

March 7, 2016

Academic Affairs Motion

The Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Council moves the adoption of the following academic calendar for 2018-2019. Because this calendar departs from the normal calendar – *specifically in starting the Spring Semester the week before the Martin Luther King holiday and ending that semester a week earlier* – it requires the recommendation, as an authorized variation, of the Chancellor and President, and the approval by the Board of Curators as specified in [Section 20.140\(B\)](#) of the UM Collected Rules and Regulations:

FALL SEMESTER 2018	DAY	DATE
Classwork begins @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	August 20
Labor Day Holiday (no classes)	Monday	September 03
Thanksgiving recess begins @ close of day*	Saturday	November 17
Classwork resumes @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	November 26
Classwork ends @ close of day*	Thursday	December 06
Reading Day	Friday	December 07
Final examinations begin	Monday	December 10
Fall semester closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	December 14
Commencement	Friday/Saturday	December 14 & 15
Grades Due	Tuesday	December 18
SPRING SEMESTER 2019	DAY	DATE
Classwork begins @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	January 14
Martin Luther King Holiday (no classes)	Monday	January 21
Spring Recess begins @ close of day*	Saturday	March 23
Classwork resumes @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	April 1
Classwork ends @ close of day*	Thursday	May 02
Reading Day	Friday	May 03
Final examinations begin	Monday	May 06
Spring semester closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	May 10
Commencement	Friday, Saturday, Sunday	May 10,11 &12
Grades Due	Tuesday	May 14

SUMMER SESSION 2019		
8-WEEK SESSION 2019	DAY	DATE
Classwork begins @ 7:30 a.m.	Monday	June 03
Independence Day recess (no classes)	Thursday	July 04
8-week session closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	July 26
Grades Due	Tuesday	July 30
FIRST 4-WEEK SESSION 2019	DAY	DATE
Classwork begins @ 7:30 a.m.	Monday	June 03
First 4-week session closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	June 28
SECOND 4-WEEK SESSION 2019	DAY	DATE
Classwork begins @ 7:30 a.m.	Monday	July 1
Independence Day recess (no classes)	Thursday	July 04
Second 4-week session closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	July 26

* Close of Day Includes End of Evening Classes

End of Motion.

* * * * *

What follows is material that may be of value in considering the motion. The first page following is a spreadsheet comparing existing, proposed, and projected calendars through the Spring of 2021. Following that are comments provided to and considered by the committee from various stakeholders who were given an opportunity to share their thoughts on the modification to the typical calendar. These included campus executives, undergraduate deans, program administrators, some faculty, staff, students, and student groups.

Proposed Alternative Spring Semester Start

		'15-'16 (Current)	'16-'17 (Firm)	'17-'18 (Firm)	Proposed '18-'19	Projected '19-'20	Projected '20-'21
FALL SEMESTER	DAY						
Classwork begins @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	August 24	August 22	August 21	August 20	August 19	August 24
Labor Day Holiday (no classes)	Monday	September 7	September 5	September 4	September 3	September 2	September 7
Thanksgiving recess begins @ close of day*	Saturday	November 21	November 19	November 18	November 17	November 23	November 21
Classwork resumes @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	November 30	November 28	November 27	November 26	December 2	November 30
Classwork ends @ close of day*	Thursday	December 10	December 8	December 7	December 06	December 5	December 10
Reading Day	Friday	December 11	December 9	December 8	December 07	December 6	December 11
Final examinations begin	Monday	December 14	December 12	December 11	December 10	December 9	December 14
Fall semester closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	December 18	December 16	December 15	December 14	December 13	December 18
Commencement	Fri, Sat	Dec 18 & 19	Dec 16 & 17	Dec 15 & 16	Dec 14 & 15	Dec 13 & 14	Dec 18 & 19
Grades Due	Tuesday	December 22	December 20	December 19	December 18	December 17	December 22
SPRING SEMESTER	DAY						
Classwork begins @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday				January 14	January 13	January 11
Martin Luther King Holiday (no classes)	Monday	January 18	January 16	January 15	January 21	January 20	January 18
Classes begin (or continue) @ 8:00 a.m.	Tuesday	January 19	January 17	January 16	(January 22)	(January 21)	(January 19)
Spring Recess begins @ close of day*	Saturday	March 26	March 25	March 24	March 23	March 21	March 27
Classwork resumes @ 8:00 a.m.	Monday	April 4	April 3	April 2	April 1	March 30	April 5
Classwork ends @ close of day*	Thursday	May 5	May 4	May 3	May 2	April 30	April 29
Reading Day	Friday	May 6	May 5	May 4	May 3	May 1	April 30
Final examinations begin	Monday	May 9	May 8	May 7	May 6	May 4	May 3
Spring semester closes @ 5:30 p.m.	Friday	May 13	May 12	May 11	May 10	May 8	May 7
Commencement	Fri, Sat, Sur	May 13 & 14	May 12,13,&14	May 11,12,&13	May 10,11,&12	May 8,9,&10	May 7,8,&9
Grades Due	Tuesday	May 17	May 16	May 15	May 14	May 12	May 11

