

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**of the**  
**ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL**  
**concerning**  
**PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES**  
**FOR COMPOSING ACADEMIC CALENDARS**

**Presented at the**  
**764<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate**  
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## **BACKGROUND**

**In May 1982, the Faculty Senate adopted a set of procedural recommendations for preparing academic calendars and a statement of principles that should guide that preparation as Senate Document Number 82-065. At the time, developing calendars was the responsibility of the Space and Calendar Committee, and involved setting the dates for an entirely face-to-face curriculum and an in-person or by-mail registration system. Later that Committee, now known as “the Calendar Subcommittee,” became a subcommittee of the Academic Matters Council, where it remains today under the current Faculty Senate bylaws.**

**Many developments in scheduling, including adoption of computerized online registration systems, development of wholly on-line courses, expanded use of technology to create “blended courses” consisting of classroom and online components, and addition of an array of online programs enrolling students from around the nation and the world to the university’s academic offering have created new conditions that need to be considered during formulation of the academic calendar. To address the current conditions, the Calendar Subcommittee recommends adoption of these procedural recommendations and calendar composition principles to be implemented by the Calendar Subcommittee. These replace the recommendations and principles laid out in Senate Document Number 82-065.**

## **PRINCIPLES FOR COMPOSING ACADEMIC CALENDARS**

**The order of these principles reflects their sequential application to the making of each year’s calendar. The Calendar Subcommittee will make every effort to apply them in this order each year.**

- 1. There should be provision for sufficient class meetings or other coursework times over the course of a term to meet the Carnegie Commission definition of an academic unit sufficient to qualify for the number of credits the course carries.**
- 2. When classes are not held on a particular day due to a holiday, balance should be restored no later than two weeks following the holiday. Balance is restored when consecutive days of a later week are the same nth session of a class meeting once a week.**
- 3. The fall and spring semester Final Examination periods should consist of a minimum of five days.**
- 4. A space of at least one reading day should exist between the last day of classes and the first day of final examinations.**
- 5. The fall semester Final Examination period should not end later than December 23.**
- 6. At least 15 days after January 2 shall be allocated to intersession.**
- 7. Spring semester classes must begin before the end of January.**
- 8. Commencement should occur before the Memorial Day weekend.**
- 9. Summer Sessions should begin at least one week after commencement and no later than June 4, allow for a July 4 holiday, and end at least ten days before the beginning of the fall semester.**

10. **Summer Sessions shall follow either a CPE (Continuing and Professional Education) calendar providing for two 6-week CPE sessions or a University calendar providing for one continuous 13-week session.**
11. **The Calendar Subcommittee shall coordinate calendars to accommodate the agreement for cross-registration between the Five Colleges.**

#### **PROCEDURAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The preparation of a calendar involves a time-consuming balancing of multiple considerations. Faculty members having proposals for modification of the academic calendar should submit them to the Calendar Subcommittee at the beginning of the academic year so that they may be considered together with the overall setting of the calendar.**

**Calendars proposed by the Calendar Subcommittee become official upon approval by the Faculty Senate.**

**The Calendar Subcommittee, acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate, shall have the authority to approve “UMass Global Calendars” providing for variations on the spring and fall semester calendars for courses offered in conjunction with Shorelight in international locations where the local holiday schedule differs significantly from the holiday schedule prevailing in the USA. It shall assure that such variations provide an identical amount of class or other coursework time as the University Academic Calendar.**

**MOTION: That the Faculty Senate approve the Principles and Procedures for Composing Academic Calendars, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 17-030.**  
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