To: Faculty and Staff

From: Donzell Lee, Ph. D.
       Interim VPAA/Provost

Date: February 9, 2015

Re: GradesFirst Implementation

Beginning spring 2015, Alcorn State University will use the GradesFirst Early Alert System for attendance monitoring, advising, and tutor management to facilitate student retention. GradesFirst will help us identify students who appear to be at-risk early in the semester; provide enhanced student-advisor relationships; and maximize tutoring efforts, thus enabling us to better help our students succeed. Additionally, the data will allow meaningful conversations about student learning to increase our retention and graduation rates.

The implementation of GradesFirst will take place in two phases: Phase I will include all freshman and sophomore students and student athletes. If you provide instruction to any freshmen, sophomores, or student athletes, you will be able to access GradesFirst at alcorn.gradesfirst.com. Your email address will be your username and the temporary password will be alcorn123. Once you log in for the first time you should change your password, which can be done by clicking on school information on the right side of the page. Once you click on that link you will be given the option to update your password.

There will be several opportunities for you to watch demonstrations and receive hands-on training with using GradesFirst over the next two weeks. The dates, times, and places will be announced by your dean. You will be expected to start entering attendance in GradesFirst and respond to the Early Alert campaigns on February 16, 2015. A campus-wide roll out (Phase II) of GradesFirst is forthcoming. To that end, we must continue to utilize the online roll to monitor attendance for our junior and senior students.

Your full participation is greatly appreciated as we continue to make student success our top priority.