* Close of Day Includes End of Evening Classes

Note: Alternative '18-'19 Spring (and thereafter) would start week before MLK Holiday
 ['19-'20 and '20-'21 are included for illustration and continue the change (but will not be formally approved at this time)]

March 7, 2016

Comments on Proposed Calendar Changes

Vice Provost for International Programs

In short, the majority of the Winter Break programs would be impacted to some extent – either by needing to adjust their end date, or by having students return to Columbia only a day or two prior to spring classes commencing...which could be a tough transition.

Below are the participation numbers we have for winter break programs, going back to 2012/13. I've included a breakdown both by the programs' administering office and the school/college of student's primary major. An A&S major could, for example, participate on a program managed by the College of Business. If you need anything else, just let me know.

Winter break study abroad participation, by administering office of program

	2012	2013	2014	2015
College of Ag, Food & Nat Resources	40	57	39	75
College of Business (including School of Accountancy)	115	113	148	121
College of Engineering	8	8		31
College of Human Environmental Sciences	17	32	21	11
International Center	45	76	38	41
Office of Service Learning			13	30
School of Journalism	34	31	29	29
Total	259	317	288	338

Winter break study abroad participation, by school/college of students' primary degree program

	2012	2013	2014	2015
College of Ag, Food & Nat Resources	40	64	36	73
College of Arts and Science	31	46	33	48
College of Business	84	86	119	107
College of Education	3	8	3	1
College of Engineering	9	12	2	25
College of Human Environmental Sciences	14			
Graduate School	1	1		
H S Truman School of Pub Affrs			3	1
Human Environmental Science		13	16	5
School of Health Professions	16	26	29	21
School of Journalism	40	33	29	34
School of Law	1	1		
School of Medicine			1	
School of Nursing	20	26	17	19
Non-degree		1		4
Total	259	317	288	338

Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies

Grad Studies certainly has no issues with such a change provided course offerings and timing with other campuses can be managed. There are several shared courses and programs across campuses.

Vice Chancellor Student Affairs

I think it is a great idea! Our break is too long. Students return to Columbia by January 10 because all their friends from home are heading back to their respective institutions and you are correct. They do miss out on internships because we end so late in May."

CAFNR Associate Dean

While I agree that ending the spring semester would be beneficial to students, unless the fall semester began a week earlier I don't see how we could manage the academic actions process in fewer days/weeks. Furthermore, fewer days/weeks between the semesters, especially after the holidays, would have a tremendous impact on our intersession study aboard programs and "scholars" programs.

Using the 2015-16 as an example....

Final grades were due by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, December 22nd and were distributed to academic units (colleges/schools) by 12 noon on December 23rd.

- In CAFNR, probation, suspension and ineligible to re-enroll notices were sent electronically by the evening of December 24th.
- Students who were suspended or ineligible to re-enroll were given until January 4, 2016 (5 business days) to submit an appeal.
- January 6th through the 15th (8 business days) follow-up face-to-face meetings were held with 41 of 67 students suspended or ineligible to re-enroll.
- Several of our intersession study aboard programs (New Zealand, Thailand, Indonesia) are for three weeks (departed December 28th and returned January 15th). Two week programs to these destinations would have an impact on the quality of the programs. This year we had 80 students participate in intersession study aboard programs.
- In addition, we conduct several "scholars" programs and industry tours during the intersession that could be impacted by a shortened intersession.

