

Mtg. #22 03-04: **FC-04-047: Start Date of Spring Semester.** Reta Pikowsky, UI Registrar, presented the Council with some possible options for changing the start date of the Spring Semester. These options were generated partially in response to a BSU initiative to reconsider the state institutions' academic calendars. There exists the possibility that finals week can be considered as instructional days, which could open the door to a reduction to the current number of days devoted to instruction. Such changes might also "solve" the problem of spring classes starting at midweek. Councilor Gunter, Councilor Dockrey, and others spoke against the notion of reducing the number of instructional days; Dockrey said that ASUI was actually in favor of adding two more days to the current schedule. No action was taken by the Council.

Mtg# 6 04-05: Approval of Revised Academic Calendar and Final Exam Schedule, Fall/Spring 2005-06. The proposed revised calendar puts the university more in line with the WSU calendar. The revision was approved unanimously. Councilor Anderson asked why Veterans Day was not included among the official university holidays. Bailey suggested that this topic could be taken up at a future meeting.



October 1, 2004

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Bill Voxman, Secretary, Faculty Council

FROM: Reta Pikowsky, Registrar

RE: Revised Academic Calendar and Final Exam Schedules

Attached please find a revised academic calendar and revised final examination schedules for Fall 2005 and Spring 2006. We recently discovered some problems and errors with the academic calendar that was reviewed and approved in March 2003. The corrections and adjustments we made to the academic calendar cast the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 Final Examination schedules into a slightly new light and we have adjusted those as well.

The issues we identified include:

- The Registrar's Office made an assumption about how the planning calendars were developed in the past (there were no documented procedures) that resulted in fall and spring start and end dates that don't work very well.
 - For example, for the fall semester, we were working backward from Labor Day, not from the Christmas holiday. Since the date of the Labor Day holiday changes with the yearly calendar, the start dates and end dates of fall became very late on both ends. This creates problems with the final examination schedule and produces some odd configurations, including having them on a Saturday.
 - It is also important to maintain a reasonable break between the end of fall and the start of spring. We have looked once more at all the future years to make sure the time between fall and spring Semesters is the standard three and one-half weeks.
- In the year 2010-1011, some extra days made their way into the spring semester. We have counted all of the days again, carefully, to make sure we have the 160 required days accounted for without any additional days.
- The fall semester start date was a week different than that of WSU.

I apologize for the confusion and for taking up even more of Faculty's Council time to address these revisions.

Cc: Dwaine Hubbard, Registrar's Office



March 11, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bill Voxman, Faculty Secretary
FROM: Reta Pikowsky, Registrar
RE: Start Date of Spring Semester

The recent change to a Wednesday start date for the spring semester appears to have created some problems. Following are the problems, concerns, and questions that have been directed to me by various faculty and staff on and off-campus.

- The College of Law may wish to regain the two days we lost by starting on Wednesday instead of Monday. It might be possible to have a different start date for the College of Law, but we would need to be sure that we have examined all the possible issues related to one start date for the College of Law and for the rest of the University (financial aid, reporting enrollment to the Clearinghouse, availability of other university services, university housing, etc.). *The College of Law representative will speak to this issue at the meeting.*
- Our students registered in cross-listed courses that were taught at WSU, missed the first two days of class because we did not begin until Wednesday, when WSU started on Monday, as usual. WSU and UI try to coordinate calendars for these and other reasons.
- Could better information for the students enrolled in WSU/UI cross-listed courses solve the problem with WSU's and UI's start date being different in Spring?
- Whatever we do in regard to coordinating with WSU, we must remember that the commencement dates in May must be on different weekends.
- For classes that meet only on Monday, the MLK holiday in the second week means that these classes don't actually meet until the third week. Classes that meet on Tuesday, don't meet until the second week of the semester.

- Our courses in Idaho Falls are closely linked with ISU's schedule. Having a different start date for the UI creates confusion. Courses that are delivered compressed video from Idaho Falls are a problem for our students who would have to come back to campus two days early.
- BSU starts a week later in the spring than we do – we might inquire as to why that is the case. We might also inquire as to whether all state institutions live by the 160-day policy.
- Depending upon those answers, why don't we look at being on the same calendar as BSU and ISU?

The Idaho State Board of Education Governing Policies and Procedures manual states that "each semester indicated in the Official Calendar of an institution will consist of seventeen (17) weeks with at least fifteen (15) full weeks or seventy-five (75) instructional days of class work or its equivalent". Our Faculty-Staff Handbook states "Each academic year includes two 16-week semesters..... The Fall semester ends shortly before Christmas; the Fall and Spring semesters together must include at least 160 instructional days, including the final-examination period".

In reviewing the number of instructional days in the Fall 2003 (79 days) and the Spring 2004 (81 days) semesters, we note that there are exactly 160. So, according to our own parameters, there is no more leeway in the calendar; we are teaching the minimum number of instructional days allowed.

If the start date of Wednesday is deemed problematic, and we consider changing it back to Monday, one possible way "to give back" a day to the teaching faculty would be to institute a Friday holiday perhaps some time in April that would be a University holiday, no classes and no offices open. This would lead us to 79 days in the Fall and 82 days in the Spring. This might be a compromise that would not create any other problems.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information or assistance as the Faculty Council takes up this issue. Thanks.