brown
Production Assistant Hailey Nye	Videographer -
News Editor Emma Walters	Cartoonist Blake Flanery
Culture Editor Tate Zellman	News Reporters Davaria Pharr
Special Editions Editor -	Freelance News Reporters Marc Stoufer III Bella Brazeau
Sports Editor Nolan Matthews	Culture Reporters -
Opinions Editor Jackie Moglia	Freelance Culture Reporters -
Multimedia Editor -	Sports Reporters Devin Wardrop
Web Editor Lucas Gill	Freelance Sports Reporters -
Managing Copy Editor Connor Fuller	Photographers Shaunti'ara Reynolds Clark Vance Delaney Stewart

Advisor
Scott Kowalewski
ScottKowalewski@ferris.edu

EDITOR'S COLUMN: The final push

Leaving the semester more hopeful than I started



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

Blase Gapinski Editor in Chief

As I head into my last semester at Ferris, I'm surprised by how much I'm looking forward to what comes next. For the first time since arriving on campus, the path beyond graduation feels clear, and the future I used to worry about now feels within reach. With the fall semester ending and the final one approaching, it isn't just the end of a chapter. It will be the start of everything I've worked toward, and I'm entering this final stretch of university with more purpose and far more optimism than when I first started. A lot of that optimism comes from realizing how much I've changed during my time here. This place has challenged me, frustrated me and pushed me out of

my comfort zone more times than I can count. But it also gave me room to grow into someone ready for what comes next. I've built relationships that grounded me and lost some along the way as well. I have found mentors who guided me and helped me discover strengths I didn't know I had. As the idea of graduation gets closer, I'm less focused on what I'm leaving behind and more excited about the possibilities waiting on the other side. What's surprised me most as graduation gets closer is the realization that I can choose what comes next. For the first time, my life doesn't feel directed by anyone else's expectations or tied to relationships or routines that once shaped my decisions. I can live where I want, pursue the career I want and build the kind of life that feels

right for me. That freedom is exciting, but it also reminds me that I still have one semester left to finish. Before I take the next step, I owe it to myself to end strong and start planning for the future I want to create. But I think this is also where a lot of us start to fall short. Winter break gives us just enough time to relax, then panic, then convince ourselves we should have everything figured out before classes even start again. We slip into what everyone calls senioritis, but it feels like it is more than laziness. It's the pressure of realizing the clock is running out and instead of enjoying that final stretch, we get overwhelmed by everything we think we need to accomplish. The irony is that these are some of the last moments we'll spend living the college life we once couldn't wait to

experience. Maybe instead of stressing over the finish line, we should permit ourselves to enjoy it. For me, winter break is shaping up to be this strange mix of looking ahead and slowing down. I know I need to use some of the time to actually think about my future. Not in a dramatic, life-changing way but in a realistic one. There are things I've avoided during the semester because I was too tired or too busy, like looking at jobs, thinking about where I might want to live and figuring out what my first steps after Ferris might look like. I don't want to wait until April to start all that. But at the same time, I can feel how badly I need a break. Not the kind where you tell yourself you're relaxing but spend all day worrying about what you're not doing. A real break.

I want a few days where I don't open my laptop, don't think about deadlines, and don't try to map out the next five years of my life. I want to sleep in, see people I haven't seen in months and remind myself what it feels like to breathe without a schedule attached to it. So this break is going to be somewhere in the middle. I'll plan a little, rest a lot and try not to guilt myself for whichever one I'm doing, because when I come back in January, I want to feel ready. Not overwhelmed, just ready. It is safe to say that I am ready to finish the semester strong, and I am actually looking forward to the spring semester. I know I need to enjoy the time I have left here and then be ready to step into whatever comes next with a clearer head than the one I've been running on all fall.

Sexually inactive

The misplaced focus on youth sexuality and mental health

Liz Brown
Podcast Manager

There is a question that has sprouted in my mind as I've grown into adulthood. Why is the world so concerned with the sexuality of young people?

Recently, an article was released by the New York Times talking about the lasting effects of antidepressants on sexuality. This feels like a valid concern, except for when you realize how they framed it. "More Teens Are Taking Antidepressants. It Could Disrupt Their Sex Lives For Years."

The effects of SSRIs on sexuality in adulthood are quite heavily researched and should always be information given upon prescription. However, that is not always the case.