Thanks for giving us the opportunity to provide input.

A&S Assistant Dean

In addition to the shortened timeframe for processing actions and appeals, as well as clearing December grads, we also have a winter intersession study abroad trip and an international AB trip. Both trips typically return within a couple of days before the Spring semester starts, and I don't believe the Department of Health Sciences would be able to run that trip. We don't have any other intersession courses, though.

A&S Academic Advisor

If the time between semesters was shortened by one week, I think it would still take us the same amount of time to process initial academic actions and send notifications of dismissals. Most people who could help around the holidays take off to be with family and those that are usually in the office, are already the ones who help at that time. Assuming grades would be due on Tuesday December 18, 2018, probation and dismissal notifications would still be sent on Friday December 28. This would leave us with nine business days to review appeals before the start of the spring 2019 semester instead of 14 days. I'm not against this plan, but I anticipate we would get more appeals the first week of classes than we have in the past. My guess is that it would probably decrease the number of appeals that could be reviewed and accepted by A&S, therefore, more students would truly transfer to another school rather than transfer to our division.

On the positive side, other schools in Columbia already started the week before MU, so having similar start dates would be helpful to get students to transfer in time and not wait for their appeal to be reviewed at MU.

College of Business Associate Dean

We have a similar timeline to what Bryan describes with 50 of 95 students appealing their dismissal this past year. Our intersession study abroad programs had 123 students enrolled this year, which was below our typical 160-170 students. Our intersession programs are 16-17 days in length and should the spring semester begin earlier, the students who study abroad would only have the weekend before the spring semester started which could be tricky for students who are out of state. Let me know if you have any questions or need additional info. Thanks!

College of Education Associate Dean

I checked with those in the college of education. They support such a change in the calendar. However, we do not have as many academic actions or try to do travel abroad during the intersession.

A&S Faculty Member and Departmental DUS

I represent the poli sci department on the Arts and Science curriculum committee. Ted Tarkow brought this up in our meeting yesterday and encouraged us to give feedback. I don't speak for the committee, but I can tell you the discussion about this change was not in favor of it. I suspect you will find the same from our department. Cooper invited us to e-mail you directly, so you may hear from some of us. I can tell you that I, personally, do not favor this change. I get a lot of valuable work done over winter break. The fact that an extra week would be added to summer break would make little difference. The week comes at a critical time in January.

College of HES Faculty Member

I am 100% in favor of this change for all the reasons you mention.

A&S Assistant Dean

I think we would be able to accommodate the schedule (would need more people to commit to processing/entering actions), but students would have a very small window of appeal (or none) before having classes dropped.

I would also be concerned about bumping Winter Welcome up a week. If the change occurs, I could see Winter Welcome moved to the Thursday/Friday before classes begins or something a little later.

A&S Departmental Associate Chair

Off-hand, I like the idea of moving up the Spring semester one week.

A Member of the Registrar's Staff

I have one concern with the spring schedule. Our semester ends a week earlier than normal, so I am thinking this will put our commencement weekend as the same as Stephens and Columbia College. This year Columbia College's commencement is May 7 and Stephens is the same day. So, with the new calendar this would put all three institutions with ceremonies at the same time. We had this one time and we had upset parents because they could not find hotel rooms in Columbia. Just with MU's ceremony alone, all the hotels are booked and not to mention the restaurants and traffic in town that weekend.

A&S Professor

[I] oppose. The proposed calendar would recreate what I consider to be the main problem with fall semester: big break just before the end. If we start a week earlier, then the break should be

moved up to so that it is closer to the middle of the semester. [*Editorial comment: both the existing schedule and the proposed change would have the entire month of April between the end of Spring Break and the last day of classes. --- Art*]

A&S Program Coordinator

I sent out this note to my colleagues in [my department] and got back two comments, both opposed. The first was from a staff member who felt that the time between Fall and Winter semester is still helpful for completing administrative work from the previous semester, and that the break would be too short. The other comment, from a faculty, is copied and pasted below.

