

Report of the Academic Calendar Task Force

October 5, 2009

Task Force Membership:

Cameron Faustman, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Co-Chair

Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith, Office of the Registrar, Co-Chair

Bruce Cohen, Counseling Program for Intercollegiate Athletes

Joseph Comprone, Avery Point Camp

Duncan Craig, undergraduate student

Deborah Dancy, School of Fine Arts

Mary Anne Doyle, School of Education

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Andrea Hubbard, School of Pharmacy

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Carol Polifroni, School of Nursing

Gene Roberts, Facilities Management

Gene Salorio, School of Business, Stamford Campus

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Staff to the Task Force:

Pam Fischl, Office of the Registrar

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A Brief History of the Academic Calendar at the University of Connecticut

“Study the past if you would define the future.” – Confucius

The Connecticut Agricultural College changed from a quarter calendar to a semester calendar in the 1914-1915 academic year. First semester classes began on Tuesday, September 22. The Thanksgiving Break began on Wednesday and ran through Sunday. There was a Christmas Break running from December 24 through January 1. First semester classes resumed on January 2 and the semester ended on January 29. Second semester classes began on Tuesday, February 9. No classes were held on Washington’s Birthday and after noon on Memorial Day. There was no other break during the second semester. The second semester ended on June 6 and Commencement was held on Wednesday, June 16. No summer sessions were included in the calendar.

Aside from a two year hiatus, during the 1917-1918 and 1918-1919 academic years, and with various small adjustments, this basic calendar model was followed until the 1972-1973 academic year.

An Easter recess, lasting from Friday through Monday morning, was introduced in 1915-1916.

In 1917-1918 and 1918-1919 the academic year began in mid-October and ended in early May. Classes were not held on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day, and Washington’s Birthday, but those appear to have been the only breaks.

In 1919-1920 the Connecticut Agricultural College returned to the previous calendar model. Second semester exams for seniors ended at noon on June 5 and a week later for all other students. Commencement was held on Tuesday, June 15.

During the 1933-1934 academic year the “Easter recess” was replaced by a “Spring recess”, running from noon on Wednesday, March 28, through noon on Wednesday, April 4.

A formal summer session was added in 1937. Prior to that year, only a couple of Forestry and Civil Engineering classes met in the summer. The summer session lasted six weeks. In 1943, a second six-week summer session was added; in 1946, the session was eliminated. In 1960 the second summer session returned; both sessions ran for five weeks. In 1963 the summer sessions were extended to six weeks in length.

In the fall semester of 1964 “Conversion Days” appeared in the calendar: “The classes regularly scheduled for Friday, December 18, 1964, will meet on Monday, December 14, 1964” and “The classes regularly scheduled for Thursday, December 17, 1964, will meet on Tuesday, December 15, 1964.” The Conversion Days made up for the Thursday and Friday classes lost during the Thanksgiving Break.

In May 1966 the Senate revised the calendar for the 1966-1967 academic year after the Bulletin (Catalog) was printed, reducing the length of the break between semesters, from two weeks back to one week, allowing the 1967 spring semester to end earlier. This change was made at the request of the Student Government. In 1967-1968, the break between semesters was returned to two weeks. This was accomplished by moving the start of the fall semester up by a week.

The calendar changed significantly in the 1972-1973 academic year. The fall semester began on Wednesday, September 6, two days after Labor Day. There was a Wednesday through Sunday Thanksgiving recess. Fall semester classes ended at noon on Saturday, December 16. Exams ran from Monday, December 18, through

Saturday, December 23. Spring semester classes began on Monday, January 15. The last day of exams was Tuesday, May 8, and Commencement was held on Sunday, May 13.

Beginning in 1976-1977, a one or two weekday gap was introduced between the last day of classes and the beginning of final exams. (These days were first referred to as “Reading Days” in the 1993-1994 General Catalog.) This calendar model was followed until the 1993-1994 academic year, with the fall semester occasionally starting before Labor Day in years when that holiday fell on September 5, 6, or 7. In spring 1994 the gap between the end of final exams and Commencement was eliminated.

A one-day Fall Break, on Columbus Day, was introduced in fall 1996. Winter Intersession was also introduced in the 1996-1997 academic year.