I understand how this might be a concern to a teen. Young people are known for exploring their sexuality during puberty, those crucial teenage years. The author's worry comes from a suspicion that taking the medication during puberty can permanently alter some people's sexual feelings, often erasing them.

Many of the stories come from those in their thirties and forties, who were likely prescribed the drug when it was still less researched.

One story, however, stood out to me. A mother recalled allowing her daughter to be prescribed Zoloft at age 11 and now says that 24 years later, she cannot feel any-

thing sexually. About her daughter being medicated, she said, "I can't believe I so easily said yes."

This was an interesting assessment to me. A mother would rather have preserved her daughter's sexuality than dim her depressed or anxious feelings.

As a minor, the child does not get a legal choice in the matter. As a person, however, they should be heavily involved in the decision. A minor should be given the same information about the medication as their guardian.

Where people sometimes fail is not allowing their child to have an informed say. Many will do what they think is best for their baby, unless it is a necessary treatment.

In 2020, at 16 years old, when I brought up the COVID vaccine to my mom, she immediately mentioned an article she saw about the effects it could have on fertility.

Why was that her concern? I had immunocompromised family and friends that I did not want to risk spreading the illness to. It was incomprehensible to me how she did not see that angle.

The general worry surrounding the fertility of young men and women is also odd to me. The world is nearing overpopulation, and the foster system is full of children and teens in need. I understand that many people do cherish the experience of birthing their own child; however, I do not see why that needs to be such a pressure point.

I would also like to bring up LGBTQ+ youth. More specifically, I have noticed a double standard.

Why do parents feel like they have any more right to the details of your sex life when you are queer versus straight? Trans youth likely experience this invasion of privacy tenfold.

It can feel weird how involved adults can be in these intimate, private matters. While many come along for support, some are looking for control.

It is important to leave a safe space for a child to explore themselves and ask questions, but it goes too far when you are dissecting private aspects of their lives for them. Informing a child about the possible changes to their sexual feelings and giving them that autonomy will build trust.

This is all to say that maybe the focus is on the wrong place. Perhaps we should look at the foundation of these issues and what can be done to repair those.

Sexual education curriculum could use an update. Inform kids about their sexuality in a safe and factual way, rather than omitting certain information because it's "inappropriate."

Instead of continuing to profit from trying to fix the reported increase in mental illness, do more to try to prevent the situations and dismantle the institutions that cause so much mental distress.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

The last full week



Comic by: Blake Flanery | Cartoonist

Sports

Nolan Matthews | Sports Editor | matthen4@ferris.edu

Mavericks come to town

Ferris football moves onto the quarterfinals of the DII playoffs



Photo by: Clark Vance | Photographer

Defensive back Gyasi Mattison preparing for the matchup against the Ashland Eagles, where the Bulldogs won 56-24.

Nolan Matthews
Sports Editor

After winning their 27th playoff game since head coach Tony Annese took over in 2012, the Ferris State Bulldogs look to take on the Minnesota State Mavericks in the DII quarterfinals.

The Bulldogs (13-0, 7-0 in GLIAC) welcome the Mavericks (10-3, 7-3 in NSIC) to Top Taggart Field for the second matchup in the history of these two programs.

Ferris is coming off a commanding victory last week over the Ashland Eagles, where the Bulldogs took them down by a score of 56-24. The Bulldogs were once

again led on offense by sophomore quarterback Chase Carter, who went 9-17 passing for 130 yards and three touchdowns, while running 10 times for 91 yards and a touchdown.

Head coach Tony Annese spoke about the victory.

“Huge win for us today,” Annese said. “I want to give Ashland a lot of credit today. Coach Geiser has done a great job with that program, and I’m happy that we’re past them, because they do know us well. They’ve always been a challenge for us. I’m very pleased to move on and see who we face on Saturday.”

Minnesota State is coming

off a hard-fought win, which saw the Mavericks take down the University of Indianapolis 35-27 with a late fourth-quarter touchdown.

The Mavericks are a run-first team, rushing for 2,790 yards and 36 touchdowns as a team, with their lead rusher being sophomore running back Sam Backer. Backer has run for 933 yards and 16 touchdowns on the season, with their second leading rusher being sophomore quarterback Mitchell Thompson, who has run for 662 yards and six touchdowns.

As a team, the Mavericks average 214.6 yards per game, while the Bulldogs allow 109 yards per game.

Ferris is coming off a game where they allowed 300 yards and a touchdown on the ground, which is the most they have allowed this season.

