Midterm Grades  
Faculty Senate Charge

1. **Action Requested:**  
We request that the Faculty Senate endorse the following recommended insertion to the handbook:

Faculty members are expected to enter midterm grades for all full-semester length courses during the 8th week of the fall/spring semesters. Students are notified when their midterm grades become available.

This should be inserted into the passage of the bulletin related to grade reports on p.28:

**GRADE REPORT**
At the end of each semester/term for which a student is enrolled, an online grade report is made available via MyUSI. The online grade report is a record of courses enrolled, letter grades earned, semester grade point average, and cumulative grade point average. Information concerning the student’s current academic standing also is indicated.

Further, we propose that the current 5th week non-attendance reporting be eliminated. Instead, at the point of midterm grade reports, if students have not been attending a majority of course meetings, then faculty members may administratively withdraw them from the course.

2. **Current Policy:**  
There is no current written policy about midterm grades, either for faculty to provide them or for students to know when and where to look for them. Current practice is that faculty members are encouraged to make midterm grades available to students.

Currently, all faculty members are expected to report non-attendance of students at the 5th week of the semester.

**ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**
Students who are absent one-half or more of the class meetings of a full semester-length class without excuse during weeks two through four may be notified by letter to their mailing address of the possibility of their being administratively withdrawn from their class. The students so notified will be given until the end of the seventh week (mid-term) to meet with their instructors to resolve the situation. The instructor of the class may complete the process of an administrative withdrawal of a student (at mid-term) if the situation is not resolved. NOTE: Merely not attending a course does not automatically remove the course from a student’s record. Students who do not accept the responsibility of completing an Add/Drop or Withdrawal From All Classes form jeopardize their record with the possibility of incurring an F in a course not properly dropped.

3. **Background:**
Timely feedback is important for students, and can be critically important for student persistence, retention, and overall success. Even though midterm grades are currently encouraged, less than 30% of faculty members are reporting grades to students at midterm.
Some faculty members are regularly giving feedback to students without using the midterm grades system available in Banner, but by reporting them through the midterm grades report, we can insure that academic advisors, chairs, and Deans are aware of overall student performance, and appropriate intervention efforts are possible. By seeing all of their midterm grades in one location, students have a richer overall picture of their performance and can have more meaningful conversations with their faculty members and advisors.

A large number of other universities have midterm grade policies, and have reported them to be important tools to improve student success.

4. **Potential resources:**
   - Registrar Sandy Frank
   - Associate Provost Brian Posler
   - University Strategic Planning group on Enrollment Management and Retention

**Selected Midterm grade policies at other institutions**

**Bradley University—All undergraduate students**
Mid-term grades for all undergraduate students are reported to the Office of the Registrar shortly after the midpoint of the fall and spring semesters. The Registrar shall establish the exact date mid-term grades are due and provide grade rosters to faculty members about one week prior to this date. Teaching schedules should be planned so that reports of these grades can be made. These grades are supplied to the student, the student’s academic advisor and the Dean of the College in which the student is registered.

**Rockhurst University—All undergraduate students**
Midterm grades, issued for undergraduate students, are progress reports only and do not affect the student's GPA. Undergraduate advisors may also view their advisee’s midterm grades on Rockweb. Midterm grades provide an opportunity for students and advisors to discuss academic progress.

**Indiana University—All Core courses AND all courses with a FR or University Division sophomore**
According to the Procedures on Early Evaluations for the Bloomington Campus, recently approved by the Bloomington Faculty Council, all instructors teaching General Education Common Ground courses, as well as other courses in which there are freshmen or sophomores in University Division will receive a request for assignment of letter grade evaluations in the fourth week of the regular semester, with a submission deadline of Monday of the sixth week.

**University of Arkansas at Little Rock—All courses at 1000 or 2000 level**
The University Faculty Senate has established the policies that any student has the right to an evaluation of his or her grade in a course prior to the end of the drop period and that faculty are expected to facilitate availability of grades to all students. In addition, faculty will inform students of midterm grades for all semester-long 0 level, 1000 level and 2000 level courses offered during the fall and spring semesters. “Each faculty member is expected to select appropriate times for the periodic evaluations which are necessary or desirable during the course of the semester, but the complexities of an academic institution make it necessary that all faculty members comply with an orderly schedule of final examinations.”

**Wisconsin-Madison—All First Year students**

A mid-term (really sixth week) grade should be reported for each first-year student. These reports are used to assist students in their adjustments to academic work. Students whose reports show their academic work is not satisfactory are advised to seek help from their instructors, advisors, and others so that they may improve their work before it is too late. If the instructor has other methodologies of informing students of their grades, it is not mandatory that mid-term grades be submitted to the Registrar. However, this will mean that these grades cannot be reported to the student's advisor, nor will they be reported to any special program advisor (AAP, TRIO, etc.)

Please keep the following in mind:
- Mid-term grades will be submitted electronically through My UW Madison.
- Mid-term grade rosters include any first-year student enrolled in your class
- Grading may begin as early as as Monday, February 21st
- The final deadline for you to submit mid-term grades is March 7th at midnight. You will not be able to enter or submit these six-week grades after that.

**Ball State—(deficiencies only)**
Policy for Midterm Deficiencies
Freshmen students in danger of receiving a C-, D+, D, D-, F or NC in a 100- or 200-level course will be sent a notice to that effect during the eighth week of the semester. This midterm evaluation will be available to the student on MEG and sent to their academic advisor and residence hall director. The purpose of this evaluation is to give advance notice that a student’s course performance might result in a semester grade of less than a C. It is ultimately the student’s responsibility to respond appropriately to this information.

Even if a notice is not sent, a student may still receive a grade of less than a C in the course. The midterm evaluation is merely a notice of poor performance at that time.

U-Illinois Springfield—news article about the recent implementation

Students in 100 and 200 level courses are going to be a part of a new policy change made by the university’s retention program. The new policy requires faculty who teach lower level courses to turn in a student’s midterm grades for review...

...The new midterm policy will be implemented through Banner, the student information system. Faculty of the lower level courses are required to turn in grades by today, October 21. It is also optional for 300 and 400 level departments and faculty.

Moranski said that this is an important policy in the retention program, especially during these hard economic times. Their main goal is to retain the students they have throughout their full careers.

“We know that midterm grades have some effect, a real effect and need to be coordinated with other retention systems,” said Moranski. “When you coordinate an early warning system with midterm grades, you can let students know how their doing and give them time if they’re having trouble to make changes in their study habits.”

SENATE ACTION:
The Charge was assigned to the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Faculty members are expected to enter midterm grades for all full-semester length courses during the 8th week of the fall/spring semesters. Students are notified when their midterm grades are available.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
• Faculty Affairs Committee unanimously recommends that entering midterm grades remains optional.
• Encourage timely entering of scores for student assignments on Blackboard
• In addition, the committee recommends that the current 5th week non-attendance reporting be eliminated. Instead, at the point of midterm grade reports, if students
have not been attending a majority of course meeting, then faculty members may administratively withdraw them from the course.

Faculty Senate determined at the September 7, 2012 meeting to send the recommendation to Ron Rochon (Provost):

- This was a holdover charge from the previous year. It was recommended that midterm grades remain optional.