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Calendar for Summer 2000, Fall 2000, and Spring 2001

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Approved by the Senate: 11/30/1999

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Calendar for Summer 2000, Fall 2000, and Spring 2001

Submitted by: Linda Bleicken

11/30/1999

Dr. Linda Bleicken (Acting Provost) reported that the Calendar Committee met on November 9 and approved each of the calendars. She stated that calendars would be presented separately to the senators for their approval. Dr. Charlene Black (AVPAA; Dean of Undergraduate Studies), then described in detail the process followed to develop the summer 2000 calendar, as well as Board of Regents and institutional factors that influenced its development. After Dr. Black's presentation, Dr. Bleicken moved the approval of the Summer 2000 calendar.

Summer 2000 Calendar

Motion: Dr. Bleicken motioned for the approval of the Summer 2000 calendar as described in the attachment to the Faculty Senate meeting agenda. The motion was seconded. There was considerable debate about the proposed summer calendar, including the following comments:

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS), a member of the Calendar Committee, stated that she voted against the calendar "because there is not even a full week between graduation and the typical day of the University-wide faculty meeting that normally precedes Fall Semester."

Ms. Pam Watkins (COST) expressed a concern about the starting date of the summer calendar. She stated: "Bulloch County Schools don't get out until June 6, I think, and our calendar starts a full week ahead of that. So we are basically excluding Bulloch County students from Georgia Southern by starting on May 29. And...most of the core classes that students would take coming right out of high school are not offered in the short term session; they are offered only in the long term session. So we are, in effect, closing out Bulloch County students who want to go to Georgia Southern."

Dr. Jeff Buller (CLASS) stated: "I don't think there has been a decision yet as to whether core classes are going to be offered only in long terms or in the short terms. In fact, it's my understanding that for the coming summer we will be able to offer classes in any

format that we like, and so I expect that a large number of core classes will be offered in either short term I or short term II."

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS) stated: "This is, I guess, less connected to this particular calendar on which we are voting than it is to long-range planning. I think faculty in the long term would like to see the calendar reflect more of student-faculty wishes for breaks between semesters. Fred Whitt, at the Calendar Committee, volunteered, if I remember correctly, to work with the sub-committee to try to plan a template of a summer calendar that would be a possible alternate in the future. Am I reflecting what you said correctly, Fred? I just wondered about the progress on that."

Dr. Fred Whitt (CHPS) stated: "I think the key was...what the decision was going to be on where revenue would be placed in the future. If revenue is placed in the later term--the upcoming fiscal year rather than the one we would currently be in--then it's a moot point."

Dr. Kent Guion (CHPS) posed the question: "Is our obligation to have instruction occur after July 1 a long term obligation or is it one that is just going...out this summer?"

Dr. Ron Core (Vice President for Business and Finance) replied: "Yes, it presents a number of problems from a budgetary standpoint of where you record the revenue and also student credit hours. In discussions I had at the Board office just two weeks ago they are also looking at this as an issue and they strongly feel that all institutions should move their revenue and consequently expenditures forward into the next fiscal year. They are reluctant to make that as a mandate, but they are continuing to look at that. As far as whether it's a long term or a short term, it's an ongoing discussion at this point."

Ms. Pam Watkins (COST) stated: "I don't think it can be stressed enough that this 51 percent rule really does drive the summer calendar, and that we can do nothing to change the fact, basically, unless we change the length of class time. If we operate in this manner and the Board of Regents continues to set the August start date as early in August as it's being set, then we are going to be held to about one week from summer graduation to the start of school in the Fall. I understand that there are fiscal reasons to leave it the way it is. I understand that, but nonetheless it still is a real hardship on faculty members."

Dr. Ron Core (VPBF) responded: "In the discussion I had at the Board office two weeks ago, the issue of mandatory beginning and ending dates was brought up as a factor in what dictates how summer school and the rest of the calendar is going to be scheduled. There was a lot of discussion among the Chief Business Officers that this was really a vestige of the quarter system and didn't really have a lot of merit once we moved to semesters. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs indicated that he would take it up...at the Board office as an issue that they needed to address it as part of addressing the summer school issue. So they are aware of those problems; now what will be done about it I don't know."

