Hello Everyone, I hope you have been having a good summer. I’m reaching out to share a few updates and important information about university resources and policies.

**Fall 2024 UPDATES**

**ITS-TEACHING AND LEARNING SERVICES TECH DAY** – Tools and Technology for Evaluating Learning – August 22, 2024. See https://its.uri.edu/tls/tech-day/ for details.

**National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity membership** - Activate your URI-sponsored membership in the NCFDD to access a broad range of career development and mentoring resources.

**URI Health Services Medical Excuse Note Policy** - *URI Health Services does not provide illness excuse notes for mild self-limited illnesses of less than 3 days duration.* Medical visits solely for medical excuse notes can occupy a significant portion of the clinic schedule and therefore create a healthcare access barrier for students with more serious illnesses. If a student requires 3 or more days away from their academic responsibilities, a Dean’s notification will be made via URI Health Services administration and the student’s dean will contact the course instructors (URI Health Services Medical Excuse Note Policy).

**MILITARY SERVICE ABSENCE POLICY** – The URI Faculty Senate adopted a policy on absences due to military service. See University Manual Section 8.51.12. This policy stipulates, per federal law, that students may not be penalized for absences due to Unites States Armed Forces and/or National Guard duty assignments.

**POLICY REMINDER – Resolution of Grades of Incomplete:** In February 2023, the URI Faculty Senate adopted updated guidelines for the resolution of grades of incomplete. See University Manual sections 8.53.20 – 8.53.24. The revised policy clarifies the temporary nature of the grade of Incomplete, the circumstances under which it is appropriate to assign the grade of Incomplete, and the process for resolution of grades of Incomplete.

**DID YOU KNOW?** - Students cannot be required to take three final exams on the same day - See 8.51.27 for details.

**URI BOOKSTORE ADOPTIONS** – Many students want to purchase textbooks and course access codes from the URI Bookstore before the start of the semester using their financial aid. Unfortunately, some faculty haven’t submitted their course information to the bookstore and students must therefore wait for a refund, or use a credit card, to purchase through an outside source. The URI Campus Store has moved to a new software for course adoptions, please check your email for a personalized adoption message from URI@verbasoftware.com to ensure that your course materials are available.

**USE OF GENERATIVE AI** – Faculty are urged to provide students with a clear generative-AI acceptable-use statement for all courses, including whether use is permitted, and how students should reference their use of this technology. Please visit the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (ATL) Teaching With ChatGPT and other AI website for resources related to teaching and AI, including a link to a crowd-sourced compilation of generative AI syllabus policies.
RESOURCES

• **Questions about AI/Chatbot GPT?** The Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning has created a [web resource](#) for faculty interested in learning about generative AI and how courses and teaching pedagogy can be adapted in light of the rapidly growing use among students and faculty. Dr Stephen Atlas, from the URI College of Business, has written *ChaptGPT for Higher Education and Professional Development: A Guide to Conversational AI*.

• **Equity through access for students with disabilities** – Disability, Access, and Inclusion (DAI) works with students who identify as having a disability and/or chronic condition to ensure that their right to reasonable accommodations for the purpose of equal access to educational programs, services, activities and facilities is upheld. Faculty are required by law to provide the accommodations listed in a student's DAI accommodation letter, and are encouraged to visit [DAI's website](#) for helpful information about eligibility, rights, and resources. The [Academic Testing Center](#) is available to support testing accommodation needs.

  o **DAI Drop-in Hours** – DAI hosts virtual Student/Community Member Drop-in Hours Monday - Friday from 2-4pm via webex: [https://rhody.webex.com/meet/DAI](https://rhody.webex.com/meet/DAI).

  o **DAI leadership** (Paige and Nina) hosts dedicated virtual Faculty Drop-in Hours twice a week for the first month of the Fall and Spring semesters. Visit DAI's [Faculty Resource Page](#) for more information.

  o Please contact us at **401-874-2098** or [dai@uri.edu](mailto:dai@uri.edu) if you have questions, cannot make faculty drop-in hours, or if you would like to discuss a custom DAI Workshop for your department or organization!

