




University Senate CHARGE

Date:	May 29, 2014
To:	Christopher Davis Chair, Academic Procedures & Standards
From:	Vincent Novara Chair, University Senate 
Subject:	Review of Mid-Semester and Early Warning Grades Policies and Procedures
Senate Document #:	13-14-36
Deadline:	March 27, 2015

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) requests that the Academic Procedures & Standards (APAS) Committee review the University's early warning grade policies and procedures and make recommendations on whether changes are appropriate.

Specifically, we ask that you:

1. Review the University of Maryland Undergraduate Catalog (<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm>).
2. Review the Course Grades section of the Faculty Handbook (<http://faculty.umd.edu/teach/coursegrade.html>).
3. Consult with a representative from the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Studies.
4. Consult with a representative from the Office of Faculty Affairs.
5. Consult with the Senate Educational Affairs Committee.
6. Review early warning and mid-semester grades procedures for 100 and 200 level classes.
7. Review similar policies for undergraduates at our peer institutions and other Big Ten universities.
8. Review other methods of early warning grade administration.
9. Consider the merits of creating a formal University policy regarding mandatory early warning grades for 100 and 200 level classes.

10. Consult with the University's Office of Legal Affairs.

11. If appropriate, recommend whether the current policies and procedures should be revised.

We ask that you submit your report and recommendations to the Senate Office no later than March 27, 2015. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Reka Montfort in the Senate Office, extension 5-5804.

Attachment

VN/rm



University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

Name:	Mythili Mandadi
Date:	3/27/2014
Title of Proposal:	Proposal to Mandate the Use of ELMS and Reporting of Mid-semester Grades of all Instructors and Teaching Professors
Phone Number:	
Email Address:	
Campus Address:	
Unit/Department/College:	BSOS
Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):	Undergraduate student
Description of issue/concern/policy in question:	<p>Currently university policy does not mandate that professors use ELMS (or prior to 2013, the grading system on my.umd.edu). Also, university policy apparently only mandates the reporting of mid-semester grades in 100- and 200- level courses. While this may be the university policy, in my experience as a junior who has taken over a 100 credits, that many professors/instructors refrain from posting mid-semester grades. In fact, even in my freshman and sophomore years when I was taking 100- and 200-level classes, it was common for at least one or two instructors to abstain from reporting mid-semester grades. In addition, professors who refuse to use ELMS to help us keep abreast of our performance in their classes often offer no alternative. Both of these practices decrease clarity in students' understanding of their academic performance and thus may prevent a student from seeking the guidance or aid necessary to improve their grades. As academic success is something students, faculty, and the whole university community should be working towards, I opine that these policies should be remedied.</p>
Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:	<p>I ask that professors be mandated to use ELMS and post mid-semester grades. If for some reason a professor cannot use ELMS, he must be required to offer an alternate to his students.</p> <p>Although it is already mandatory (According to the English department) for professors to post mid-semester grades for 100- and 200- level courses, this is not being enforced. In addition, this policy should be amended to all undergraduate courses from 100- to 400-.</p>
Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:	<p>The infrastructure for using ELMS is already in place. In addition, most professors have an array of TAs and graders provided by the department to use for just this purpose. For adherence, the individual departments as well as the university should enforce these practices.</p>
Additional Information:	<p>The university has already transitioned to reporting final grades online eliminating the costs associated with mailing final grade reports. This is another step along that road.</p> <p>I understand that not all assignments can be graded with immediacy, but professors still have the option of a S or U aside from the traditional A through F grading system.</p> <p>The privilege to evaluate us is well-deserved by these eminent professionals. That said, they must wield this power responsibly because it affects us now and even more after we graduate. And by obfuscating their evaluations of us, they harm our ability to improve ourself.</p>

Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to senate-admin@umd.edu or University of Maryland Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall, College Park, MD 20742-7541. Thank you!

Please also find attached my letter to Wallace Loh, the University President on this issue.