

# **University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR COMMITTEE REPORT**

**September, 2009**

### **Committee Members:**

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**Alan Yang, Associate Vice Chancellor, OVCS**

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University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

**Academic Calendar Committee Report**  
**September 2009**

The committee was convened to examine UHM's academic calendar and propose changes that maximize campus resources and realize energy savings without compromising the academic and pedagogical integrity of our curriculum. With the understanding that implementation would commence with Fall 2010, our Phase I suggestions have been limited to changes that can be made with minimal disruption yet still have a serious impact.

Discussions focused on a **restructured semester model** that streamlines the semester for energy efficiency and a **modified summer model** that increases the length of the summer term and eventually incorporates it into the regular academic year in order to maximize use of UHM resources while improving students' time-to-degree. The committee discussed implementing a four-day work week but decided not to at this time, instead choosing first to run a logistics and feasibility pilot of the four-day week in summer. Mindful of existing Board of Regents policies and faculty contract issues, we forward the following recommendations. We realize, however, that modifying the academic calendar will not be without challenges and offer recommendations in phases to ease implementation.

In order to enact Phase I by Fall 2010, these recommendations need to be vetted and carried out with some alacrity, as the timeline will be governed by deadlines for departmental schedules, the Schedule of Classes, and the Catalogue.

We also recommend the implementation plan include rolling out the phases gradually so that the focus in 2009-10 remain on Phase I. We recommend that subsequent phases be postponed until the impact of Phase I can be assessed, so that experience with it can inform decisions about the timing and process of implementing Phases II and III.

**Summary of Recommendations**

**Phase I: Maximize Campus Resources to Realize Energy Savings (Fall 2010)**

- Reduce Fall and Spring semesters to a 14-week instructional period plus final examination period.
- Increase the length of Summer Session to a total of 14 weeks, but retain Summer's flexible scheduling.
- Shut down the campus as much as possible during the break between Fall and Spring semesters.
- Investigate remote working and risk management policies to allow more faculty to work off-site during the break between Fall and Spring.
- Schedule classrooms more efficiently so that a minimal number of buildings are used at any given time and entire buildings or parts of buildings can be shut down when not in use.
- Allow incoming Fall admitted students to enroll in Summer courses without submitting an additional application.

### Phase II: Change Academic Schedules

- Lengthen the academic day so that courses are distributed more evenly between 8:30 am and 10:00 pm.
- Offer more high-demand courses throughout the day and in Summer.
- Implement a 4-day work week in Summer as a pilot study.
- Continue to offer classes with customized terms and for specialized student populations.

### Phase III: Improve Students' Time-to-Degree by Incorporating Summer into the Academic Calendar

- If the 4-day pilot is successful in Summer, apply it to Fall and Spring semesters.
- Fully integrate Summer into the academic calendar so that UHM offers three equal terms, which entails re-examining/revising:
  - the faculty contract to include a Summer option in the normal duty period;
  - payroll;
  - tuition and distribution of revenue;
  - financial aid;
  - housing contracts; and
  - application and admission processes.

## Discussion

### 1. The Restructured Semester Model

The Restructured Semester Model reduces Fall and Spring semesters by two weeks each, for a 14-week instructional term, while retaining a welcome week before Fall and finals weeks at the ends of both Fall and Spring (see attached). This model allows for a significant break between the two terms in order to maximize energy savings from campus shut down hours. Courses are distributed more evenly throughout a lengthened day for greater availability, and classrooms are scheduled so that buildings or parts of buildings can be shut down when classes are not in session.

#### Background facts:

Board of Regents policy mandates a 15-week semester plus a final examination period (BOR Policies and Procedures, Chapter 5, Section 5-5, Academic Calendar). WASC leaves determining the length of instructional periods to each institution and thus does not need to approve changes. UHM's instructional period, currently at 16 weeks, is longer than that of many of our peer institutions. The academic day is concentrated between 9:30 am and 2:30 pm, when most of the high-demand classes are scheduled. Classes are scheduled into classrooms scattered throughout the campus such that many buildings cannot be shut down yet go partially unused during non-peak periods.

#### Benefits of the restructured semester model:

Shortening the instructional periods to 14 weeks:

- allows for a longer break between Fall and Spring as well as breaks between Spring and Summer and between Summer and Fall, easing "crunch" times for housing, academic advising, and student services;
- aligns UHM's instructional period with that of peer institutions and increases energy savings while maintaining academic integrity;
- decreases the amount of time international students must spend away from home and thus reduces costs for them.

Creating a longer break period between Fall and Spring:

- allows UHM to shut down buildings or parts of buildings for an extended period to save energy;
- promotes the clustering of instructional classrooms to allow UHM to maximize energy savings by shutting down buildings or parts of buildings whenever classes are not in session;
- eases pressures for everyone during the very busy time from mid-December through mid-January.

Lengthening the academic day:

- allows UHM to offer courses at a wider variety of times, making high-demand courses more accessible and giving students more flexible schedules;
- may change traffic patterns and ease "jam" times.

#### Challenges of the restructured semester model:

Shortening the instruction periods to 14 weeks:

- requires BOR approval;

- eliminates most or all study days before finals weeks;
- will require faculty and student consultation;
- raises the issue of faculty workload and how to handle an extended on-duty break period.