The calendar changed significantly once again in 2003-2004, a model that is still in place. Fall semester classes began on the Monday before Labor Day. “Virtual Days”, originally known as “Conversion Days”, were eliminated. The one-day Fall Break was eliminated and the Thanksgiving Break was extended to the full week. The earlier start allowed the introduction of a December Commencement ceremony on the Sunday following the end of exams. The spring semester began on the Tuesday after the Mark Luther King Jr. holiday. The final exam period was reduced from eight days to six, with the last day a partial day. The weekday Reading Days were replaced by weekend Reading Days; semesters end on Fridays and exams begin on Mondays. A three week May Term was introduced following the end of the spring semester in early May.

In 2009-2010 the December Commencement ceremony was eliminated.

*Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith, University Registrar
September 2010*

I. Background

On February 20, 2009, the Senate Executive Committee charged the Academic Calendar Task Force (J. von Munkwitz-Smith and C. Faustman, Co-Chairs) with investigating the potential for adapting the academic calendar to better meet the needs of the University (see Appendix 1).

The Committee began its deliberations on March 24, 2009. There was overall consensus by task force members that the initial focus should be on pedagogical and related issues and that the mechanics of when to start/end would then evolve from these. These included:

- a. a consideration of the appropriate number of reading days
- b. a mid-semester break in the fall semester
- c. a consideration of the potential for improved revenues that might occur as a result of a longer winter break
- d. special program considerations (e.g., study abroad)

Operating assumptions/guidelines that initially guided the Task Force were:

- Each semester will have seventy days of classes, with the same number of Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.
- The Fall semester will end no later than December 23.
- Whenever possible, the Fall semester will begin after Labor Day.
- There will be a four day break over the Columbus Day weekend.
- There will be a break beginning Wednesday of Thanksgiving week.
- There will be a one week break in the middle of the Spring semester.
- The Spring semester will end before Memorial Day.
- There will be six days of exams, which could include a Sunday, each semester.
- There will be one or two non-weekend Reading Days each semester.
- There will be two Summer Sessions of five to six weeks in length.
- There will be a Winter Intersession of three to four weeks in length, which will begin the first weekday after New Year's Day.
- Commencement will occur in May on the weekend following the end of final exams; there will be not be a December Commencement Ceremony.
- One University Commencement would be desirable

Most, but not all, of these assumptions/guidelines were retained in the committees final recommendations (Table 2).

The Task Force met formally on 5 different occasions. In addition, task force members engaged the University community as indicated in Table 1. The members also received emails (Appendix 2) and were approached by colleagues informally about individual recommendations and preferences. The School of Nursing provided written input that is included in Appendix 3).

Table 1. Formal meetings between the Calendar Task Force and various constituencies.

Date	Meeting Group	Location	Committee member(s)	Appendix
4/6	Department Heads	Bishop Center	A. Hubbard; G. Solario	4
4/9	President Hogan	Senate Conf Room	All	-
4/14	UEI AVPs	CUE 134	S. Kremer, D. Dancy	5
4/16	Associate Deans	CUE 134	C.Faustman, A. Hubbard, C. Polifroni	-
4/29	Campus-wide community	Schenker 55	J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, A. Hubbard, G. Solario	6
4/30	Campus-wide community	Schenker 55	J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, C. Polifroni, J. Comprone	6
5/5	Dean’s Council	Bishop Center	C.Faustman, J. von Munkwitz-Smith	6
5/18	Enrollment Service Committee		J. von Munkwitz-Smith	-
Early May	Undergraduate community	Virtual (survey)	E. Jordan, H. Frank, J. Petriello	7
6/15	Regional Campuses	Teleconference	C. Faustman	6
9/24	School of Fine Arts Executive Committee	Art Building 222	J. von Munkwitz-Smith	-

II. Minutes

Minutes from the meetings of the Calendar Task Force are provided in Appendix 8.

III. Academic Calendars from other Institutions

The Task Force reviewed a large number of calendars from other institutions (Appendix 9). In several cases we followed up with telephone interviews with the Registrar or faculty members at these locations. We discovered that (1) no two calendars were alike, and (2) no institution considers their calendar to be ideal (in several cases we were told that the institutions were considering making changes to their calendars).

IV. Recommendations

A motivating factor for a re-consideration of the Academic Calendar was to potentially accommodate a single University-wide May Commencement activity. The Task Force discussed this issue early on and decided that regardless of the calendar developed out of this activity, that any of a number of Commencement formats could be accommodated. We did not consider it within our charge to determine what option should be adopted.