Dr. Lowell Mooney (COBA) stated: "If you have school age kids and you start May 29, they're still in school, and if you graduate on Sunday and the General Faculty meeting is

the following Friday, there's not even a weekend between Summer Semester and Fall Semester. So there's absolutely no time for family activities. Another issue is that...most of the student off-campus housing lease agreements end July 31st. That's going to put an additional hardship on students as they scramble to find someplace to live that last week or so while they are trying to finish up school projects, prepare for final exams, etc. I talked with one realtor and she said she tries to work with students if they need to stay on a few extra days, but a lot of companies in town do not. So I think that's another issue that would suggest we need to look at this rule again and see if we can make a change."

Dr. Jack White (COBA) asked Dr. Core: "Isn't summer school self-supporting? I remember when we were talking about the summer compensation at 2 percent per credit hour...in the past summer school made money. So if it's self-supporting, why does it matter whether we push it forward or do it in the current fiscal year?"

Dr. Ron Core (VPBF) responded: "Well, there again, it depends on how you account for it. If you look at strictly the tuition revenue that comes in and the expenditures that are associated with that, summer school is not self-supporting. Actually, expenditures exceed revenue and have for some time. I know they have for the two years I have been here."

In response to Dr. Mooney's point earlier, Dr. Krug (CLASS) stated: "Linda...was there not overwhelming sentiment among the 18 people at the Calendar Committee meeting that there be a request, if at all possible, to move the University faculty meeting from the Friday after graduation to the following Monday? So that there would be at least seven full days, so that it would occur rather than on Friday the 11th, on Monday the 14th of August?"

Dr. Linda Bleicken (Acting Provost) responded: "Yes, that is true."

The motion to approve the Summer 2000 calendar was defeated by a vote of 17-15.

Fall 2000 Calendar

Dr. Bleicken (Acting Provost) described the factors involved in developing the Fall 2000 calendar and then moved its adoption by the Senate.

Motion: Dr. Bleicken motioned for the approval of the Fall 2000 calendar as described in the attachment to the Faculty Senate meeting agenda. The motion was seconded.

An amendment to the motion was immediately offered by Ms. Pam Watkins (COST).

Motion: Ms. Pam Watkins motioned to amend the proposed Fall 2000 calendar to include a Fall

break on Monday and Tuesday, October 23rd and 24th, to eliminate the reading day on Friday, December 8th, to move the last day of classes to Monday, December 11th, and to hold final exams from December 12th through 16th. The motion was seconded.

Ms. Pam Watkins (COST) explained the rationale for the amendment by stating: "The reason that we're proposing a Monday and a Tuesday for Fall break, instead of a Thursday-Friday, is because it cuts out a lot of Thursdays and Fridays during the Fall. If we put it on a Monday-Tuesday, and couple that with the Wednesday-Thursday-Friday Thanksgiving break, that takes us out a whole week. Moving the last day of class until

Monday compensates for the Labor Day holiday. So we don't come up short any days by doing it that way. Regarding the elimination of the reading day, if we put a reading day on a Friday basically we are giving the students a long weekend right before final exams, and I don't think that's necessarily an educationally sound thing to do. I realize that one trade-off is having a Saturday final, but as we discussed in the Calendar Committee meeting, finals could be scheduled in such a way that Saturday finals would impact the fewest number of students and faculty members."

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS) followed up on Watkins point by stating: "If this two-day Fall break is added and if the scenario plays out the way Pam has described it, graduation would not occur any later, we would still finish on the same day, and yet we would have a two-day Fall break."

Dr. Jack White (COBA) asked: "How do you give a Saturday afternoon exam, get it graded, get it over to the Registrar, and know whether those people graduate? I mean, I am all for them working 24 hours a day, but I think that is almost what it would take and I might direct that to Mike Deal."

Mr. Mike Deal, Registrar, responded: "We have changed our procedures so that we are not issuing diplomas at graduation so that's really not an issue any longer. We would not have to have grades before graduation."

