



RUTGERS

THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

Robert L. Barchi, President

February 7, 2014

Mr. Kenneth Swalagin
University Senate
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
ASB III, Suite 110
Cook/Douglass Campus

Dear Mr. Swalagin:

I am writing in response to the Report and Recommendations on Charge S-0808A, Implementation of 2006 Senate Recommendations on Availability of Syllabi as adopted by the University Senate at its September 2012 meeting. I thank the members of the Instruction, Curricula and Advising Committee for their continued attention to this issue.

The administration supports this initiative and has twice endorsed the posting of course syllabi on the online schedule of classes. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chancellors have brought this issue to the attention of their academic deans and charged them with bringing the importance of this to their department chairs and faculties. We have indicated that providing even partial information is helpful to students as they make their course choices. Given recent changes in academic administrators and the addition of the Biomedical and Health Sciences units, by copy of this response I am asking the Chancellors to bring the Senate's concerns to the attention of their deans and faculties and to take whatever steps they deem appropriate on their campuses to make course syllabi widely available to students before they register for classes.

However, while I support encouraging faculty to provide this information, I do not think it is appropriate for the administration to centrally mandate the posting of this information for each course or require departments to be responsible for posting all syllabi on their web pages and linking the syllabi in their course management systems to the Course Synopsis System. Absent information about why faculty currently do not comply with this request by routinely posting their syllabi—that is, whether they have some objection to posting them or just do not get around to doing so—I am reluctant to place this additional responsibility on departments.

Sincerely,

Robert Barchi

- c. Nancy Cantor, Chancellor-Newark
- Richard L. Edwards, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
and Chancellor (Interim)-New Brunswick
- Wendell Pritchett, Chancellor-Camden
- Brian Strom, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Chancellor-RBHS