It became obvious to us that there was no calendar format that can accommodate every group's preferences. Constraints imposed by national holidays, practical considerations for student work schedules and the diverse requirements of the many majors offered by the University made this a very challenging task. The Task Force attempted to always consider what would be best for the educational mission of the University. Potential budget and energy-use implications of the calendar recommendations were considered. We also took student preferences, as indicated by the student survey responses, into account. Issues of whether or not students would attend class (e.g., on Mondays and Tuesdays of Thanksgiving week), personal travel preferences of faculty/staff, and potential conflicts with holidays and local school calendars were discussed as well, but did not weigh as heavily as other considerations in our recommendations.

After considering all of the input received, the Task Force arrived at consensus for the recommendations provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Academic Calendar Task Force Recommendations.

Recommendation	Comments
There should be no "Virtual Days".	The general consensus was that these should be avoided at all costs. A special challenge for clinical programs is presented by these; Regional Campuses indicated that their students, many of whom work, find these difficult to accommodate.
Incomplete weeks should be avoided, but may be necessary depending on other decisions.	Laboratory courses can find incomplete weeks challenging because of preparation logistics.
There will be two Reading Days.	A compelling reason for increasing the number of Reading Days was not presented; students indicated they would like more but only if it did not prolong the semester.
When possible, six days will be provided for exams, but if necessary five days will be acceptable.	This could require adjustment of the current "bunched finals" policy.
The number of classes during a semester should fall within a range of days rather than be driven by a specific number. It is recommended that a minimum of 65 class days and a maximum of 70 class days be an official range within which a calendar is developed.	While desirable, the goal of symmetry between years/semesters should not be rigorously adhered to if it causes other problems.
There will be flexibility in whether classes start before or after Labor Day.	In some years classes could start prior to Labor Day and in others they could start after. This is necessary to complete the fall semester in a desirable timeframe (see next recommendation). If the fall semester consisted of 65 class days, the semester could always start after Labor Day.
Fall semester exams will end no later than December 21.	Submission of final grades, time needed to determine probation/dismissal eligibility, out-of-state student travel considerations all factored in to this recommendation.
A two-day break in mid-October, preferably on Monday and Tuesday, will be implemented.	A mental health break for students, staff and faculty members.

Thanksgiving break will begin the Wednesday before the holiday.	A change from the current calendar. Considerable input noted that the current Thanksgiving break comes very late in the semester and makes it challenging for faculty, staff and students to return and become re-engaged with semester's end so close in time.
Winter Intersession will continue at three weeks in length.	No compelling reasons for a change were seen. Maintaining the current format will allow the spring semester to remain as-is and allow for the continuation of the current May Term, which generates revenue for the University.
The current mid-semester spring break format will be retained.	No compelling reasons for a change were seen.
There will be a May Term lasting three weeks and two summer sessions of six weeks each, but if necessary one summer session could last five weeks.	If the fall semester always starts after Labor Day, both summer sessions could always be six weeks in length.
Commencement should be held on a weekend immediately following the conclusion of final exams.	The Calendar Task Force takes no position on the question of a single Commencement ceremony versus school and college ceremonies. Having Commencement occur on a weekday was considered undesirable by the committee.

V. Sample Calendars

Sample calendars for 2009-2010 through 2020-2021 were prepared following the Task Force recommendations. These calendars include options for starting both before and after Labor Day (See Appendix 10).

APPENDIX 1

Charge to the Academic Calendar Task Force

Date February 20 2009
From: Senate Executive Committee
To Academic Calendar Task Force

President Hogan has asked the SEC to review the academic calendar to see if it could be adapted to better meet the needs of the university. The issues raised by President Hogan are as follows:

It would be preferable to start the academic year after Labor Day.

He would like to offer a longer and more comprehensive Winter Session.

A longer Winter Session would push back the start of the Spring Semester -- perhaps until very late January. A later ending Spring Semester would improve the chances for better weather for a large outdoor commencement ceremony at Rentschler field in Hartford.

In addition to these concerns raised by the President, you are requested to consider the following:

Both semesters currently include minimal reading days and a compressed exam schedule. This is particularly an issue in the Spring, when exams for undergraduates overlap with Graduate Commencement.

There are particular problems associated with the current Fall Semester calendar. These include the early Labor Day holiday, the long stretch without a break between that holiday and Thanksgiving, and a short period of classes before final exams after a long Thanksgiving break, which makes re-engagement of students problematic.

There are particular difficulties for laboratory classes when breaks are shorter than a week because of the transition from one lab set up to another.

We suggest that you begin by reviewing the well-documented deliberations associated with the previous consideration of the calendar in the early part of this decade. While you should determine how much time is needed to fully consider these issues, we anticipate your recommendations about the academic calendar coming back to the SEC for consideration by the Senate at some point in the fall 2009 semester.