• **Fall 2024 Academic Calendar and Final Exam Schedule** – Available [here](#). Classes begin on Wednesday, September 4th. Classes end on Wednesday, December 11th. **NOTE:** no classes on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6th, Tuesday classes will meet on Wednesday November 6th.

• **Advancement for Teaching & Learning (ATL) Resources** – As you develop your courses and syllabi, please take advantage of the faculty development resources offered through the Office for the [Advancement of Teaching and Learning](#), including the syllabus development, course design, and assessment design resources. Visit the [ATL website](#) for upcoming programs and their library of web-based resources, including the ATL Teaching Strategies and Techniques quick links – [https://web.uri.edu/atl/teaching/teaching-strategies-techniques/](https://web.uri.edu/atl/teaching/teaching-strategies-techniques/).

• **ITS Teaching and Learning Services** – Visit the [ITS-TLS web site](#) for educational technology support and training. See the full calendar of ITS training and support options here: [https://its.uri.edu/training/](https://its.uri.edu/training/)

  o **New to Brightspace?** Take the [self-paced Basic Brightspace Training Course](#).

  o **Captioning and ADA Accessibility Resources** – visit [https://its.uri.edu/tls/ada/](https://its.uri.edu/tls/ada/) for information on live and post-production captioning.

  o **Faculty Spotlight:** Faculty interviews about innovative implementation of instructional technologies: [https://its.uri.edu/tls/ed-tech-faculty-spotlight/](https://its.uri.edu/tls/ed-tech-faculty-spotlight/).

• **Writing Across URI** - Writing retreats; support for faculty writers; consultations on designing effective writing assignments; support for integrating Eli Review in any course. Contact Heather Johnson, Director, heather_johnson@uri.edu, or visit [https://its.uri.edu/writingacrossuri/](https://its.uri.edu/writingacrossuri/) for more information.

• **Academic Testing Center (ATC)** – The ATC offers a dedicated faculty and professional proctoring support for faculty and students. Faculty are invited to submit requests for exams and quizzes for students with approved testing accommodations, excused absences, and culturally responsive assessments. Visit [https://web.uri.edu/atic/faculty/](https://web.uri.edu/atic/faculty/) for more information. Faculty, colleges, and departments interested in ATC services, unique needs, or expanded partnerships can contact Lisa Macaruso, lmacaruso@uri.edu, for a consultation.

• **Spring 2024 IDEA student feedback results** are available for review – [web.uri.edu/provost/idea/](https://web.uri.edu/provost/idea/). See [Reflective Teaching Practice & IDEA](#) from ATL for resources to incorporate into your reflective teaching practice.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND SUCCESS

**QUICK TIPS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS:** Please visit [web.uri.edu/atl/design/syllabus/](https://web.uri.edu/atl/design/syllabus/) for more syllabus resources.

- **Build a sense of community and get to know your students:** use a survey to ask them to share something about themselves and ask if there is anything that they would like you to know about them.

- **Tell them what it takes to be successful in your course:** (how much time outside of class, how to approach the material, how to “study”, etc).

