Special Presidential Update  
December 11, 2008

Dec. 22-23, 2008 Declared Holidays

After careful consideration, and following consultation with the university’s physical plant management about energy conservation measures, UCM is declaring Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 22-23, 2008 official university holidays. The campus will be closed. This extends the winter break for university staff by two days. The break was scheduled to begin on Dec. 24 with the university reopening on Jan. 5, 2009. Employees should remember to mark Dec. 22-23 as holidays on their time sheets.

In reaching this decision, I consulted with Mike Gebeke, director of physical plant operations, who informed me that the university will realize considerable energy savings by closing Monday and Tuesday. It will allow the university to reduce the electrical load to the lowest possible level, while reducing heating costs for four extra days. We can actually begin efforts to curb power needed to heat the university on Saturday, versus waiting until Wednesday the following week. I’m pleased that members of the Board of Governors are also supporting this decision.

To help further reduce electrical usage during the campus closing, we urge faculty and staff to take measures such as unplugging all office equipment and appliances before they leave for the break, as most electrical equipment will continue to use power even when turned off.

On Friday and Saturday, Dec. 12-13, we will celebrate our annual commencement exercises, and many of our faculty will soon be taking a well-deserved break in the days to come. I want to thank the entire university community for all of their hard work over the past semester, and urge everyone to enjoy the extra time off with their families and friends. Thanks for all you do!

By the way, here are some additional suggestions that could help reduce electrical usage during the break:

Turn off or unplug the following equipment and appliances: printers, computers and monitors (offices and labs), copiers, radios, TVs, and video displays, as well as appliances such as refrigerators (please empty contents and make sure they are defrosted, if required), microwave, coffee machines, personal fans and heaters. All chargers and power supplies for laptops, cell phones and other equipment should be unplugged. These devices may continue to use power when plugged in, even when they are not connected to a device. And, don’t forget to turn off your lights!