APPENDIX 2

A Summary of Calendar Suggestions Received via Email

- Have the University's academic calendar match that of the Mansfield Public Schools.
- Have the same number of Monday class days in the semester as other class days.
- Shorten the semester to twelve weeks of classes and extend class meetings to make up for the lost time.
- Start the Fall semester after Labor Day.
- Do not start after Labor Day.
- Start the Fall semester early in August and end before Thanksgiving.
- Add a mid-semester break before Thanksgiving week.
- Do not add a mid-semester break before Thanksgiving week.
- Shorten the Thanksgiving Break.
- Do not shorten the Thanksgiving Break.
- Give students more time to study before final exams.
- Add weekday Reading Days.
- Intersperse Reading Days in finals week.
- Do not add Reading Days.
- Add an exam day to finals week.
- Shorten the break between the Fall and Spring semesters.
- Extend the Winter Intersession to five or six weeks.
- Don't lengthen Winter Intersession.
- Move Spring Break later in the semester.
- Move Commencement away from Mother's Day.
- Do not have the Graduate Commencement Ceremony at the same time as final exams.
- Do not end the Spring semester any later than it currently ends.
- Summer Sessions should always be six weeks in length.

In many cases we received the same suggestion from multiple people.

APPENDIX 3

University of Connecticut Notes from the School of Nursing March 30, 2009

Calendar Considerations were discussed at the faculty meeting. A summary is below:

1. The State Board of Examiners for Nursing regulations for program approval state the semester must be the equivalent of a fifteen week semester. However, only four are required (by statute for a nursing programs) so if we have four years of shorter semesters, cumulatively, it is ok.
2. Few supported the university wide commencement UNLESS held on campus; those in favor supported it as long as the SON continued to hold its annual pinning and reception.
3. Few supported commencement activities on Memorial Day weekend; ALL supported commencement on a weekday.
4. NO ONE supported virtual days due to the havoc in schedules with clinical sites who do not subscribe to the virtual day concept. When a day becomes something other than it is, two groups of nursing majors miss clinical so the impact is great.
5. ALL supported having fewer days of one type in a semester than another as long as it is known in advance; therefore, fewer Mondays as an example are not an issue.
6. ALL supported a four day hiatus prior to the eight week mark in the semester regardless of what weekend that is...a Friday/Monday or Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday combination.
7. The group was split as to the efficacy of the full week at Thanksgiving.
8. All supported two two day blocks of reading days...two prior to the first three days of exams and then two prior to the next three days. It did not matter whether it was a weekend or not.
9. The majority (34) like starting after Labor Day even if it meant fewer days of one type during the semester . No one supported holding classes on Labor Day.
10. Majority supported ending by December 20th to foster holiday travel.
11. A longer winter break was received with split opinions...still too short to get a new job BUT will support online courses better which is good.
12. All wished us luck!

APPENDIX 4

Notes from meeting with the University department heads April 6, 2009

Attending: Andrea Hubbard, Eugene Salorio, Carol Polifroni

Hubbard and Salorio attended as task force representatives to advise department heads of Academic Calendar task force and solicit feedback on issues and concerns. A copy of the "Calendar Considerations" information distributed at first task force meeting was emailed to department heads prior to the meeting and additional copies were provided at the department heads meeting.

Major issues and concerns expressed by department heads as follows:

Starting fall semester after Labor Day & end later in December

Preference seemed to run in opposite direction: better to start before Labor Day and end earlier in December
Class on Labor Day?

Mixed response: "Students just won't show up"

Having commencement at end of May

Students appreciate early finish to Spring semester

Summer jobs

Other programs

Some professional societies have their annual meetings in mid to late May: later end to spring semester would make it more difficult to attend these

Makes it impossible for some departments to do their May term study abroad programs

Ecology and Natural Resources has a program every year to South Africa in May, and this is only feasible time of the year

Conflicts with getting annual reports in (perhaps more with reviewing them, since these are department heads?) as well as performance evaluations and merit recommendations

Consider ending classes early in May and having Commencement at the end of May

Very little support for commencement at Rentschler Field

What happens if it rains?

Will take forever to do one ceremony for entire university (hooding PhDs)

Sentiment expressed that breaking graduation up into separate ceremonies by school has worked well

Storrs campus is the students' home, the location they identify with - commencement should be here

Need to bring parents to campus

Various departments have honors and awards ceremonies on that day:

Now use on-campus facilities

where will they have them if commencement is at Rentschler?