- **For Freshman courses** - encourage students to complete the [AEC Academic Success modules](#) to set themselves up for success in their first year.
• Clearly indicate which software/technology platforms students will need to use in your course and where to find them.
• Establish class conduct and communication expectations in collaboration with your students, including expectations regarding use of academic integrity, eating/drink in class, and use of electronic devices in class.
• Be explicit, in writing, about what constitutes academic integrity in your course – common sources of confusion for example, are whether they can collaborate on homework/take-home tests, whether they can look at (or share) exams from prior semesters, and what is considered acceptable use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT.
• Be explicit, in writing, about your policies regarding use/sharing of your course materials (e.g. posting course materials to a third party site like Chegg).
• Be explicit, in writing, about acceptable use of generative AI, including how to reference use. See this compilation of generative AI syllabus policies for sample syllabus statements.
• Clearly communicate class attendance/participation expectations.
  o Students should communicate illness-related absence in advance of missed class/assignment/assessment.
  o URI Health Services does not provide medical excuse notes for absences of fewer than 3 days, therefore faculty should not require a note. See for details.
• Explicitly communicate options for accommodating illness-related absences, including missed work/exams.
  o If appropriate for your course, consider recording your class for later viewing. Students report that they find class recordings to be a helpful study resource, and this can also be helpful in the event of absences.
  o See Grading for Equitable Learning from ATL for resources on Grading and Student Assessment
• Note on Finals: students cannot be required to take three final exams on the same day - See 8.51.27 for details.
• To minimize conflicts with final examinations, list the time of the final for your course in the syllabus and to provide students with the link to the final exam schedule so they can plan ahead. (Final exam schedule is posted at https://web.uri.edu/academic-calendars/).

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: To ensure that we are supporting the success of all students, federal law requires course materials to be accessible (e.g., videos, audio recording, texts, etc.) in face-to-face, blended and fully online courses. The Office of Disability, Access, and Inclusion provides resources for faculty and staff. ITS Instructional Technology and Media Services provides information and support about captioning video content. Adding captioning to video content is required to make videos accessible to all viewers – especially for learners who are deaf or have low hearing. Captions are also shown to increase comprehension for students whose native language is different from what is spoken in the video.

ILLNESS-RELATED ABSENCES - Faculty should clearly outline class attendance and absence policies in their syllabus, bearing in mind that absences due to viral illness are expected. NOTE: Per URI Health Services policy, please do not ask students to provide a medical excuse for a self-limiting illness of less than 3 days duration (Medical Excuse Note Policy). If a student requires 3 or more days away from their academic responsibilities, a Dean’s notification will be made via URI Health Services administration and the student’s dean will contact the course instructors. Students who are absent due to illness should not be penalized by grading or assignment/exam make-up policies. See University Manual sections 8.51.11-8.51.14. The Academic Testing Center is available to support proctoring needs for make-up quizzes and exams.

STUDENT SUCCESS RESOURCES:
  o Fall 2024 Academic Enhancement Center services begin 9/9/2024. Visit uri.edu/aec/ for information about the three programs that make up the AEC: STEM & BUS Tutoring, Undergraduate Writing Center, and Academic Skills Development (see syllabus statements in the following section).
  o Center for Career and Experiential Education. The Center for Career and Experiential Education (CCEE) supports undergraduate students with career preparation through one-on-one advising, 24-7 online resources, career education courses, and career events that prepare them for life after graduation and connect them with employers and community partners. A Career Education Specialist (CES) is available to meet with students. For more information or to meet with a CES, go to uri.edu/career.
  o Mental Health and Wellness. URI offers mental health and wellness resources for students including the URI Counseling Center, TELUS Health Student Support App, the Wellness Resource Center, and Well-being Coaching.

CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH CAMPUS RESOURCES: Find resources, report a concern or refer a student through the Faculty & Staff resources page.
SYLLABUS STATEMENTS

We ask you to include these statements (or similar) in your syllabi:

**Viral Illness Precautions Statement**: The University is committed to delivering its educational mission while protecting the health and safety of our community. Students who are experiencing symptoms of viral illness should NOT go to class/work. The CDC says people with these types of illnesses should stay home until they have been fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours and their symptoms have been improving.

If you are unable to attend class, please notify me prior to the start of class at 401/874-xxxx or xxx@uri.edu or through the medium we have established for the class.

**Academic Honesty**: Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student’s name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student’s own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. [Faculty are encouraged to include details regarding course-specific expectations, including the use of generative AI tools.]

**Excused Absences**: Absences due to serious illness or traumatic loss, religious observances, military service, or participation in a university sanctioned event are considered excused absences. Students are responsible for work missed during an excused absence but will not be penalized by grading or assignment/exam make-up policies. Students should notify faculty in advance of absences due to religious observance or university-sanctioned events, and as soon as possible for other absences See University Manual sections 8.51.11-8.51.16 for details.