Dr. Kathleen Koon (CHPS) stated: "I would just like to support the amended calendar that Pam Watkins has proposed, primarily for the reason that it does have a full complement of 15 Fridays, and elimination of a Friday for our students is elimination of an 8-hour clinical day so it has a considerable impact on them."

Dr. Leo Parrish (COBA) asked: "The folks that analyzed this in terms of how many Monday night graduate classes meet and Tuesday night, and so forth, have you had a chance to determine the impact of this change on whether we're going to be making up night classes on a weekend because of this? I am just wondering if this amended schedule has been analyzed to be sure that it doesn't end up coming up short on labs..."

Dr. Frank French (COST) stated: "There's an impact every time you have a holiday break...I just think that we are chopping up the schedule so much that it's breaking up the rhythm of school."

Mr. Michael Mills (CLASS) stated: "As I understand it, Fall break was initially a student-initiated motion, and I am wondering if there are any student representatives here today? How do students feel about this and was polling done about whether they wanted the Fall break?"

Ms. Casey Jackson (SGA) responded: "We did a survey for the Calendar Committee, a very informal survey, but overall by a wide majority the students wanted a Fall break."

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS) reported on a faculty survey conducted by herself and Ms. Watkins regarding the Fall calendar. On the issue of Fall break, she reported that: "105 of our colleagues wanted a Fall break out of the 143 responding in CLASS. In the College of Education, of the 38 respondents, 31 wanted a Fall break. Of the faculty in College of Science and

Technology, 62 out of 99 wanted a Fall break. In COBA the total number who wanted a Fall break was 14 out of 31. So there were somewhat less than half. So more than half of the faculty wanted a Fall break."

Dr. Grube stated: "You're about to vote to recommend something to me and I'm missing a huge piece of information. I've heard almost no substantive pedagogical reasoning given to support the two-day break. I need to hear your thinking on this point. Simply a popularity poll about whether you are going to take a couple of days off isn't quite enough for me."

Dr. Janie Wilson (CLASS) responded to Dr. Grube's concern: "I think it's unfair to the students and the faculty to suggest that it's just a break. Some discussion here today has been that students will blow off classes. I would prefer to think that's not true. I believe my students spend time perfecting papers when they have days off...they come back with better papers after a break, so I tend to think they do a better job when they have extra time for those things."

Dr. Clara Krug (CLASS) followed up by quoting a comment from a faculty member who replied to a survey about the Fall calendar: "I'm not as concerned with faculty in relation to the Fall break as I am with students. The break offers them a time to get caught up and rejuvenate. Going from the 3rd week in August to Thanksgiving with only one three-day holiday is too long, they need the Fall break."

The motion to amend the proposed Fall 2000 calendar to include a Fall break on Monday and Tuesday, October 23rd and 24th, to eliminate the reading day on Friday, December 8th, to move the last day of classes to Monday, December 11th, and to hold final exams from December 12th through 16th was defeated by a vote of 19-14.

The original motion to approve the Fall 2000 calendar as described in the attachment to the Faculty Senate meeting agenda was approved by a vote of 23-9.

Spring 2001

Dr. Bleicken (Acting Provost) described the factors involved in developing the Spring 2001 calendar. One important issue concerned the "earliest start date" for Spring 2001 semester as

mandated by the Chancellor's office. Dr. Bleicken reported that the Chancellor's office would not approve GSU's request to move the earliest start date from January 5 to January 8, as requested by the Calendar Committee.

Motion: Dr. Bleicken motioned for the approval of the Spring 2001 calendar as described in the attachment to the Faculty Senate meeting agenda. The motion was seconded.

The motion to approve the Spring 2001 calendar passed.

President's Response:

I have received your recommendations regarding the Summer 2000 and the Academic Year 2000-2001 calendars.

I concur with your endorsement of the proposed academic year 2000-2001 calendar and am **approving** its adoption as the University calendar.

I appreciate the many issues you raised during the discussion of the Summer 2000 calendar and hope that your many suggestions can be realized as we move forward with long range planning. The current parameters, however, lead me to approve the Summer 2000 calendar as proposed by the calendar committee.

I accept your recommendation regarding the Opening Faculty meeting for the Fall which I am scheduling for Monday, August 14, 2000.