TO: All Faculty
FROM: Richard Wall, VP for Academic Affairs
RE: Class Cancelation Policies for Academic Travel
DATE: May 4, 2015

It is the foremost responsibility of faculty to ensure full class coverage in their courses. All academic travel requests should include details on classes that will be missed, how class material will be covered, or a plan for colleague coverage of missed classes. As a rule of thumb, the following guidelines for missed classes apply when faculty attend academic conferences:

1. For MWF classes, cancelation of class should be limited to one class in a MWF sequence. On occasion, faculty may have multiple paper presentations or other professional roles at a conference that requires missing more than one class. In that case, cancelation of two classes in a MWF sequence requires the approval of the Chair and respective Dean. For TR classes, class cancelation should be limited to a T or R but not both.

2. Academic travel that requires a faculty member to miss a full week of class should not be approved except in unavoidable circumstances or academic research presentations of substantial merit and prestige for the faculty member and College. This includes multiple trips in one semester that result in a total of one or more week of missed classes in MWF or TR courses. In circumstances where a full week of classes is missed, the travel proposals must include a plan for class coverage by colleagues or make-up classes, and receive the approval of the Chair, Dean, and AVP.

3. Once per week classes are a particular problem because cancelation of one class is equivalent to cancelation of a full week. Faculty who submit travel requests that include the date of a once per week class should include a plan for class coverage by colleagues, internet communications to simulate face-to-face lecture, or a make-up class. It is expected that once per week classes would not be canceled outright for academic travel.

4. Care should be exercised to minimize travel that would require students to miss several days of classes. Academic travel to conferences or field trips with students lasting more than two consecutive weekdays should be discussed with the Chair and Dean before a travel request is submitted. Travel with students during the semester creates issues with students missing other classes in addition to the specific course or group sponsoring the trip. Faculty should require that students seek approval of faculty teaching their other courses, and that course requirements are satisfied.

5. When academic travel occurs, all online classes should continue in their normal manner.