**Mental Health and Wellness**: We understand that college comes with challenges and stress associated with your courses, job/family responsibilities and personal life. URI offers students a range of services to support your mental health and wellbeing, including the URI Counseling Center, TELUS Health Student Support App, the Wellness Resource Center, and Well-being Coaching.

**Land Acknowledgement**: The University of Rhode Island land acknowledgment is a statement written by members of the University community in close partnership with members of the Narragansett Tribe. The statement recognizes and pays tribute to the people who lived on and stewarded the land on which the University now resides. The statement seeks to show gratitude and respect to Indigenous people and cultures and build community with the Narragansett Nation and other Native American tribes.

**University of Rhode Island Land Acknowledgment**

The University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional stomping ground of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People. We honor and respect the enduring and continuing relationship between the Indigenous people and this land by teaching and learning more about their history and present-day communities, and by becoming stewards of the land we, too, inhabit.

**Anti-Bias Syllabus Statement**: We respect the rights and dignity of each individual and group. We reject prejudice and intolerance, and we work to understand differences. We believe that equity and inclusion are critical components for campus community members to thrive. If you are a target or a witness of a bias incident, you are encouraged to submit a report to the URI Bias Resource Team at www.uri.edu/brt. There you will also find people and resources to help.

**Disability, Access, and Inclusion Services for Students Statement**: Your access in this course is important. Please send me your Disability, Access, and Inclusion (DAI) accommodation letter early in the semester so that we have adequate time to discuss and arrange your approved academic accommodations. If you have not yet established services through DAI, please contact them to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations in the classroom. DAI can be reached by calling: 401-874-2098, visiting: web.uri.edu/disability, or emailing: dai@uri.edu.

Please consider including the following information in your syllabus or course site to highlight these important student resources:

**Academic Enhancement Center**: The Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) offers face-to-face and online services to undergraduate students seeking academic support. Services are based out of Roosevelt Hall, the Carothers Library room LL004, and online.

- Peer tutoring is available for STEM & BUS-related courses through the Drop-In Center and small group tutoring.
The Writing Center peer consultants offer feedback focused on supporting undergraduate writers at any stage of a writing assignment.

UCS 160 and 161 courses and one-to-one Academic Skills Consultations offer strategies for improving planning, studying and test-taking skills.

Academic Skills Consultations offer personalized peer support through 1-to-1 meetings focused on helping students build skills and strategies to meet their academic goals.

Complete details about each of these programs, up-to-date schedules, contact information, and self-service study resources are all available on the AEC website, uri.edu/aec.

All Academic Enhancement Center support services for Fall 2024 begin on September 9th. Visit uri.edu/aec for information about our three AEC programs.

STEM & BUS Tutoring (STEM, BUS, NUR, EGR) helps undergraduate students navigate a variety of 100 and 200 level science, math, business, nursing and engineering courses through free peer tutoring in person and online. Students can select weekly or occasional (as-needed) tutoring sessions through the TracCloud system or visit the Drop-In Center, located in the Carothers Library lower level room LL004. The TracCloud application is available through URI Microsoft 365 single sign-on and more detailed information and instructions can be found at uri.edu/aec/tutoring.

**Academic Skills Development**

- **Courses:** UCS 160: *Success in Higher Education* (1cr.) and UCS 161: *Becoming a Self Directed Student* (1cr) teach strategies for planning, studying, and addressing academic challenges. For more information, contact David Hayes at davidhayes@uri.edu.
- **Peer Support:** Need help managing your time? Just ASC! Academic Skills Consultations (ASCs) are personalized 1-to-1 meetings designed to help students build skills to meet their academic goals. For more information contact Heather Price at hprice@uri.edu.
- **Professional Consultations:** Students can schedule consultations with Dr. David Hayes on Starfish or may be referred by an advisor or case manager.
- **Resources:** The Study Your Way to Success page is a self-guided web portal offering curated tips and strategies in response to common academic challenges.