The Bulldogs have a good rushing attack of their own, being third in the nation in yards per game with 303. With their leading rusher being Carter, who has run for 852 yards and 15 touchdowns. Another prominent rusher is junior slot receiver Taariik Brett, rushing for 515 yards and 16 touchdowns.

On the defensive side of things, the Mavericks are led by redshirt freshman linebacker Jefferson Mobry, who leads the team in total

tackles with 64, while also intercepting four passes on the season. Another prominent name on the defense is junior defensive lineman Tanner Olson, who has 26 total tackles, eight tackles for loss and four sacks on the season.

On the defensive side for the Bulldogs, they have benefited from the return of senior defensive back Jalen Jones, who missed nine games during the regular season, but returned for the first playoff game against Northwoods. In his two playoff games so far, he has six total tackles and an interception in each game, while also returning one for

a 15-yard touchdown against Northwoods.

Senior slot receiver Brady Rose is excited to keep playing at Top Taggart Field for the playoff games in front of the fans.

“We love playing home playoff games,” Rose said. “It’s very cold up here for the playoffs, and it’s hard for people to come up here and play in the cold.”

The Ferris State Bulldogs will face off against the Minnesota State Mavericks on Saturday, Dec. 6, at 12 p.m. at Top Taggart Field.

Ferris takes on the Pride

Women’s basketball travels to take on Purdue Northwest



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

The Bulldogs are 6-1, which is their best start to the season since 2023-24.

Devin Wardrop
Sports Reporter

The No.19-ranked Ferris State women’s basketball team will start GLIAC play by traveling to Purdue Northwest to take on the Pride.

The Bulldogs (6-1, 0-0 in GLIAC) are on a five-game win streak headed into the contest, and are coming off a 79-68 win against the Hillsdale Chargers. In that win, senior guard Mia Riley led the team with 22 points, seven rebounds, two assists, three steals and one block. Senior guard Kadyn Blanchard was second with 13 points and five assists. The Bulldogs shot 44.6% from the field and 25% from the three-point line. Ferris State also shot 73.7% from

the free-throw line.

Blanchard loves how this team has been playing so far this season.

“The team is feeling great, and I certainly feel great about the team,” Blanchard said. “We have had to play against so many different types of opponents already this year, so we have great experience for anything that comes our way. Especially in the game versus Northwest, I think we showed how resilient of a team we are & how experienced. Being down seven at one point in the fourth quarter and then bringing it back to head to overtime showed our grit and togetherness out there. I’m very excited to keep playing with this group and growing from every experience

together.”

In the seven games played this year, Ferris State is averaging 79.7 points, 39.9 rebounds and 19.1 assists per game. The Bulldogs are shooting 45.7% from the field and 32.2% from three-point range. Blanchard leads the team with 15.1 points, 5.6 rebounds and 4.9 assists per game. Senior forward Mya Hiram is tied with Blanchard with 5.6 rebounds per game as well. Senior guard Elle Irwin leads the Bulldogs with 0.9 blocks per game. Blanchard and Riley co-lead the team with 1.9 steals per game.

Junior forward Claire Erickson knows these early games set the tone for the rest of the season.

“I think we have done a

good job getting some tough regional wins on the road,” Erickson said. “These are the ones that matter when it gets to March, so it’s important that we get these wins early and get ready for GLIAC play coming up.”

Purdue Northwest (1-5, 0-0 in GLIAC) is on a five-game losing streak coming into the contest after winning its first game of the season, beating the Tiffin Dragons 70-65. Purdue Northwest played the same Hillsdale team the Bulldogs played, and lost 77-59. In that contest, sophomore guard Ciara Sims led the team with 16 points and four rebounds. Senior forward Alyssa Cole was right behind her with 12 points and nine rebounds in the game. Purdue North-

west is coming off an 85-75 loss against the University of Illinois-Springfield. In this game, Sims led the team with 20 points, three rebounds, one assist, one block and one steal.

The Pride averages 63.5 points, 33.2 rebounds, and 10.7 assists per game. Purdue Northwest shoots 38% from the field and 31% from three-point range.

Cole leads the Pride with 13.5 points and 6.0 rebounds per game. Cole also leads the team in field goal percentage with 47% and in free throw percentage with 91% from the line. Sophomore guard Cameryn Phillips leads the team with 3.3 assists per game.