Missed lab days

Makes life difficult

Question was raised about how these departments now handle snow days?

Suggests methods exist to balance out missed days

Virtual days

No great enthusiasm for them but no significant opposition

Seemed to be regarded as reasonable solution to missing class days (e.g., bunching of holidays on Mondays)

Several speakers noted from personal experience that these had worked well at UCONN in the past and also at other universities

May solve the problem of missed labs on Mondays or classes that run Mon Wed Fri (never seem to catch up after missing Mon)

Thanksgiving holiday

Seemed to be some preference for maintaining full week

In terms of tradeoff, better to start semester earlier before Labor Day) than to run until Dec. 23

Wednesday before Thanksgiving is heaviest travel day of the year

Not wise to have students traveling on that day

Many students will just skip class that day

In fact, many will skip class on Tuesday as well

Students will angle for Tuesday-Thursday class schedules since it will in effect mean one less week of class

One week break earlier in Fall semester?

Not much enthusiasm

Holiday over Columbus Day

Indifference

Longer January intersession

Doubt expressed that longer January term, in conjunction with eliminating May term, would lead to significantly" improved revenue opportunities in January"

"Who wants to be here in January?"

Later start to and end of Spring semester will mean moving Spring weekend back

moving Spring weekend earlier in the year was major objective-accomplishment of last calendar revision

Reading days

Indifference: "Never heard from any students about this"

The Senate "owns" the calendar and thus any changes must be approved by that body.

APPENDIX 5

Notes from Meeting with UEI Group 4/14

Questions are raised over changing the academic calendar. Feelings were that it should be driven by pedagogy and creative teaching practice. Concerns reflected a general view and open discussion of changing the university's academic model of teaching, reviewing what works and being careful and thoughtful about changes. Reviewing the academic calendar might serve as a broader review of the present structure of academic learning at UONN and how it is measured. A broader study of top 20 public institutions, not Harvard or Yale, for calendar/academic models is suggested.

Changing the calendar is a separate concern from the single large graduation issue.

Change to the calendar should be for academic reasons, pedagogically driven.

Debate and discussion over the merits of the 13 or 14 week semester. Many feel our students benefit from 14 weeks, and comparisons should be made with more suitable peer/comparable institutions.

Some debate and discussion about the number and length of reading days before final exams-no clear consensus. Students seem to have voiced wanting and needing more.

Appears we are changing the calendar back to what we had before the current change-which was a lengthy process.

Suggestions are made in support of a short break of time between the end of finals and graduation.

There was general sentiment expressed that Thanksgiving break was perhaps too long.

Do we need a standard number of classes and final exams-can there be flexibility within our current system.

Can we move to encourage five classes instead of four, with a change in credit hours?

Support for longer Winter Break with more emphasis on study abroad programs, and other academic study program here and at other institutions.

Longer winter break also supports some academic research programs and faculty.

Support for the semester ending early.

Students can begin employment opportunities sooner.

Provides ample time to preparation of other UG centered programs for the summer, such as ACES and Orientation.

There was a general lack of support and enthusiasm for one large commencement. Cited concerns:

Students want to be connected to the personal graduation experience.

Parents do like the campus experience.

Lack of interest and support for graduation at a site other than campus.

Concern over weather issues.

APPENDIX 6

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Notes from Presentations to the University Community, Dean's Council, Regional Campuses J. von Munkwitz-Smith and C. Faustman

April 29, 2009 – University Community Meeting #1

- 9 non-committee members in attendance
- Major comments
 - A little time is needed between final exams and commencement
 - Incomplete weeks present challenges for laboratory classes
 - For commencement decision, consider what is best in the student's judgement
 - An extra reading day would be beneficial
 - Consider starting 2 wks prior to Labor Day

April 30, 2009 – University Community Meeting #2

- 3 non-committee members in attendance
- Major comment
 - Incomplete weeks present challenges for laboratory classes

May 5, 2009 – Dean's Council Meeting

- Major comment
 - Dean Woods noted that performances were “cut back” with the implementation of the current calendar (due to shortened Spr term).
 - Should the University have a single calendar for all campuses/schools? University Senate controls some calendars but not others (no real support for single calendar).

