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1998-1999 Academic Calendar

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Approved by the Senate: 10/20/1997

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1998-1999 Academic Calendar

Dr. Carter described the calendar, including the options for the Fall semester considered by the Calendar Committee with input from faculty, staff and students: no break, a mini-Fall Break (Thursday-Friday or Monday-Tuesday), or an extended Thanksgiving break.

The Committee's vote was as follows:

4 for no break,

3 for the short Fall break, and

8 for the long Thanksgiving break.

Mr. Clint Murphy (SGA VPAA) argued that the SGA had voted unanimously to support a mini-break in October and that a fourteen week session without a break would result in burnt out students and faculty.

Mr. Chad Elkins (SGA Pres) said that students who fly home are particularly opposed to the nine day Thanksgiving break followed by two more weeks of school. He added that the previous administration had also unanimously supported an October break. Dr. Carter said that Dr. Nolen had clearly represented the opinion of the students to the Calendar committee, but that the committee's votes had been divided, as is opinion across the university.

Dr. Marky Lloyd (CLASS) wondered if the policy might be changed in the future, and Dr. Carter said the calendar is reviewed on an annual basis.

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS) asked if faculty would need to return for meetings a full week before classes start, and Dr. Carter answered yes, given the one-time transition involved in the shift from the quarter to the semester system during Summer 1998. Dr. David Stone (COST) seconded the SGA's position. He felt it would be difficult to "get people back on track" after a nine-day vacation. Dr. Carter suggested that a Senator move to amend the original motion so that the option of an October break might be voted on. The motion was made and seconded.

Dr. George Shriver (CLASS) asked the students this: if they objected to two plane tickets home for an extended Thanksgiving and a Christmas break, wouldn't an October break necessitate three plane tickets?

Mr. Chad Elkins (SGA President) said that students were accustomed to a four day break and would choose to stay in Statesboro during that time.

Dr. Charlie Crouch (CLASS) noted that the Spring Calendar provides for a reading day before finals but that the Fall Calendar does not. Dr. Carter said that to provide either the mini-break or the longer Thanksgiving break, a fall reading day had to be eliminated.

Mr. Milan Degyansky (COST) noted that the Fall quarter starts with a single day (Friday) week and exams begin on Saturday. He noted that many courses in COST will not have the same number of meeting days and argued for consistency. In response to Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS), Dr. Carter said that appropriate weekends for the October break would be the 10th or the 24th, both of those involving away football games.

Dr. Carl Gooding (Dean, COBA) said that he had voted for no break, so as to avoid the Friday start and the likely "stretching" of the breaks, both resulting in poor attendance. He also said, however, that all over the country, semester-based schools have a full week at Thanksgiving and students cope somehow, and that the rationale against the long Thanksgiving break might equally apply to the Spring break.

In response to Ms. Iris Durden (LIB), Dr. Carter said that the plans of other System schools vary.

Dr. Trey Denton (COBA) added that, given the students' desire to abolish attendance policies altogether, classes might well be empty before and after the breaks.

Mr. Clint Murphy (SGA VPAA) said that because Georgia Southern's students are accustomed to the quarter system, the two-break system would better serve them and called the question. The motion to call the question passed by a two-thirds vote. The proposed amendment to the original motion passed 23 to 9. Dr. Anne Pierce (COST) suggested that rather than beginning exams on a Saturday, we might begin them on Monday, December 14 and continue through the 18th. Dr. Carter said that the Registrar needs a workday before graduation.

Dr. Carl Gooding (COBA) pointed out that any calendar less than 75 class days would be overturned by the BOR.

Dr. J. B. Claiborne (COST) also expressed concern about beginning the Fall semester on a Friday. Dr. Carter said that part of the rationale was to accommodate freshmen orientation and other activities.

Dr. Claiborne asked Mr. Clint Murphy (SGA VPAA) for his input. Mr. Murphy replied that he attends every class. Dr. Claiborne asked Mr. Murphy, as SGA representative, about his sense about whether his fellow students would attend that beginning Friday course. Mr. Murphy said that he personally did not support an attendance policy; that

attendance should be on students' own discretion. Ms. Pam Watkins returned to Dr. Gooding's point that there is also a nine day Spring break. She pointed out that at least in the Spring five weeks of class follow Spring break, while only two follow Thanksgiving.

Mr. Clint Murphy (SGA VP) agreed that students could "get back into it" in a five week period. In response to Dr. Milan Degansky's concerns about beginning on a Friday and the lack of a reading day in Fall, Dr. Charlene Black pointed out that with graduation on August 2, there is a very brief time to prepare residence halls, classrooms, etc. for incoming students. Dr. Anne Pierce suggested faculty be more positive about students' attendance on scheduled class days and added that there is no obligation for professors to repeat on Monday what non-attending students have missed on Friday.

Ms. Virginia Richards (CHPS) suggested the Senate should resist second-guessing the Calendar Committee. Dr. David Stone asked why we will start the Spring semester so early. Dr. Carter said that the BOR gives earliest and latest beginning dates. The Senate approved the amended Calendar, with a mini-break in October.