

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Deans, Department Chairs and Faculty

**FROM:** John H. Frederick  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



**SUBJECT:** Course Grade Recordkeeping

**DATE:** December 16, 2013

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Last spring, I alerted you to some upcoming changes in the university's policies for handling of student data, including course grade books. Our expectation is that faculty will all take necessary precautions to protect student data from exposure to unauthorized individuals.

To promote greater data security, and to facilitate new systems adopted by the university to enhance student success through "early alert" notifications, I indicated the several steps that would be implemented concerning the handling and storage of student grade records. I write you now to remind you of one of those provisions.

**Effective in the spring of 2014**, we are requiring all faculty to keep course grade records in Blackboard Learn. The one-year delay we provided since my initial announcement has been intended to give those faculty members who did not use Blackboard Learn an opportunity to receive assistance and training in its use. Faculty may continue to store and formulate grades in other formats on the university I-drive or on an encrypted flash drive, including, for example, Excel format, but we ask that grades be uploaded into the Blackboard Learn grade book regularly as a means of allowing students to monitor their performance in your courses.

Since my previous announcement, we have also piloted a student "early alert" system that downloads grade information from Blackboard Learn and analyzes it, allowing us to automate intervention with students whose performance has abruptly declined. It is critical that faculty maintain updated records in Blackboard Learn so that the early alert system is effective in helping our students persist and ultimately succeed in their studies. Our students will be depending on you to keep your grade books in Learn current.

Faculty members who wish to keep student records from past semesters (i.e. class rosters and grade information for students) are urged to maintain those records in a secure place, either on the password-protected I-drive, an encrypted laptop or password-protected desktop, or in a locked cabinet or room. We also ask that faculty members take appropriate measures to secure graded student assignments until they are returned to the students.

I greatly appreciate your attention and compliance with these new requirements.