

From: Rob E. Anderson <rob.anderson@usg.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2017 9:40:23 PM
To: Janet E Frick
Subject: RE: Question about UGA Academic Calendar Discussions

Dear Dr. Frick,

I really do appreciate your message and reaching out. In addition, I am sorry to hear about your sick child and hope that all is well soon.

Last year's adjustment to policy was targeted at questions pertaining to whether the former policy addressed compressed courses and mini-terms. The key addition, from our perspective, is "a course offered in fewer than fifteen (15) instructional weeks shall contain the same total hours (contact hours, preparation time, content, and requirements) as the same course offered in the standard 15-week semester."

There was no intent to alter what was previously required within these 15 weeks or to lessen minutes of instruction. I apologize if we caused confusion. The strikethrough of weeks and minutes was counterbalanced by linking both the credit hours and weeks of instruction with federal regulations, which require both 15 weeks of instruction (34 CFR 668.3 (b)) and commensurate meeting time regulations found in 34 CFR 600.2.

I strongly believe that my office needs to examine closely the impact of calendar policies on classroom instructional time. As a component of this examination, I want to understand better the current practices at both Georgia Tech and Georgia State. With these next steps in mind, I have requested of President Morehead that he not entertain a 15-week calendar at the present time. I also respectfully ask the same of you and the University Council. This request is made with a promise that this issue will be resolved in the coming year and Board policy will reflect the outcomes of this analysis.

I thank you for all that you do in service of your students, your university and our system.

Best,

Rob Anderson

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From: Janet E Frick [<mailto:jfrick@uga.edu>]
Sent: Monday, March 20, 2017 2:14 PM
To: Rob E. Anderson <rob.anderson@usg.edu>
Subject: Question about UGA Academic Calendar Discussions

Dear Dr. Anderson, I am on the UGA faculty and am the chair of the executive committee of UGA's University Council, our faculty-staff governance body. Chair of the executive committee is the highest faculty position in governance at UGA. I realize you are incredibly busy and I hope it's ok for me to contact you. I have tried to reach your office by phone on a couple of different days and have left voice mails. Dr. Shrivistav shared with us his correspondence with you about UGA's discussions about our academic calendar, and in your reply you said not to hesitate to reach out if we had any additional questions or concerns.

Our University Council meeting where we will discuss our two academic calendar proposals for 2018-2019 takes place on Wednesday of this week. I have what I hope is a fairly simple / straightforward question, although it will take me a bit of time to explain the necessary background. As Dr. Shrivistav noted, one calendar we are considering is a few days longer than the other. I would note, however, that both calendars abide by the USG calendar guidelines found here:

<http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/policy/C339>

[Board of Regents Policy Manual | University System of Georgia](#)

www.usg.edu

[Board of Regents Policy Manual Official Policies of the University System of Georgia](#)

One of our calendars under consideration (the shorter one) is 15 instructional weeks, as USG and federal policies define instructional weeks. The other calendar (the one that is more similar to past UGA calendars) is 16 instructional weeks, a week longer than USG policy requires. Both calendars reach this length prior to final exams.

You mentioned in your email to Dr. Shrivistav that you are new to your current position. In that case, I wanted to mention that the Regents changed, and in fact "eased", their calendar policy in October 2016. This is noted on page 25 of this PDF (page number 25 at the bottom, or p. 32 of the 66 page pdf, "revisions to policy 3.4 academic calendar"):

http://www.usg.edu/assets/regents/documents/board_meetings/agenda_2016_10.pdf

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So just this past fall, the Regents removed some previous language and clarified that instructional length would align with federal definitions of instructional length; both of our calendars under consideration meet these guidelines. Indeed, these published policies deeply informed the development of our two calendar proposals.

The other piece of relevant information, from my faculty perspective, is that for some years, we have had some challenges for students and faculty at UGA because our academic semesters have started unusually early (typically 1 week earlier) in comparison to most of our peer and aspirational institutions, but yet have ended at roughly the same time. This has presented a number of challenges, which have been discussed at UGA for years but especially this past year. For example, some students have been unable to apply for prestigious between-term internships -- in Spring 2017 our semester started before a fellowship program in Governor Deal's office ended, which prevented our student body president from even considering applying for it. Other students have had to miss the start of term because study abroad programs or internships (or even basic training, in the case of a student in my Intro Psych class last fall) ended too late; some faculty have had to choose between attending their professional academic conferences or being present for the first day of classes, etc. Our student government association *begged* us to see if there was anything we could do to at least align our start dates with Georgia State and Georgia Tech, who of course are governed by the same calendar policies that we are. Importantly, the shorter of our two calendars under consideration on Wednesday aligns almost exactly with the calendars that Georgia State and Georgia Tech have already posted for 2018-2019, both of which also have 15 instructional weeks. It is almost an exact match with Georgia State:

<http://registrar.gsu.edu/files/2013/05/2018-2019-At-A-Glance-Semester-Calendars.pdf>

Academic Calendars 2018- 2019 - Registrar

registrar.gsu.edu

Academic Calendars 2018- 2019 Fall 2018 Semester Calendar Events Full Semester Mini-Semester I Mini-Semester II Schedule of Courses on Paws Mar 12 Mar 12 Mar 12

Georgia Tech takes 2 less days for Thanksgiving than our shorter calendar, but we teach 1 day longer in December so it mostly evens out. The spring lengths are very similar, just shifted by a week at both the start and the end:

<http://www.registrar.gatech.edu/calendars/fiveterm.php>

So my question is this: given that both of our calendar proposals fit all USG calendar guidelines, and given that one of them (the "shorter" one) aligns almost exactly in length with the calendars that Georgia State and Georgia Tech have already approved for 2018-2019; and further, given

that our early start dates have presented challenges that UGA students and faculty have thoroughly documented in discussions over many months in our faculty governance process (I can provide you with more information on this, if you're interested), is there any reason that we cannot equally consider both calendar options in our Wednesday meeting?

Your reply to Dr. Shrivistav, saying that you would like time to study the calendar issue and report back, is being interpreted by some as a statement that we *should not* consider a 15-week calendar that aligns with Georgia State's and Georgia Tech's calendars and aligns with published USG policies. So I am asking for clarification on that question. To be clear: Georgia State and Georgia Tech have both posted 15-instructional-week calendars for 2018-2019. We at UGA are considering two proposals, one of which is 15 instructional weeks and one of which is 16 instructional weeks. Is there any reason that we cannot equally consider both options?

I don't want to take any action that would be seen as being out of alignment with the wishes of the Regents. All we are wanting to do on Wednesday is have an open discussion of these two calendar options, each of which has some supporters and some detractors. But if it is indeed your perspective that UGA should retain an academic calendar that is one week longer than Georgia State and Georgia Tech, and one week longer than required by current published USG calendar policy, then of course I will respect that and that will inform our discussions on Wednesday.

We all, of course, welcome all guidance and input from the USG / Regents into the future development of our calendars. I just also know, from the perspective of UGA student government association and many (not all, of course) UGA faculty, we would like to be sure that all USG research institutions (which of course have many responsibilities including research, writing, grant applications, travel, internships, study abroad, presentations at conferences, etc) are interpreting calendar policies the same way.

Thank you for your time. If you would like to speak to me on the phone, I am working from home with a sick child today but can be reached at 706-338-4524. I will be back in my office tomorrow.

Respectfully,
Janet Frick

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