Shutting down buildings or parts of buildings during the break to save energy requires:

- rearranging where instructional classrooms are located, which is often time-consuming and costly, and often triggers significant opposition;
- reassessing how the campus (faculty, staff, services, etc.) conducts business during the on-duty break period.

Lengthening the academic day:

- requires departments to change the times of courses;
- will require reassessing when and how academic advising and student services are provided.

In addition, any changes to the length of faculty duty periods will affect the formula used to calculate prorata summer pay for 9-month faculty.

## **2. The Modified Summer Model**

The Modified Summer Model lengthens the summer term and includes it in UHM's academic year in order to maximize use of UHM resources. This model lengthens Summer to 14 weeks, mirroring the Fall and Spring semesters, increases its course offerings, and expands its role in graduating students in a timely fashion (see attached). In this model, Outreach would continue to offer flexible terms (one 14-week term, two 7-week terms, etc.). This model also includes piloting the four-day work week to assess whether it yields enough savings to make it worth implementing in Fall and Spring.

### **Background facts:**

Summer Session is coordinated by Outreach College from late May through mid-August in two, six-week terms. Although most classes run for a standard 6 weeks, there are many other classes that have customized terms. In total, Outreach College sets up over 100 customized terms for summer session classes. There is no tuition differential for resident and non-resident students. Many non-traditional programs that do not mix well in the Fall and Spring semesters, such as travel study programs and off-site field studies courses, are offered during summer. The enrollment of visiting students and local students who return home from mainland colleges are historically high in Summer Session. Revenues collected for Summer Session classes are returned to sponsoring colleges. As the duty period of 9-month instructional faculty does not extend into the Summer months, the ability to offer many of the high demand courses has not been possible.

### **Benefits of the modified summer model:**

Lengthening the term to 14 weeks:

- makes it possible to offer more high-demand courses, including Foundation, Diversification, "DFW," science laboratories, and meeting-intensive courses such as languages;
- allows greater flexibility for creating Summer terms to accommodate a variety of instructional needs;
- makes it easier to offer more travel study opportunities;
- makes Fall, Spring, and Summer all the same length, which makes it easier to teach courses in different terms instead of having to structure the course differently for each term.

Increasing course offerings:

- provides better availability of courses for students;
- provides greater flexibility in scheduling;
- may increase UHM's graduation rates.

Expanding its role:

- will make better use of resources, ensuring that when the campus is open, it is in full use, and when it is closed, buildings can be shut down;
- makes it possible for students to graduate in fewer years;
- may allow faculty to choose which two terms (of Fall, Spring, and Summer) they will teach.

Piloting the 4-day work week:

- allows UHM to assess whether a 4-day week in fact yields savings large enough to make implementation worthwhile.

Challenges of the modified summer model:

Lengthening the term to 14 weeks will require:

- instructors to revise their courses and syllabi to fit the new timetable;
- housing to adjust its contracts with students;
- financial aid to adjust its schedules and awards.

Increasing course offerings in "off" hours and in summer:

- may alleviate high demand areas, but only if further study is undertaken to determine how many of which courses, and how many seats in those courses, need to be offered;
- will require significant encouragement to, commitment from, and reorganization of departments before such offerings become regular.

Expanding Summer's role will require:

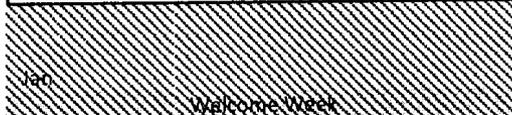
- departments to plan for summer term when preparing their schedules of classes;
- academic advising, faculty advising, and student services (including financial aid, housing, libraries, Campus Center, etc.) to reassess their services in order to support the summer term;
- reassessing Summer's separate application and admission processes;
- reassessing Summer's tuition rates;
- reassessing the distribution of summer revenue to departments;
- reassessing the definition of a full-time student, especially for international students and those on financial aid;
- modifying the contracts of 9-month '1' faculty to include summer as part of the normal duty period;
- adjusting Banner and system-wide coordination.

Piloting the 4-day work week will require:

- significant investments by the campus in garnering buy-in and in providing training;
- significant planning by the campus to determine which buildings can be closed, which services must remain available, etc.;
- significant changes in logistics and operations for virtually every office.

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| Welcome Week |      |    |
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| Sept         | Fall | 1  |
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|              |      | 3  |
|              |      | 4  |
| Oct          |      | 5  |
|              |      | 6  |
|              |      | 7  |
|              |      | 8  |
| Nov          |      | 9  |
|              |      | 10 |
|              |      | 11 |
|              |      | 12 |
| Dec          |      | 13 |
|              |      | 14 |
| Finals       |      |    |



| Welcome Week |        |    |
|--------------|--------|----|
| Jan          | Spring | 1  |
|              |        | 2  |
| Feb          |        | 3  |
|              |        | 4  |
|              |        | 5  |
|              |        | 6  |
| March        |        | 7  |
|              |        | 8  |
| Spring Break |        |    |
|              |        | 9  |
| April        |        | 10 |
|              |        | 11 |
|              |        | 12 |
|              |        | 13 |
| May          |        | 14 |
| Finals       |        |    |



| Summer |  |    |
|--------|--|----|
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| July   |  | 7  |
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| Aug    |  | 11 |
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|        |  | 14 |