June 15, 2009 – Teleconference with Regional Campuses

- All campuses participated; the number of faculty staff ranged from 3 to 12+ per campus
- General consensus that “Virtual Days” are not desirable
 - In general, Regional campuses do not have Friday classes (Htfd has some labs) and many students work on Fridays
 - Beware of effect on Adjuncts that teach at multiple schools/colleges where virtual days could lead to conflicts in their work schedules
- Be sure to consider Community College calendars since many UConn students also take CC courses concurrently.
- Single commencement
 - Stamford rep1 was interested in a single University Commencement (all locations would be “off-campus” for their students). A second Stamford rep noted that several of their students currently travel to Storrs for commencement and are happy to do so.

- Avery Point, Torrington and Hartford generally indicated that their students currently attend an on-campus (i.e., at regional campus) celebration that is very personal. They were less enthusiastic about a single University Commencement.
- Waterbury suggested that the Co-Ops be contacted at each regional campus to determine how many students from regionals currently/actually participate in Storrs ceremonies.
- Noted that the current fall calendar is good because it only has 1 incomplete week (relevant to lab courses) and any other proposal (e.g., mid-semester break; classes during Thanksgiving wk) would increase the number of these.
- More reading days would be beneficial
- Academic considerations should be primary in any decision making
- Try to end by December 20th in the fall semester to permit sufficient grading time prior to Xmas
- Summer intersession should be 6 wks per session not 5 wks
- If a longer January intersession is an objective,
 - please consider the impact of weather issues at the regional campuses (i.e., commuters)
 - will we lose non-UConn students that currently take courses with us
 - consider complementing with more on-line offerings
- Q: Summer session #2 currently ends quite late. Do we lose non-UConn students because of this?

APPENDIX 7

Results of the Calendar Survey Distributed to Undergraduate Students in May 2009

1. * Having the Fall semester start before Labor Day would have an adverse effect on my summer employment prospects and earnings.

Yes	534	30.76%
No	885	50.98%
Unsure	317	18.26%

2. * I would be willing to have classes on Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week in order to have a two-day break in October.

Yes	425	24.48%
No	1226	70.62%
Unsure	85	4.90%

3. * I would be willing to have classes on Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week in order to have two weekday reading days prior to final exams in December.

Yes	554	31.91%
No	1038	59.79%
Unsure	144	8.29%

4. * Currently graduation in May is held on a weekend in Storrs where multiple ceremonies are conducted by the different schools and colleges. As an alternative, a single combined graduation could be held at Rentschler Field in East Hartford which is the only venue sufficiently large to accommodate this option. Advantages of this would include a higher concentration of area restaurants and hotels, the potential to attract a more prominent graduation speaker, and better publicity for the University.

I would prefer retaining the current graduation format in Storrs	720	41.47%
I would prefer a combined graduation ceremony at Rentschler Field in East Hartford	607	34.97%
No preference	409	23.56%

5. * A weekday graduation ceremony in May would be difficult for me and my family to attend.

Yes	1038	59.86%
No	420	24.22%
Unsure	276	15.92%

6. * Currently Mother's Day falls on the second Sunday in May. I would be in favor of scheduling the graduation ceremony one week later to avoid coinciding with Mother's Day.

Yes	515	29.67%
No	879	50.63%
Unsure	342	19.70%

7. * Would a graduation ceremony on Memorial Day weekend be acceptable to you and your family?

Yes	562	32.37%
No	859	49.48%
Unsure	315	18.15%

8. * Currently the Spring Semester begins the third Tuesday in January. I would be in favor of starting the semester...

Earlier	424	24.42%
Later	141	8.12%
As it is now	1171	67.45%

9. * Having the Fall semester end later in December would have the advantage of more reading days on week days prior to final exams and a mid-semester break. What would be the latest date for the end of final exams that you would be willing to accept in order to achieve these advantages?

Dec. 19	1082	62.33%
Dec. 20	296	17.05%
Dec. 21	173	9.97%
Dec. 22	139	8.01%
Dec. 23	25	1.44%
Dec. 24	21	1.21%

10. * Having the Spring semester end later in May would have the advantage of more reading days on week days prior to final exams and the potential for warmer weather for graduation. What would be the latest date for the end of final exams that you would be willing to accept in order to achieve these advantages?

End of the 1st week in May	818	47.15%
End of the 2nd week in May	649	37.41%
End of the 3rd week in May	209	12.05%
End of the 4th week in May	59	3.40%

11. * I would be interested in a larger selection of classes during the January intercession, which would require an extended January break along with a later ending of the Spring semester in May.

