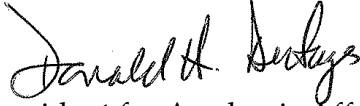




## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** URI Community

**FROM:** Donald DeHayes   
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

**DATE:** April 8, 2014

**SUBJECT:** URI Common Reading for 2014

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I am pleased to announce and support the URI Common Reading selected for Fall 2014 - Randy Pausch's *The Last Lecture*. The goals of the Common Reading Program are to introduce first-year students to a campus culture focused on academic engagement and to build a sense of community among students, staff, and faculty at URI. **I invite you to read the book and engage in discussions with our students and each other and to bring the book into your courses in interesting and enjoyable ways.**

This year's selection was chosen with significant input from students enrolled in Grand Challenge and Honors writing courses focused on the "common reading." Students in these classes chose eight books they believed would be engaging to first-year students and meet the goals of the Common Reading Program. The Common Reading Selection Committee carefully considered each of the students' choices and selected *The Last Lecture* as the one that offers the greatest opportunities for community conversations, programming, reflection, and inspiration.

Randy Pausch, a highly respected computer scientist on the faculty at Carnegie Mellon University, succumbed to pancreatic cancer in 2008. When diagnosed and given only months to live, he decided to create a lasting legacy for his students, colleagues, and three young children. His lecture, "*Achieving Your Childhood Dreams*," was delivered to a full house at Carnegie Mellon University. This lecture was viewed online by millions across the globe and became known as the "Last Lecture." Pausch adapted the talk into the *New York Times* bestselling book *The Last Lecture*. The book reveals his humor, strength, and inspiration, while dispensing practical advice on following one's dreams.

This Fall, three Grand Challenge courses will focus on the themes of *The Last Lecture* and many exciting events are being planned, including a Diversity Week presentation featuring URI faculty, students, and administrators, who will offer their own last lectures. All incoming students and their advisors will be given a copy of the book at orientation in June and asked to read it over the summer. #DreamBigURI will be used as the social media hashtag to exchange responses to the book and keep the community apprised of Common Reading events throughout the summer and fall.

Complimentary copies of the book will be available in early May from the Provost Office (115 Green Hall, 874-4408) for instructors using it in a course. The Bookstore will also have copies available for purchase. Please join this URI community initiative and help build a campus culture of academic engagement and interaction with our students. Best wishes for the remainder of the semester and a peaceful summer.