Academic Calendar Resolution

Presented by:
Professor Jeffrey J. Doyle, Committee Chair
Professor Kate Walsh, Committee Vice-Chair
Academic Calendar Resolution

Therefore be it resolved that the University Faculty Senate adopt the proposed academic calendar:

- Fall schedule includes 68 days of instruction and 12 Mondays.
- Spring schedule includes 69 days of instruction and 13 Mondays.
- Thirteen study and exam days
  - Five study days (including a Sunday break in the middle of exams in the Fall, and a Friday break in the middle of exams in the Spring)
  - Eight days of exams (including Saturday in the Fall and Saturday and Sunday in the Spring)
Calendar Revision Objectives

Reexamine the existing academic calendar to propose changes that will:

1. Afford optimal educational opportunities for both students and faculty.

2. Address concerns about student stress and mental health related to prolonged periods of instruction without multiday breaks.

3. Comply with New York State Education Department requirements.
Proposed Calendar: Fall Semester

- **Highlights**
  - Labor Day holiday and Fall break remain.
  - Insertion of full day break Wednesday before Thanksgiving.
    - To be in compliance with state education requirements, we need to add the additional day at the start of semester.
  - Classes begin Tuesday before Labor Day. In most years, it is one day earlier. Once every six years, it is six days later than when we begin now.
  - Classes end on a Friday, in most years, one week after Thanksgiving break.

- **Issues**
  - Some faculty would prefer as late a start as possible.
  - Orientation
Proposed Calendar: Spring Semester

- **Highlights**
  - Memorial Day Weekend Commencement.
  - Martin Luther King, Jr. day would become a university holiday.
    - This holiday occurs on the third Monday in January. In half the years, classes would begin two days later, on a Wednesday. In other years, classes would begin nine days later, on a Wednesday.
  - Two-day winter break (M & T) during the third week of February.
    - Spring Break would occur one week later than it does now. Semester is divided into thirds.
  - Classes end on Wednesday (three days later than we currently do).

- **Issues**
  - Mental health break for students
  - Partial weeks of instruction
Study/Exam Period & Senior Week

- Four full study days before exams begin, and a fifth day in the middle of exams.
  - Two-thirds of a day less than in the current CU calendar.
- Eight days of exams over a nine day period.
  - One-third of a day less than in the current CU calendar.
- An improved exam schedule that will reduce conflicts including back-to-back exams and three in 24 hours.
  - To space exams, we would have one exam period on Saturday in the Fall, and one on each weekend day in the Spring.

Issues

- Senior week programming would be reduced from six full days to between two - four days.
Begin the Spring Semester earlier to preserve full weeks: Issues to consider

- Beginning six days earlier on a Monday means we have additional days to deploy.
  - Conflict with MLK holiday in half the years.
  - Longer February break. (Nine days of many students on campus.)
  - Ending the semester during the last week in April, with a Memorial weekend Commencement. (Two weeks for seniors to be on campus.)

- Senior administration has expressed concern about student safety and risk, especially for days that are not scheduled (i.e. classes are not in session).
Begin the Spring Semester earlier to obtain days at the end: Issues to consider

- Beginning three days earlier (to end classes on a Friday) means that in half the years, the first Monday would not occur until week 3 of the semester.

- Other concerns with an abbreviated Winter break:
  - Very long spring semester (16 weeks)
  - Winter session
  - Faculty research time
  - Costs of returning furloughed staff
  - Some students prefer the time for internships, and for those that travel far, being with family; others wish to return sooner.
Key Events this Spring

1. Public release of first draft of calendar recommendations.
   - Presentation to Faculty Senate. Vetting with UGA, GA, UA, EA, orientation staff, and Student and Academic Services. Review of written feedback, including comments from Faculty Senators. *Committee revises calendar proposal.*

2. Presentation to Faculty Senate and formal vetting of feedback.

3. GA votes to unanimously supports proposed calendar.

4. UG Assembly Resolutions
   - Resolution #43 listing ‘imperative features of an academic calendar,’ which are mostly met by revised calendar, and two weeks later,
   - Resolution #47 denouncing the proposed calendar and seeking additional changes to reduce student stress.
SA Resolution 43: “Imperative Properties” of Academic Calendar

1. A minimum of 4 full days of study period.
2. A minimum of 8 full days for the exam period.
3. An academic break in between the Spring semester and Spring break.
4. A natural break within each exam period (similar to how the weekend currently serves as a break for most students.)
5. The Wednesday of Thanksgiving as a full day off.
6. A minimum of four full days for Senior Week programming in the Spring semester.
S.A. Resolution #47: Undergraduate Student Body Denouncement of the Calendar Committee’s Proposal

Be it therefore resolved, that the Student Body calls on the Faculty Senate to incorporate further options to relieve mental stress, such as

(i.) starting earlier in the Spring Semester to allow for a longer study period;

or (ii.) a longer study and exam period (similar to the current length of the study and exam period),

or (iii.) an exam period with a built in break in it in order to help relieve student stress and enhance mental health.