**The Undergraduate Writing Center** provides peer writing support to students in any class, even if you haven’t started writing yet. Peer writing consultants work with students at any stage, from understanding an assignment and brainstorming ideas to developing, organizing, and revising a draft. Writing consultations are available in person and online, and can be scheduled through URI Microsoft 365 single sign-on via TracCloud. For more information, visit uri.edu/aec/writing.

**Center for Career and Experiential Education:** The Center for Career and Experiential Education (CCEE) supports undergraduate students with career preparation through one-on-one advising, 24-7 online resources, career education courses, and career events that prepare you for life after graduation and connect you with employers and community partners. Your Career Education Specialist (CES) is available to meet with you all year long, as early as your first-year, both in-person and virtually, to assist with exploring your career options, resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation, job and internship search, and more. We use Handshake to connect you to on and off campus jobs and internships and RhodyServes to connect you with volunteer opportunities in RI. Our team on the first floor of Roosevelt Hall can help you learn how to use Handshake effectively to find amazing opportunities. For more information or to meet with a CES, go to uri.edu/career.

**Graduate Writing Center (for graduate courses):** The Graduate Writing Center provides writing support to all URI doctoral and master’s students to foster continuing development of academic and professional writing skills necessary to succeed in graduate programs and academic or professional careers.

**Rhody Outpost Basic Needs Pantry:** Food insecurity affects up to 30% of college students. That means you might not have enough food to get through a day or week, you don’t have money to purchase groceries or personal products, or you are primarily eating foods that don’t provide a lot of nutrition because they’re all you can afford. This can all impact your academic success.

Rhody Outpost provides URI students who are food insecure with emergency food services and resources. The Outpost is housed at the Dining Services Warehouse at 10 Tootell Road, between Flagg Road and West Alumni Avenue. We are open every Friday from 3-5:30. Any student in need is welcome to visit the Outpost after filling out a brief request form.
If you have questions about food or housing insecurity, contact Barbara Sweeney, Coordinator of Food Security Outreach, at barbara_sweeney@uri.edu, or 401-874-5633. We want to help all students succeed and make URI a place with #NoRamHungry.

UNIVERSITY MANUAL REQUIREMENTS

Please familiarize yourself with Chapter 8 of the University Manual which contains important academic regulations.

Course Syllabus Requirement (University Manual 8.50.30) – According to the University Manual: “All instructors shall make available a syllabus in the first week of class, or first day of class for fully-online accelerated programs (8.51.24), to students enrolled in each of their courses. Syllabi components should clearly communicate classroom policies, essential aspects of the course, and expectations of student participation.”

In addition to satisfying Faculty Senate approved policies, your syllabus communicates mutual expectations between you and your students and serves as a roadmap to successful course completion, including your course scope, expectations, learning outcomes, deadlines, attendance policies, grading criteria, and other important information. Please provide students with information about assessment/major paper/project due dates, office hours, availability of special tutorial sessions, expectations on individual vs group work, and use of generative AI tools. This clear outlining of expectations helps to ensure that students in your classes understand what they are expected to learn, how they will be assessed, and are fully aware of your academic standards. Providing such information can help avoid misunderstanding, frustration—on both sides—and foster acceptance of responsibility by our students.

RESOURCE NOTE: As you develop your courses and syllabi, please refer to the faculty development resources offered through the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, including the syllabus development, course design, and assessment design resources.

The University Manual also contains information that is helpful in preparing your syllabus. I refer particularly to the following sections in Chapter 8 of the Manual: 8.27.10-19 (plagiarism— instructor’s responsibilities, judicial action, and student’s responsibilities); 8.39.10-12 (attendance); 8.51.10-27 (examinations), and 8.53.20-24 (Incomplete). Each semester, issues are directed to this office that are addressed specifically in these sections.

