

Community College *of* Philadelphia

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty
FROM: Judith Gay
DATE: January 19, 2010
SUBJECT: Spring 2010 Information

I hope everyone enjoyed a peaceful break and then found the events of Professional Development Week engaging and informative. As Dr. Curtis mentioned in his address that week, our student retention has improved. I appreciate the many faculty who are initiating strategies to foster student persistence and who were successful in encouraging students to meet high expectations for academic performance.

The purpose of this memo is to remind you of some information that, I believe, can help us continue on this path of improving student success.

Syllabi: Every student is entitled to a syllabus for each course. Each syllabus must have basic information that will help students understand course objectives, class policies and procedures and how they will be evaluated. Some departments have specific requirements for syllabi. A copy of your syllabus must be turned in to the appropriate Division Office. I think it would be helpful if faculty submitted their syllabi electronically.

Make-up Exams: Assessment of student learning is a critical part of teaching, and test-taking is an integral part of that assessment. Faculty at CCP have tried, and continue to try, a wide variety of methods to manage students who miss examinations. Generally, faculty strive to exercise good manageability of this process which includes equitable and ethical treatment of students and consideration of the student's schedule.

In the past, some of the strategies faculty used caused problems and may have had a negative impact on the validity of the test results. Some students were placed in a corridor to take a make-up exam because there was no classroom available. The student had to deal with the noise and distraction of other individuals using the passageway. Also, students in the past were sent to the division offices with the expectation that the staff would monitor the student's behavior. This was an unfair expectation of the staff who must also provide service to others contacting the office for assistance. And, as I am sure you know, students left unmonitored during a test taking situation have many opportunities (e.g. text messaging) to access information unfairly. These situations left the door open for grade appeals and other potential complaints. Fortunately all of these issues have declined significantly.

With those past issues in mind, this is just a reminder that faculty members must monitor their own make-up exams.

Early Warning: During Fall 2008, Student Affairs initiated an early warning system as one of our *Achieving the Dream* strategies for improving student outcomes. For the past few semesters, faculty provided tremendous support to this effort and, as a consequence, students were informed early of steps they needed to

take to be successful. I encourage all faculty to use this easy system that is linked to the 20% and 50% reporting dates to communicate with students who are not meeting expectations.

Study Day: Study Day is Friday, April 30, 2010. In a survey of student opinions of Study Day, we found that students overwhelmingly find this opportunity valuable. Students said they use this opportunity to finish papers and prepare for final exams. Faculty may only use Study Day for a class with approval. If the department head approves offering a class session, please contact John Jones to schedule a room.

Final Exams: Faculty are required to meet classes during Final Exam week. The final class meeting may be for the purpose of giving an exam; teaching or reviewing additional material; meeting with students to review performance. Some departments have policies and procedures related to Final Exam week that must be observed.

Final grades: Final grades must be turned in on time. Most faculty realize that failing to submit final grades in a timely fashion has a negative impact on students, particularly those trying to register for classes with prerequisites and those trying to transfer to another institution.

Graduation: Faculty participation is important (and required). This is a significant milestone for students, their family and friends and the entire College community. Please note that this year Graduation is Saturday, May 8, 2010. Please put the date on your calendars now so that you do not have conflicts for that date.

Student Grade Appeals: Students have the right to appeal final grades. In the past, some faculty have destroyed the exams and papers that document student performance, making it difficult to validate the accuracy of the grade. Faculty must maintain student information used to calculate grades for at least the following Fall or Spring semester. If you return the materials to the student, the student is responsible for maintaining the documentation. If an appeal is in process, you may need to keep the information longer. Please review the information in the Student Handbook relevant to grade appeals if you want additional information about the appeal process.

Use of Banner for Class Lists, Attendance and Grades: All faculty need to use Banner for at least the following tasks:

- Printing a class list
- Documenting attendance at the census point (20% report)
- Recording student grades

Financial aid procedures make it imperative that the census attendance reports are completed on time. Failure to do so has a profoundly negative impact on students seeking financial aid. To find information on attendance and grade submission, log on to MyCCP, and click on Banner Attendance and Grade Information Updates.

New Banner users need to contact the Help Desk at 215-496-6000 or HelpDesk@ccp.edu to set up an account name and password. Check the Academic Computing website (http://faculty.ccp.edu/dept/Acad_Comp/) for information on Banner workshops. You may contact Arnold DiBlasi by email at adiblas@ccp.edu or by phone at (215) 751-8545 to discuss training opportunities.

I look forward to a semester that will be beneficial to students and faculty and that reinforces our College commitment to student success and academic excellence. Please contact your Department Head, Division Dean or me if you have questions or concerns. Thank you for your cooperation.

c: Department Heads, Deans, President's Cabinet, Academic Affairs Staff