September 20, 2005

To: Susanmarie Harrington
RE: Academic Affairs 2004-2005 Committee Report
From: Johnny Goldfinger and Rick Ward

The Committee met in September and December of 2004 and January, March and May of 2005. The committee considered 30 student initiated grade change requests and four petitions to modify distribution requirements. 16 of the grade change requests were denied as was one request to modify a requirement. Of the grade change requests all but three were requests to have “F’s” changed to “W’s.” In such cases, the committee evaluated the student’s appeal by reviewing the documentation and rationale that appeared on the appeal form. In seven cases, the committee felt there was insufficient documentation or a weak rationale for the grade change. In four cases, the student had been away from the university more than three years and the committee recommended the forgiveness policy as a more appropriate means of dealing with the poor grade. In one case the five year limit on grade appeals had been exceeded and in another the student had already graduated. Of the 17 cases in which the appeal was upheld, most had stopped attending all of their class early in the semester, provided documentation for medical, personal or professional reasons for dropping out of school, and provided a compelling rationale for why they had not officially withdrawn from the class.

The Committee discussed the apparent increase in confusion over drop/add policies, noting that many students are under the impression that they can drop a class “on-line” or by e-mailing the instructor. The Office of Student Affairs will begin reminding students of the drop/add policy on the student list serve and raise the issue with counterparts in other schools.