

Whereas: The current academic calendar (e.g., change in start and end dates of semesters), was created without significant consultation with relevant stakeholders, and

Whereas: Anecdotally, many problems have surfaced with the new schedule including, but not limited to:

- Students who are taking pre-requisite winter session classes at other universities or community colleges have trouble registering for our classes, due to the early start of Spring semester. This reduces enrollments and income to the university. There is also not enough time to inform students that they have failed prerequisite courses and must re-take them.
- New wintersession scheduling conflicts with holidays. This causes breaks in course delivery for wintersession courses associated with the holidays that are not conducive to the flow of the courses. This is of particular concern due to the compact nature of delivery in the short Wintersession. It also appears to negatively impact the willingness of faculty to teach courses for a host of reasons, including the encroachment of the wintersession into carryover course activities associated with the Fall semester (e.g. grading papers, exams), and with courses preparation activities associated with Spring semester. In addition, student enrollment during wintersession appears to be reduced due to the schedule that interferes with “family time” for many during the holidays. This would be inconsistent with the goal of promoting graduation rates for CCSU students.
- Spring break comes at the end of the semester instead of in the middle when it might be more needed. In addition, it bisects Fall pre-registration.
- The earlier start for Spring semester (without clear justification) robs faculty of time for scholarship and course development activities.
- The earlier start for Spring semester has led to a back-up in the copy center where the staff size has recently been cut in half.
- The Thanksgiving break comes too near to the end of the Fall semester. Instead of acting as a pause in the semester, it disrupts the flow of instruction at the end when projects are being completed. Some classes have end of the semester presentations and activities that are shortened or interrupted by this late break.
- Administrative faculty members who have winter session duties (example: meeting with students who earned a low GPA in the Fall, to help them devise a plan to increase their GPA) have insufficient time to do this effectively, because of the early start of the Spring semester.

*[Note: If the Senate chooses to take action, there are at least 5 options: to approve (a) alone, (b) alone, (c) alone, (a) and (c), or (b) and (c). (a) and (b) should not both be approved.]*

#### Be It Resolved

- a. The Faculty Senate establish an *ad hoc* assessment committee of the faculty (not necessarily just senators) to conduct a formal program evaluation of the schedule changes and report their findings and recommendations to the Senate and the Administration.
- b. The Committee on Academic Standards is directed to conduct a formal program evaluation of the schedule changes and report their findings and recommendations to the Senate and the Administration.
- c. The Faculty Senate requests that the Secretary of the Senate send the attached letter to the Board of Regents. The letter shall also be sent to the President of the University and to the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Regents.

Proposed letter

Dear Board of Regents President Gray,

In 2010, the Board of Trustees for Connecticut State University approved a new academic calendar. In the past, Fall semester classes typically began the day after Labor Day, while Spring semester classes typically began the day after Martin Luther King Day. Under the new calendar, Fall classes and Spring classes both begin before the holidays. This new calendar was created without significant consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Over the last three years, it has become clear that the new academic calendar was not optimal. Many problems with the new calendar have been identified by faculty members, including but not limited to the following:

- Students who are taking pre-requisite winter session classes at other universities or community colleges have trouble registering for our classes, due to the early start of Spring semester. This reduces enrollments and income to our university. There is also not enough time to inform students that they have failed prerequisite courses and must re-take them.
- New winter session scheduling conflicts with holidays. This causes breaks in course delivery for winter session courses associated with the holidays that are not conducive to the flow of the courses. This is of particular concern due to the compact nature of delivery in the short winter session. It also appears to negatively impact the willingness of faculty to teach courses for a host of reasons, including the encroachment of the winter session into carryover course activities associated with the Fall semester (e.g. grading papers, exams), and with courses preparation activities associated with Spring semester. In addition, student enrollment during winter session appears to be reduced due to the schedule that interferes with “family time” for many during the holidays. This would be inconsistent with the goal of promoting graduation rates for CCSU students.
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- Administrative faculty members who have winter session duties (example: meeting with students who earned a low GPA in the Fall, to help them devise a plan to increase their GPA) have insufficient time to do this effectively, because of the early start of the Spring semester.

We are aware that, at a meeting on Friday, October 18, you agreed that faculty should have input into the construction of the academic calendar.

In view of the importance of the calendar, the CCSU Faculty Senate requests that, when a committee is formed to look at the issue of the academic calendar, such committee should include teaching faculty and administrative faculty.

Sincerely yours,

*(signed)*