

Background on Proposed Winter Intercession

The goals of this effort is to create space for a viable Winter Intercession, which will provide the following:

- It will allow students an additional term in which to complete coursework in the calendar year.
- It will allow students in courses with longer prerequisite sequences, such as in some STEM areas, the ability to complete these sequences in a shorter time.
- It will result in greater scheduling flexibility in some areas, alleviating bottlenecks in student progression.

To be clear, this discussion is focused on a Winter Intercession that:

- Is in most ways, equivalent to the summer term, in terms of faculty load, etc. This will be an opt-in term for faculty.
- Is scheduled with Spring terms in the same way that Summer is scheduled with Fall.

To name just a few of the considerations that guided the development of these proposals, the following were considered:

- We only have 52 weeks of the year.
- Financial Aid, A&R, and MIS need at least one week after each term to do end of term processing (for a total of 4 weeks in this scenario).
- Generally, the math breaks down as:
 - 16 Weeks Fall
 - 16 Weeks Spring
 - 8 Weeks Summer
 - 6 Weeks Winter Intercession
 - 1 Week Spring Recess
 - 1 Week Winter Recess
 - 4 Weeks for End of Term Processing
- We are trying to avoid finals week on holiday weeks (hence, Proposal 1b).
- We are trying to avoid, to the extent we can, the holiday weeks being massively disruptive to instruction.
- We are trying to minimize the difference between our current practice and this new schedule, although there will obviously be some disruption.

- We know that there may be additional difficulties by special programs, such as Nursing or Athletics, which may need further modifications or special exceptions.
- We acknowledge that there will be some difficulty aligning with K-12, but we also know that this alignment is already problematic due to a variety of external factors.
- Details of the number of days of instruction, impact of holidays, etc, still need some further vetting with schedule office, although these have been given a preliminary review.

A few notes on the three proposals:

Proposal 1:

This proposal is more similar to our current pattern, so that is a plus. It shifts the Fall and Spring terms each a small amount to allow 8 weeks between them (6 weeks of instruction, Winter Recess, and 1 week of processing). Two caveats to this proposal are that Finals week would start mid-week the week before TG, and run up to TG, and there is a 1-week gap in instruction for the Winter Recess.

Proposal 1b:

Very similar to Proposal 1, but with entire calendar shifted 1 week earlier to avoid finals week during Thanksgiving Week. Caveat is that Winter Intersession is split into 4 weeks and 2 weeks by Winter Recess.

Proposal 2:

This proposal shifts Spring term further (and Fall slightly earlier) to place a Winter Intersession immediately after Winter Recess. This allows for 6 weeks of instruction without a 1 week interruption. Caveats: Bigger impact on Spring term placement, and bigger shift from current schedule.