Proposed Changes to UHM Summer Session Schedule
Outreach College
April 2011

In an effort to provide a summer session that better meets the needs of our students, Outreach College is considering two changes:

1. Offering 3-week, 3-credit courses, and
2. Reducing the two existing 6-week long summer sessions to 5 weeks each.

We are in the planning stages and seeking input on the proposals.

Background

There is a growing trend among universities across the country to offer 3-week courses during summer sessions. In a recent survey of 48 major state and private universities, about 1/3 are offering 3-week summer courses. The courses meet every day for 14 or 15 days for about 3 hours per day, including breaks. The majority of these courses are offered in May, allowing students to complete courses they need for the fall semester in a timely manner before leaving for summer break.

These courses have been well received by the students and the faculty. Positive comments, in addition to the expedient completion of a course, include good retention rates by the students and the building of camaraderie. The experienced schools recommend a few things:

1. Students only take one 3-week course at any time,
2. Students be told to clear their calendars for the 3 weeks,
3. Faculty have materials ready to distribute before the start of the courses, and
4. Expectations for each course should be clearly stated.

On another issue, a continual barrier we face in trying to attract undergraduates from mainland universities and local high school students and teachers to our summer session is that our sessions begin too early in May. Many schools get out after UHM and their students cannot get here in time for our summer session. If we are to attract more students from outside the UH System, we need to delay the start of summer session. Many other universities have moved the start of their summer sessions into June.

Proposals

3-week courses:

Outreach College is considering scheduling one or two sessions of 3-week courses, one at the very beginning of summer break for our continuing students and, possibly, one at the end, primarily for incoming students. The courses would meet Monday through Friday for 3 hours with a 15-20 minute break for 14 days. (One day is needed for the Memorial Day holiday.) Students taking a 3-week course would not be allowed to register for any other courses at the same time. The deans and department chairs would have to decide if a faculty member could teach more than one course at a time.

The offering of 3-week courses by a department would be completely voluntary. However, given the newness of this format, we would ask that careful consideration be
given to which courses and instructors would be best to include in the initial offering of 3-week courses.

The 3-week courses could be offered as part of our existing summer schedule with two 6-week sessions, thus not requiring any change to the current summer schedule. However, we may want to take the opportunity to change our schedule to address the problem of the early start of summer sessions.

**5-week semesters:**

Currently, in the 6-week summer sessions, classes meet every day for 75 minutes. Allowing for holidays, there are 28 or 29 meetings. The first summer session starts one week after spring commencement and second summer session ends one week, sometimes two weeks, before the start of the fall semester. There is no break between the sessions. As an example, for Summer 2012, commencement is on May 12 and the summer schedule is as follows:

- Summer Session I (6-weeks): 5/21/2012 - 6/29/2012
- Summer Session II (6-weeks): 7/2/2012 - 8/10/2012
- New first 3-week session: 5/21/2012 - 6/8/2012
- New second 3-week session: 7/23/2012 - 8/10/2012.

If we adopt a 5-week summer session, classes would meet every day for 95 minutes. Allowing for holidays, there would be 24 meetings per class. We would schedule a 3-week session immediately after spring commencement, followed by two 5-week summer sessions. The end 3-week session would have to overlap the second 5-week session. The summer courses would still end one week before the start of the fall semester. Again, as an example, for Summer 2012 the schedule would be as follows:

- First 3-week session: 5/14/2012 - 6/1/2012
- Summer Session I (5-weeks): 6/4/2012 - 7/6/2012
- Summer Session II (5-weeks): 7/9/2012 - 8/10/2012
- Second 3-week session: 7/24/2012 - 8/10/2012.

If they wish, departments could schedule 10-week courses over the two 5-week summer sessions.

As a point of reference, in a survey last year of summer sessions at leading universities, for the schools on a semester system, about 40% had 6-week summer sessions, 30% had 5-week sessions, 17% had 4-week sessions, and 10% had 7-8 week sessions.

Other schedules are possible, but we would like to keep the schedule clean by minimizing the overlap of summer sessions.

**Again, no decisions on the above proposals have been made. We are in the planning stage and would appreciate comments from students, faculty, and staff.**

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