Dear colleagues:

The first year students arrive on Friday and classes begin on Monday. The campus soon will be a very busy place. As we anticipate the return of students, I wanted to inform you that the practice of notifying you about student absences for compelling non-academic circumstances we started last year will continue in 2018-19.

- **Absences for Non-Academic Reasons**: You will be notified via letter from the Dean of Students in cases where a student is experiencing an aggravated and compelling non-academic circumstance beyond their control and for which the Dean of Students has documentation. Please do not ask students for sensitive documentation yourself. Rather refer the student to the Dean of Students. Once you receive a dean’s letter, it is within your authority to determine what remedy or accommodation is appropriate as set forth in the 2018-19 SRR&R Section 04.13 Excused Absences.

Please note that any circumstances reported by a student about matters that do not relate directly to their own personal health, wellbeing, mental health, and/or safety (examples include death in the family, illness of a family member or friend, compelling parental circumstances, or personal financial matters) should be addressed with the academic associate dean of the student’s college. Please do encourage the student to seek guidance in these circumstances from their associate dean.

The purpose of the practice is to reduce the circulation of protected records and, at the same time, to provide you with confidence that indeed documented non-academic circumstances are in play. Last year, students and faculty generally were quite positive about the way in which the practice served both students and faculty alike. Students felt reassured that faculty knew that they were not “scamming” them or seeking an unfair advantage. Faculty were encouraged that exceptions and accommodations were afforded only those students who were truly in need of them and that they were relieved of a brokering role.

We hope that this is helpful to you. Please do let me know when and if you have questions.

With best wishes for the approaching new academic year,

John T. Kirkpatrick
Senior Vice Provost for Student Life
and Dean of Students