Yes	313	18.03%
No	1106	63.71%
Unsure	317	18.26%

Total Responses – 1736

APPENDIX 8

Minutes of the Academic Calendar Task Force Meetings

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Minutes

March 24, 2009

Present: J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, B. Cohen, J. Comprone, D. Dancy, M. Doyle, H. Frank, A. Hubbard, E. Jordan, S. Kremer, J. Petriello, C. Polifroni, G. Roberts, G. Salorio, L. Teal

1. Introductions were made.
2. The charge to the Task Force was reviewed. It was suggested that the committee meet with President Hogan to understand his specific goals for a reconsideration of the university calendar. Some members felt that the option to make no changes to the present calendar should be strongly considered; some members felt that the fall semester calendar was problematic.
3. Timeline. Input will be collected through spring '09 and into the summer; proposal(s) will be developed through the summer; the proposal(s) will be shared with the University Community to obtain feedback in early fall '09. The goal is to have something delivered to the SEC by early November '09.
It was suggested that some coordination with the medical and dental school calendars could be advantageous. This will be communicated to the SEC for consideration.
4. There was discussion about how the committee will reach a decision that will then be communicated to the SEC. An attempt will be made to reach consensus.
5. C. Faustman will ask for a meeting of committee members with the President to occur ASAP.
6. It was noted that Nursing requires a 15 week semester (including finals week) as per legislative mandate.
7. The committee felt that "one University Commencement" should be added to the list of operating assumptions.
8. There was overall consensus that the committee should focus on pedagogical and related issues that require a consideration of the calendar and that the mechanics of when to start/end should then evolve from these issues. These would include:
 - a. a consideration of the appropriate number of reading days
 - b. a mid-semester break in the fall semester
 - c. a consideration of the potential for improved revenues that might occur as a result
 - d. special program considerations (e.g., study abroad)
9. The following outreach efforts will be undertaken by committee members on the indicated dates/locations.

Date Meeting	Group	Location	Committee member(s)
4/6	Department Heads	1:15pm Bishop	A. Hubbard; G. Solario
4/14	UEI AVPs	8:30am CUE 134	S. Kremer, D. Dancy
4/16	Associate Deans	9:00am CUE 134	C.Faustman, A. Hubbard, C. Polifroni
4/29	Campus-wide community	3-5pm Schenker 55	J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, A. Hubbard, G. Solario
4/30	Campus-wide community	3-5pm Schenker 55	J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, C. Polifroni, J. Comprone

TBD	Undergraduate community	Virtual	E. Jordan, H. Frank, J. Petriello
TBD	Graduate Senate		J. Petriello

The next Task Force Meeting is April 24th , Senate Conference Room

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Minutes

April 9, 2009

Members present: J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, B. Cohen, D. Dancy, M. Doyle, H. Frank, A. Hubbard, E. Jordan, C. Mahnoey, J. Petriello, C. Polifroni, G. Roberts, G. Salorio, L. Teal

Guest: President Hogan

1. Introductions were made.

2. President Hogan explained that his primary goal for investigating a calendar change is to have one commencement in late May. President Hogan feels one commencement is desirable for the following reasons :

- a. Cost savings—it is expensive to have multiple ceremonies and celebrations
- b. College of Liberal Arts & Sciences is put at significant disadvantage because they have to hold more than one ceremony
- c. Holding the event at Rentschler Field is a positive gesture toward the city of Hartford where there would be more choice of restaurants and hotels for students and their families
- d. Commencement will become a university event, rather than a school/college event (does not preclude celebrations in schools/colleges)
- e. One commencement will have more of an impact, worthy of national attention

3. Potential challenges:

- a. On years Labor Day falls on September 7 it will be difficult to schedule a 14 week semester, let alone the 15 weeks necessary for Nursing, as well as include Thanksgiving break and reading days without postponing exams until after winter break.
- b. A late May graduation doesn't guarantee good weather
- c. Length of time it will take to award degrees during one ceremony
- d. Concerns students will leave Storrs and not return for event

4. Questions to consider:

- a. Is a single commencement a top priority for UConn?
- b. Is a mid-week commencement possible?
- c. Is holding commencement on Memorial Weekend possible?
- d. Should UConn shorten Thanksgiving break?
- e. Do other institutions give fall exams after winter break?
- f. How will students feel about having ceremony somewhere other than home campus?
- g. How will parents feel?
- h. Will faculty attend ceremony in East Hartford?