Freshman guard Charlotte Miller believes the regional

games are a good indicator of how the conference games will go.

“It’s been a good start to our season with wins over some tough teams, and I think a final regional win is a great way to send us into conference play,” Miller said. “We’ve really come together as a team and always pick each other up when there’s adversity. I’m really proud of all the work we’ve put in so far, and I can’t wait to see all the continued success we’re going to have.”

The Ferris State Bulldogs will begin GLIAC play against the Pride on Thursday, Dec. 4, at 6 p.m. at Wink Arena.

Bulldogs to start GLIAC play

Men’s basketball to take on their first GLIAC opponents of the season



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Guard Tyler Hamilton kicks out the ball while being pressured by a Kuyper defender.

Nolan Matthews
Sports Editor

After coming off the first win of interim head coach Alex Fodness’s career at Ferris against Kuyper, the Ferris

men’s basketball team looks ahead to the first GLIAC matches of the season, against Purdue Northwest and Wayne State. The first of this week’s two matchups sees the Bulldogs

(1-3, 0-0 in GLIAC) take on the Pride (2-3, 0-0 in GLIAC). The Bulldogs are off to their roughest start to the season since 2020-21, when they also started 1-3. Senior guard Tyler Hamilton

spoke about the rough start to open the season. “The first couple of games were rough,” Hamilton said. “But we played hard and felt like we saw some great stretches where we can be really good, but we have to try to put it all together.”

The Bulldogs look to continue to win after coming off a 102-55 win against Kuyper. Junior guard Chang Hoth led the team in points with 18, shooting 6-13 and 3-7 from the three-point line. Senior forward Mykel Bingham shot 5-11 for 12 points while leading the team in rebounds with 11, but also had three steals and four assists.

The Purdue Northwest Pride come into this game riding a two-game winning streak, including a 96-51 victory in their last game against Indiana University Columbus.

Fodness spoke about getting the first victory of the season.

“It was really nice to see us rebound after the slow start,” Fodness said. “I’m really just happy for the guys sticking to the process and doing what needs to be done. I told them I was going to be hard on them regardless of what the scoreboard was going to

be today. Because we need to get better at the things we need to get better at, and today was a step in the right direction.”

The Bulldogs have historically played the Pride well, holding a 14-3 record against them, and are riding a three-game winning streak coming into the matchup. With the last game the Pride won, coming in 2023, where the Pride narrowly defeated the Bulldogs 84-80.

Ferris is led in scoring by their two senior starters, Hamilton and senior forward Donovan Brown Boyd. Hamilton thus far in the season is averaging 13.3 points per game, which leads the Bulldogs, 3.5 assists per game and three rebounds per game. Brown-Boyd is averaging 12.3 points per game and seven rebounds per game while missing the game against Kuyper.

The Pride is led by senior forward Kyle Ross, who leads the team in scoring, averaging 15.2 points per game, while also averaging 9.6 rebounds per game. Sophomore guard Aaiden Ashton and freshman guard Garrett Clark are the Prides’ shooters from beyond the arc, with Ashton shooting 10-20 from

beyond the arc and Clark shooting 9-15.

The next matchup comes against the Wayne State Warriors (2-2, 0-0 in GLIAC) in Detroit. The Warriors are coming off a 95-81 loss against the Findlay Oilers.

The Warriors are led by a trio of scorers, junior guard Jordan Briggs, who averages 13.8 points per game and three assists per game. Carlos Paul III, who averages 13.3 points per game and four rebounds per game, and junior forward Jotham Nweke, who averages 12.5 points per game and 4.8 rebounds per game.

Last season, the Bulldogs took down the Warriors in two of their three matchups, taking them down in early January 91-81 and then again in the GLIAC tournament quarterfinal by a score of 77-65.

The Ferris State Bulldogs men’s basketball team will travel to Hammond, Indiana, to take on the Purdue Northwest Pride on Thursday, Dec. 4, at 8 p.m. Then, it will travel to Detroit to take on the Wayne State Warriors at the Wayne State Fieldhouse on Saturday, Dec. 6, at 3 p.m.

BIG RAPIDS' BEST BUDS





DELIVERY & PICK-UP AVAILABLE

STUDENTS GET A FREE GIFT WEEKLY

OPEN 7 DAYS 9-9 | +231-629-8048
IGLOOCANNABIS.COM

AVAILABLE ON:
weedmaps dutchie