

ECU CALENDAR COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: December 11, 2013
ATTENDEES: Mark McCarthy (Chair), Runying Chen, Ron Preston, Eban Bean (Vice Chair), Cindy Elmore, David Wilson-Okamura
EX-OFFICIO: Bill McCartney, Margaret Pio, Allison Crowe
GUESTS: Lori Lee

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:05 p.m. in Rawl Annex 142 by Mark McCarthy. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved without changes.

The committee approved adding this language: "Last day to submit thesis to Graduate School for completion of degree in the summer session." to the summer 2014 calendar on Monday, July 14, 2014. This sentence had been inadvertently left off the previously approved summer 2014 calendar. The date corresponds with the date for this item in previous calendars.

The committee discussed the results of the survey requesting input on proposed changes being considered to upcoming fall and spring semester calendars as a result of the state holiday makeup days in each term. Mark McCarthy distributed a handout comparing the total number of fall term days from the first day of classes to graduation at ECU and five other large North Carolina state universities. He pointed out that ECU's current fall semester calendar has fewer days than most of the comparison universities.

The committee discussed the advantages of moving future fall semester calendars to a Monday start date. It was brought up that while there may be some impact on new faculty orientation, the consensus was that the current five-day orientation could easily be reduced to fewer days.

Bill McCartney discussed the current schedule for fall semester dormitory move-in, and concluded that no changes would be needed with a change to the fall semester start date. He offered that convocation could be held on the Sunday afternoon prior to a Monday class start. He said it would not be helpful to students to have two reading days instead of the current one day, however. The change may affect the date of student convocation.

The committee discussed the merits and disadvantages to a change in the convocation day.

The committee also discussed the potential changes to university and departmental graduation ceremonies that could result from a fall semester Monday-class start. It was noted that the administration sets the date of graduation, although it is certainly influenced by the calendar. The committee also discussed the effect of the proposed calendar change on the initial school and departmental faculty meetings, many of which now occur on convocation day. It was pointed out that nine-month faculty employment contracts begin on Aug. 16, long before convocation day, so faculty meetings could occur during the week prior to the start of classes or, after classes have started, during whatever hours department chairs and deans have set aside for such regular meetings.

It was noted that if approved, any proposed changes to the fall semester calendar would go into effect in the 2015-2016 school year.

The committee voted to take the fall semester Monday-start-day proposal to Faculty Senate in its January meeting, with the current Tuesday-start in a backup calendar. The committee agreed that no change is needed in the current state holiday makeup day practice for spring semester because it comes at the end of the term and few survey respondents had a problem with it.

Because of the potential impact to reading days, exam week, and the date of fall graduation that could result with a fall semester Monday-class-start, Ron Preston offered to examine how exam week might be reconfigured to save a day. He agreed to discuss this plan with Angela Anderson before coming back to the committee.

The committee also discussed whether or not to propose other calendar changes being considered (shorter exam week, one-week delay in fall semester start date, and a combined fall break-Thanksgiving break) at the same time as the proposed change to the fall semester start date. The consensus was to consider bringing those changes to Faculty Senate at a later date, and in the meantime, to survey faculty again about those three matters.

The committee agreed that the survey statistics, but not comments, should be made available to the Faculty Senate. It was also decided that the Calendar Committee's proposal will not include any recommendation on convocation or initial faculty meetings.

Lori Lee noted that it was ECU that long ago proposed that each semester must have an equal number of M-T-W-Th and Friday class days. This is not mandated by GA.

Bill McCartney and Eban Bean agreed to work together on determining the format and number of survey questions for the committee's second survey to faculty, staff, and administration regarding possible calendar changes.

The next meeting of the Calendar Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, January 22 at 12:00 p.m. in the same room.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.