Jeff Kavalunas enters his sixth year as head coach of the Ferris State University men’s and women’s cross country and track and field programs.

Year in and year out, Kavalunas has developed competitive teams and standout athletes in both cross country and track. Through his guidance, the Bulldogs are quickly emerging as one of the up and coming programs in both athletics and academics. "The reputation of Kavalunas’ teams precedes them both on the field and in the classroom."

Kavalunas was named the “Coach of the Year” in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC) for Women’s Indoor Track for two consecutive years (1998-99). He knows what it takes to build a program and his professional demeanor works well with the student-athletes on his squad.

During the 2000-01 track and field campaign, Kavalunas coached eight school-record holders, eleven NCAA Division II National Championship qualifiers and four NCAA Division II All-Americans.

Prior to Ferris, Kavalunas spent five seasons (1991-96) as head coach of both the men’s and women’s cross country and track programs at conference member Northwood University in Midland, Mich. During that period, Kavalunas guided NU to five GLIAC championships along with coaching the 1993 NAIA National Long Jump Champion.

Kavalunas assisted with the Central Michigan University men’s cross country and track programs from 1988-91 before his Northwood appointment. While at CMU, he played an integral role in helping the Chippewas’ cross country squad finish among the top 20 teams at both the 1988 and 1989 NCAA Division I National Championships. Central also won the Mid-American Conference (MAC) in each of those years as well.

A native of West Branch, Mich., Kavalunas received a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education at Grand Valley State University in 1987 and went on to earn a masters’ degree in exercise physiology at Central Michigan in 1990. He competed in both cross country and track and field at GVSU.

Kavalunas began his coaching career in 1988 at his prep alma mater, Ogemaw Heights High School in West Branch, Mich. He resides in Big Rapids and is a member of the NCAA Division II Track and Field Coaches Association Board. He also serves as the all-academic coordinator for Division II track and field.

Paul Brueske
Assistant Coach (South Alabama, 1998)

Paul Brueske is in his second season as assistant men’s and women’s track and cross country coach.

Brueske works primarily with the field events on the track and coordinates the conditioning and weight training areas of the Bulldog program. He also assists with the promotional and fundraising aspects.

In his first season at Ferris State a year ago, Brueske worked with eight all-conference performers and seven national qualifiers. He also coached Ferris athletes to four school records in the field events during the 2000-01 track campaign.

Prior to Ferris State, Brueske served as the associate track coach at McGill-Toole High School in Mobile, Ala. While at McGill-Toole, Brueske helped produce 12 all-state performers, 35 state qualifiers and six sectional champions in the field and sprint events. Both the boys and girls squads Brueske coached won Class 6A sectional championships during the 2000 season.

A certified USA Track and Field coach, Brueske was a member of the track and field team at the University of South Alabama from 1994-1998. While with the Jaguars, he was named to the All-Sun Belt Conference Academic team and served as team captain in 1997.

A 1998 political science/criminal justice graduate of South Alabama, Brueske is a certified USA Weightlifting Club Coach and a member of the USA Weightlifting Federation. He also earned a graduate degree in athletic administration.

Kavalunas expects Brueske to continue to have a significant impact on the Bulldog program.

“Paul has helped continue what we have started here at Ferris State the last couple of years in terms of motivating and developing athletes and producing some of the top kids in the league,” he said.

An outstanding three-sport athlete at Gulf Breeze (Fla.) High School, Brueske was named to the All-Santa Rosa County football team. He competed for the Dolphins in football, track and weightlifting. In addition, he was also named the school’s MVP of the field events during his track and field career.