

**From:** "Jehuda Reinharz" <jreinhar@brandeis.edu>

**Date:** February 5, 2009 4:03:50 PM EST

**To:** "entire campus" <broadcast-email@lists.brandeis.edu>

**Subject:** Message from Jehuda Reinharz

**Reply-To:** "Jehuda Reinharz" <jreinhar@brandeis.edu>

Dear Members of the Brandeis community:

The past ten days have been extremely difficult for all of us. I have heard from many of you and listened carefully to your criticisms and constructive suggestions. I have read every message on the faculty list serve, and the thoughtful letter sent to me by a group of faculty last night. I have also heard from students, staff, alumni, university presidents and complete strangers about my statements regarding the vote by the Board of Trustees concerning the Rose Art Museum.

In retrospect, I wish I had handled the initial statements I made in a far more direct way. Unfortunately, those statements did not accurately reflect the Board's decision authorizing the administration to conduct "an orderly sale or other disposition of works from the university's collection." The statements gave the misleading impression that we were selling the entire collection immediately, which is not true. The University may have the option, subject to applicable legal requirements and procedures, to sell some artworks if necessary, but I assure you that other options will also be considered. The Museum will remain open, but in accordance with the Board's vote, it will be more fully integrated into the University's central educational mission. We will meet with all affected University constituencies to explore together how this can best be done.

I regret as well that I did not find a more inclusive and open way to engage the Brandeis community in the deliberations that led to the Board's decision.

I take full responsibility for causing pain and embarrassment in both of these matters. To quote President Obama, "I screwed up."

Having learned from this experience, I will do my best, as will the entire administration, to work together with all of you in a collaborative manner. We must cooperate as we move forward to confront our financial crisis. But we also have to take bold steps. Obviously, we have many tasks ahead of us regarding the curriculum and the budget.

In meetings with members of the faculty and with students in the past few days, I have been heartened by the enormous reservoir of good will, imagination and willingness to work hard to guarantee that Brandeis will continue to thrive as a first-rate institution of higher learning.

Sincerely,

Jehuda Reinharz