March 30, 2009

TO: Deans

FROM: Joseph A. Alutto, Executive Vice President and Provost

SUBJECT: Final Examination and Course Textbook Requirements

This is one of those memorandums that I really dislike sending. But there are two issues that require some review and action.

First, despite reports that the situation has improved, I have been told by students and faculty that there have been a number of instances in which examinations were held outside of the normal final examination period, usually prior to the scheduled day. In some cases this has been a "one off" and in others a continued pattern. University policy is clear in not allowing such activity as it places burdens on students in other courses and impedes the ability of faculty to cover the full range of materials anticipated when courses were initially designed.

Please work with your department chairs and, by no later than the end of April, send me a list of all courses that have had final examinations prior to the formal examination period. Please do this for the fall and winter quarters. In each case please also provide the rationale for such action in order to better understand both the scale and basis for this difficulty. Also, please remind faculty and TAs of our policies on this matter.

Second, Federal Regulations (Section 110 of H.R. 4137) require that students know about any and all textbooks to be required in a course that is scheduled to be offered. The objective of this appears to be that such early knowledge would allow students to seek different, and presumably less expensive, sources for required reading materials. Unfortunately, it is difficult to amass such information centrally due to our current information systems. However, going forward we are asking that each department prepare a list of such requirements (see attachment) whenever a master schedule is prepared. That information should be placed on the department or college website by course number and students should be referred to that listing. I know that some departments are already doing this but it needs to become standard operating practice until we are able to adapt the student information system to support this requirement.

Thanks for your help with this.

c: Chairs