Next meeting April 24 at 2:30 p.m. in Senate Conference Room

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Minutes

April 24th, 2009

Present: Eric Jordan, Gene Salorio, Bruce Cohen, Jessica Petriello, Andrea Hubbard, Cameron Faustman, Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith, Steve Kremer, Joe Comprone

1. Observations to date

- No one is in favor of a Renschler Field Commencement activity.
- Few if any in favor of Memorial Day Weekend timing.
- Lots of students in favor of adding 1 or more reading days (non-weekend).
- A longer January intersession can be accommodated by allowing students to return and live in their dorms.
- Splitting the reading days was suggested
- A mid-fall semester break is seen to be a worthwhile consideration/hypothesis to test (relative to helping students gain a break).

2. Survey of Students

- The survey was reviewed by the committee.
- It will be communicated to students on Monday or Tuesday of this week.

3. Upcoming university forums are scheduled for 4/29 or 4/30 from 3-5pm in Shenker 55.

4. Jeff is working to obtain calendars for additional colleges/universities. The committee reviewed the spreadsheet data gathered to date.

5. It is anticipated that the committee will meet 1-2x over the summer to discuss materials gathered through May.

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Minutes

June 19, 2009

Members present: J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, B. Cohen, M. Doyle, H. Frank, A. Hubbard, S. Kremer, J. Petriello, C. Polifroni

1. Harry Frank and Jessica Petriello shared findings of a survey administered to 1736 undergraduate students. Committee members discussed various findings and possible implications. Survey and results attached.

2. Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith discussed comparisons of academic calendars from peer institutions. Harry Frank will contact faculty at UMass regarding laboratory scheduling and Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith will contact Registrars from other institutions to discuss how they handle:

- a. Asymmetry between number of weeks and days from fall to spring semesters
- b. Broken weeks
- c. Snow days

3. Cameron Faustman reported on four presentations committee members gave to the university community. See attached summary.

4. The Committee discussed other groups that should be engaged in the process including the possibility of reaching out to Jeff Hathaway from Athletics.

Additionally, Jessica Petriello reported that some graduate students at a recent Graduate Student Senate meeting shared that they are concerned about:

- a. Reading days and the way they impact their students
- b. The limited amount of time they have to submit grades for their students as they completing their own coursework and exams.

Future Items:

1. Steve Kremer reported that Tom Callahan has staff working on an environmental study examining the ways changes in the academic calendar might impact water use and energy costs. Findings from this study will be shared and discussed at a future meeting.
2. The committee should strive to identify the key pedagogical issues associated with changes in the academic calendar related to:
 - a. Reading days
 - b. Impact on lab schedules
 - c. Length of Thanksgiving break

The next meeting will be held on July 23, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the Senate Conference Room. The main agenda topics will be revisiting of the operating principles and first draft thoughts of what our recommendations should be.

Senate Academic Calendar Task Force

Minutes

July 23, 2009

Members present: J. von Munkwitz-Smith, C. Faustman, D. Dancy, H. Frank, A. Hubbard, C. Polifroni, G. Roberts, G. Salorio, L. Teal

Members in attendance discussed extensively the operating principles related to possible calendar revision and reached consensus for the following recommendations:

1. There should be no “virtual days”, but may be necessary depending on other decisions
2. Incomplete weeks should be avoided but may be necessary depending on other decisions.
3. There will be 2 Reading Days; a compelling reason for increasing the number of these has not been presented.
4. When possible, 6 days will be provided for exams, but if necessary 5 days will be acceptable, although this could require adjustment of the current “bunched finals” policy.
5. The number of classes during a semester should fall within a range of days rather than be driven by a specific number. While desirable, the goal of symmetry between years/semesters should not be rigorously adhered to if it causes other problems. It is recommended that a minimum of 65 class days and a maximum of 70 class days be an official range within which a calendar is developed.
6. There will be flexibility in whether classes start before or after Labor Day.
7. Fall semester exams will end no later than December 21.
8. A 2 day break in mid-October, preferably on Monday and Tuesday, will be implemented.
9. Thanksgiving break will begin the Wednesday before the holiday.
10. The current mid-semester spring break format will be retained.
11. Winter Intersession will be 3 weeks in length.
12. There will be 2 summer sessions of 6 weeks each, but if necessary one session could last 5 weeks.
13. No classes will be held on Labor Day or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
14. Commencement should be held on a weekend immediately following the conclusion of final exams. The Calendar Task Force takes no position on the question of a single Commencement ceremony versus school and college ceremonies.

Action items:

1. Jeff and Cameron will create a number of hypothetical calendars.
2. Jeff and Cameron will meet with the Senate Executive Committee.

The next meeting will be held just before the start of fall classes, with the location, date, and time of the meeting to follow. <Note: Following the meeting with the Senate Executive Committee, it was decided that no further meetings of the task force were necessary.>