"I am not in favor simply because the summer break is already very long and many universities on the semester system start one to two weeks later than we currently do. Quarter systems go till mid-June. The argument that students miss out on internship opportunities seems anecdotal in light of that."

Personally, I would be opposed to making any change, unless that change is driven by significant demonstrated need, with a thorough look at the possible consequences of the change. As stated below, the argument for the change seems to be based entirely on anecdotal evidence.

Before making any changes, I would suggest doing a more thorough investigation, including a more broad survey of students, staff and faculty opinions on the issue than this email survey can get at.

A Member of the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Council

I see the benefits of moving the start date up a week. However, I also serve on the MU Council on International Initiatives and know the work that faculty and the International Center has put into creating more opportunities for study abroad, which has led to growth in the winter break abroad participation. Jim [Scott] mentions ... that over 25% of study abroad participation is over winter break, with 20+ different programs. The shorter winter study abroad programs tend to be a more affordable option for students than a full semester, and they are "less risky" than the full semester options for students who might be nervous about going abroad.

While I want to give students as much chance to land internships and make money in the summer months, our primary role is to be an educational institution. The international experience can have enormous learning benefits, and I don't want to see a reduction in these opportunities.

A&S Assistant Professor

I'm not sure if you wanted me to reply all or not. I can see the merit of having an extra week of summer for students. If, in fact, it puts them at a competitive advantage, that's a good reason to extend the summer. That said, I don't know of many schools that finish earlier than we do. Is

there any data on this? Schools on the quarter system end a full month later. Are there THAT MANY schools that end earlier that this makes a difference? For things like summer internships, there's a coordination problem among schools. If we are delayed compared to most schools, then we might consider moving the schedule. But, don't we need data on this issue? Has anyone collected academic year dates from other schools to verify the students' claim?

I bring all of this up as there are costs, maybe not to students but perhaps to faculty and staff. I for one like having a long winter break both to prepare for upcoming courses and also to travel for work. Having that extra week makes the winter break long enough to visit colleagues and get some real work done. Or just staying at home and having some real time to work on research. My bet is that faculty would support the schedule as is.

From a Member of Faculty Council Executive Committee

From my experience with setting the calendar (SO glad it's not my job), it will be the academic advising units who will be the most opposed to the change. Despite the "advances" of online students' systems, I know from my contacts in A&S that a lot of the work of graduation completion, grad checks, and probation/dismissal work is still done by hand. As far as probation and dismissal are concerned, there is an appeals committee that must meet before the semester begins, and given that there are faculty on that committee, I'm not sure how easy it would be to get them together to do that work a week earlier.

A Member of the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Council

If the calendar will be moved, my guess is that there will be questions why the university will be taking a day off for MKL day but not Presidents' day. With the current schedule, having MKL day off is not a break in classes. Maybe we should propose having Presidents' day off also

Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Council

Like the four components of the UM System, the following four (4) public Missouri universities start the Spring semester the day after the MLK observance: Lincoln University, Missouri Southern State University, Missouri Western State University, and Southeast Missouri State University. Unlike the UM System, the following five (5) universities start the Monday before the MLK observance: Harris-Stowe State University, Missouri State University, Northwest Missouri State University, Truman State University, University of Central Missouri.

Regarding private institutions: both Columbia College and Stephens College begin the Spring semester the week before the MLK observance. Interestingly, Washington University (St. Louis) begins classes the day after the MLK observance for the next two years (like MU), but has determined (and announced) that it will start the Spring 2019 semester the week before the MLK holiday as is proposed in the alternative 2018-2019 academic calendar being considered for MU.

Students: Hallie Thompson, Kenneth Bryant, Payton Head, Brenda Smith-Lezama, and email addresses MU OSL GPC, MU STUDENT LIFE GSA, MU OSL GPC PRESIDENT, MU OSL MSA PRESIDENT

No acknowledgment of email, much less a reaction or thoughts, from any of these students and student organizations. (Request for comment sent 2/22/16.)