



**MEMORANDUM**

September 26, 2005

**TO:** Campus Community  
**FROM:** Cornelius Kerwin  
**SUBJECT:** Campus Update

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We are a month into the new semester and the time is right for a report. As I and others have noted, we welcomed classes of freshmen, transfer, and graduate students who are extraordinary in many respects. By all conventional means of measuring academic qualifications, they are the strongest group in the university's history.

This fall also brought tragedy of unimaginable proportions in the form of the fierce Hurricane Katrina. Our response was typical of this community, but no less remarkable. We welcomed 115 hurricane displaced students into our midst, and we will do all we can to assist them in returning to their home institutions when those universities and colleges are ready to reopen.

Reports from across campus indicate growing concern regarding the Board of Trustees inquiry, Dr. Ladner's status, and the news media stories on these subjects. The concern is understandable in light of the extended period of uncertainty. I cannot give you a certain date when the matter will be fully resolved. This week, representatives of the board will meet with groups representing the administration, faculty, students, and staff to gain a better understanding of the community's reactions and recommendations. The board shares the hope of the AU community that this will be concluded, with finality, as soon as possible.

In the meantime, please share my confidence that, as the Middle States Commission concluded recently, American University is strong. We continue to provide education of the highest quality to our students and produce scholarship and professional work important, influential, and of service to our community, nation, and world in countless ways. Woven through the news stories of the past weeks, one consistent theme has been repeated time and again—that American University has made tremendous progress on numerous fronts and that our reputation is “ascendant.”

It is the faculty, students, and staff of this institution whose intellects, talent, discipline, and dedication have produced these results and who continue to do so every day. That fact is understood and appreciated.

Thank you for giving American University such a fine start to another academic year.