Final Exams - Please pay special attention to sections 8.51.18, which states the University’s long-standing policy regarding administering examinations during the final week of classes -

Final examinations are not required by the university, but any final examination, with the exception of take-home examinations, must be administered according to the final examination schedule prepared by the Office of Enrollment Services. Faculty members cannot administer an examination during the last five days classes are in session in lieu of a final examination, but must instead postpone such an examination to be administered according to the final examination schedule.

OTHER TOPICS

FERPA - Please be aware in your communications with students and about a student's academic progress in your course, that FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) regulations prohibit any disclosure of “personally identifiable information” from a student’s “education record” without the prior written consent of the student. For more detailed information on FERPA regulations, please go to: security.uri.edu/policies/ferpa/

Video Capture – There are some privacy issues to consider for those faculty who are using video capture in their classrooms. If the video captures only the instructor and course materials, there are no privacy issues. If the video captures images or voices of your students AND you intend to use these recordings in another class or for any other purpose, students must be notified of this in advance on the syllabus and you must provide accommodations for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Academic Integrity - Understanding the culture of source management and attribution in academia is a process of learning and relearning, with increasing complexity over time. Our goal is to better distinguish between intentional plagiarism or cheating, and making mistakes. URI’s Student Handbook web.uri.edu/studentconduct/student-handbook/) provides guidelines concerning academic honesty in this regard. Additional assistance is available at the Writing Center and the Academic Enhancement Center. It may be useful to add an extended and course-specific statement to your syllabi such as:

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student’s name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student’s own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote,
paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. The following are examples of academic dishonesty.

- Using material, directly or paraphrasing, from published/web sources (print or electronic, including ChatGPT) without appropriate citation
- Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently
- Unauthorized possession or access to exams
- Unauthorized communication during exams
- Unauthorized use of another’s work or preparing work for another student
- Taking an exam for another student
- Altering or attempting to alter grades
- The use of notes or electronic devices to gain an unauthorized advantage during exams
- Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references
- Facilitating or aiding another’s academic dishonesty
- Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the instructors

Students who engage in academic dishonesty should be reported through the Student Conduct process (see Report Academic Misconduct).

Student Feedback – URI uses the IDEA Diagnostic Feedback Instrument to collect student feedback. As you develop your syllabus and course learning objectives, please think ahead to their alignment with IDEA course objectives that will be measured at the end of the semester (see list below). Incorporation of relevant learning objectives in your course syllabus is likely to yield more reliable and informative student feedback on the IDEA feedback form at the end of your course. Instructors will be able to set IDEA objectives for their courses during the last 6 weeks of the semester. While you may want your students to master many of the IDEA objectives, you should choose no more than 2 or 3 essential and 2 or 3 important objectives that are critical learning objectives for your course. Choosing a larger number of objectives will limit the usefulness of your feedback. The student response period begins ~2 weeks before the end of classes and closes at 11:59 pm on the last reading day; students can use a variety of devices e.g. (laptop, cell phone, tablet) and in order to maximize response rates, faculty are encouraged to provide 15 minutes at the beginning of a class for students to complete the IDEA survey. Results are available to Instructors, Chairs, and Deans two days after official grades are officially posted for the semester.

The 13 IDEA course objectives are listed below for your convenience (with links to IDEA resources):

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures
3. Learning to Apply Course Material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
4. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
5. Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team
6. Developing creative capacities (inventing, designing, writing, performing in art, music, drama, etc.)
7. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity
8. Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing
9. Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth
10. Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making
11. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
12. Learning to apply knowledge and skills to benefit others or serve the public good
13. Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information

The Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning provides support for setting your objectives and interpreting your results. If you would like to review the elements of the IDEA instrument, please go to: https://www.ideaedu.org/Services/Student-Ratings-of-Instruction-Tools. If you have questions about how the process works at URI or are looking for ways to increase response rates please visit: https://web.uri.edu/provost/idea/, or contact Sean Krueger at, skrueger@uri.edu.

Thank you for all the work you do supporting the success of your students and best wishes for an enjoyable and productive semester.

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c: Academic Deans