- In response, the committee revises calendar a second time and votes to approve proposed calendar. (Vote is 8:2, with one member abstaining).
“Reasonable steps to adjust the academic calendar, such as those proposed (i.e., additional breaks and pacing of exams), have the potential for supporting students’ personal well-being and intellectual performance. Therefore, we at Gannett Health Services are pleased to support the recommendations of the Academic Calendar Committee.”  

Tim Marchell

“We also enthusiastically endorse the added two-day break in February, as this will provide another recess allowing students to recharge and rejuvinate.”  

CMM
Once again, Calendar Objectives

Reexamine the existing academic calendar to propose changes that will:

1. Afford optimal educational opportunities for both students and faculty.

2. Address concerns about student stress and mental health related to prolonged periods of instruction without multiday breaks.

3. Comply with New York State Education Department requirements.
New Amendment to the Resolution

“Be it further resolved that the academic calendar be subject to periodic review by the Educational Policy Committee. The first review shall be undertaken three years after the implementation of the revised calendar, with further reviews at 5 year intervals.”
Additional Slides
“At the meeting, Dean of Undergraduate Education Jay M. Harris outlined a possible plan for a restructured exam period, which would last six days rather than the current eight.”

Yale Calendar Revisions
(received from John Meeske, Associate Dean and chair of Yale Calendar Committee, 11/10/10)

Reduction of the Reading Period from the current 7 day to 5 days.

Reduction of the exam period from 8 days to 6 days.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current CU F 2012 calendar</th>
<th>Proposed F 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin Wednesday, 8/22</td>
<td>Classes begin Tuesday, 8/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day (no classes Monday)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Break (no classes Monday and Tuesday, 10/8-9)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Break (no classes Wednesday 1:10 p.m. through Friday)</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break (no classes Wednesday through Friday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes end (Saturday, 12/1)</td>
<td>Classes end (Saturday, 12/8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Days (4 2/3 days; Saturday through Wednesday, 12/1-5)</td>
<td>Study Days (4 days; Saturday through Tuesday, 12/8-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams begin (Wednesday, 12/5, 7 p.m.)</td>
<td>Exams begin (Wednesday, 12/12, 9 a.m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday exams</td>
<td>Saturday exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study day (Sunday, 12/9)</td>
<td>Study day (Sunday, 12/16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams end (Friday, 12/14)</td>
<td>Exams end (Thursday, 12/20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total exam period:</strong> 9 1/3 days total (8 1/3 days of exams)</td>
<td><strong>Total exam period:</strong> 9 days (8 days of exams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instruction days:</strong> 67.5</td>
<td><strong>Instruction days:</strong> 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current CU S 2013 calendar</td>
<td>Proposed S 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes begin (Monday, 1/21)</td>
<td><strong>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes begin (Wednesday, 1/23)</td>
<td><strong>February break (no classes Monday and Tuesday,</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>2/18-19)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring break (9 days: Saturday, 3/16 to</td>
<td>Spring break (9 days: <strong>Saturday, 3/30 to Sunday,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, 3/24)</td>
<td><strong>4/7)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes end (Saturday, 5/4)</td>
<td>Classes end (<strong>Wednesday, 5/8)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Days (4 1/3 days: Saturday, 5/4 to</td>
<td>Study Days (<strong>4 days: Thursday 5/9 through Sunday,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 7 p.m., 5/8)</td>
<td><strong>May 12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams begin (Wednesday, 5/8, 7 p.m.)</td>
<td>Exams begin (<strong>Monday, 5/13, 9 a.m.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday exam (1 afternoon)</td>
<td>Saturday exams (1 afternoon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study day (Sunday, 5/12)</td>
<td>Study day (<strong>Friday, 5/17</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams end (Friday, 5/17)</td>
<td>Exams end (<strong>Tuesday, 5/21</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total exam period: 9 1/3 days</td>
<td>9 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Week (Saturday, 5/18 through</td>
<td>Senior “Week” (<strong>Wednesday, 5/22 through Saturday,</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, 5/26)</td>
<td><strong>5/25</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement (Sunday of Memorial Day</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weekend)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>70 days of instruction</td>
<td>69 days of instruction</td>
</tr>
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## Benchmark Tests for Spring 2012 Exam Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model/constraints</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>Existing+</th>
<th>Flex 1</th>
<th>Flex 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Conflicts</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-in-a-day</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Disruptions</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consec (am-pm, pm-eve)</td>
<td>1326</td>
<td>1157</td>
<td>1642</td>
<td>1272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average date/time</td>
<td>5/15/12 0:24</td>
<td>5/14/12 14:22</td>
<td>5/14/12 9:43</td>
<td>5/13/12 19:28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run time (mins)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feedback from Cornell Minds Matter

“We also enthusiastically endorse the added two-day break in February, as this will provide another recess allowing students to recharge and rejuvenate.

To make up for these two days, we suggest that two days are taken off Senior Week or one day taken off Senior Week and one day taken off Study Period.”