

May 5, 2026

To: Academic Senate Executive Committee

From: Academic Senate Instruction Committee

Subject: Summary of Campus Feedback on Proposed 2027-2028 Academic Calendar (complete collected feedback is attached)

This report provides a summary of the extensive feedback from the Academic Colleges, Departments, and Administrative Units regarding the proposed 2027-2028 Academic Calendar. Across all submissions there is broad consensus that the current proposal presents significant concerns to academic, operational, and structural effectiveness. Shared governance and process concerns were prominent. A major source of frustration was not just the calendar itself, but the feeling that earlier concerns from faculty, staff and students have been ignored. Several comments described the process as top-down, erosive of shared governance, and a breakdown in the respectful and collaborative relationship between the faculty and administration given the effort, consideration and care that has already gone into semester conversion and the integration with the Maritime Academy. An additional concern is that the calendar appears to be 53 weeks rather than 52.

“In general, feedback reflects a consistent set of concerns. While there is general understanding of the original intent behind the transition to semesters – particularly the goal of better alignment with other CSU campuses and community colleges – faculty widely perceive that the proposed calendar does not achieve this objective. Instead, it appears to introduce greater misalignment with partner institutions, local school districts and community colleges, creating challenges for transfer pathways” (CAFES)

Major Findings in the Compiled Feedback:

1. Threat to Regulatory Requirements and Credentialing Constraints for CP Maritime Academy. Complications with:
 - a. Minimum time at sea for licensing.
 - b. Required timelines for USCG Exam Administration
 - c. End of term Credentialing Constraints

2. Threat to Financial Aid Compliance
 - a. Issues related to overlapping end/start date
 - b. Summer disbursements
 - c. Return of Title IV funds

3. Threat to Instructional Quality
 - a. Risk to Instructional Quality, Accreditation, Licensing on YRO.
 - b. Compressed calendar with very short intervals between terms.
 - c. Broad concerns about move to YRO.
4. Threat to Required Academic Administrative Processes and Operations
 - a. Insufficient time for PERC, APDQ, DQ Appeals, ICMA
 - b. Hiring/processing contracts for part-time faculty.
5. Threat to Maintenance/Refit of Instructional Facilities and Equipment
 - a. Insufficient timelines for maintenance, repair, refresh classroom technologies and laboratory facilities.
6. Threat to Teacher Scholar Model
 - a. Insufficient time between terms to develop and pursue new and ongoing research activities.
 - b. Lack of access to laboratory, equipment, technology and research space.
7. Threat to Alignment with External Systems

Calendar is out of sync with:

 - a. Other CSU campuses
 - b. Community colleges
 - c. K–12 school schedules - implications for Teaching Credential and SOE Graduate Students
 - d. Internship timelines
 - e. Recruitment and hiring cycles for students
 - f. Study Abroad
 - g. Local Leasing and Rental Housing timelines
8. Threat to the Student Experience
 - a. Strong consensus that proposal calendar would result in increased risk for burnout for students.
 - b. Risk to Mental Health and Fatigue
 - c. School-Life Balance due to extremely limited break time between terms.
 - d. Risks undermining Cal Poly's strong record of student recruitment.
 - e. Risk to course sequencing, registration logistics, and the impact on students who are off flowchart or depend on timely prerequisite clearance.

9. Threat to Faculty, Staff and Student Productivity and Wellbeing
 - a. Compressed calendar with minimal to zero turnaround viewed as an unsustainable pace with high risk for burnout and challenges to wellbeing.
 - b. Insufficient time for course development, preparation, and grading.
 - c. Compromises productivity in scholarship.
 - d. Increased workload for support staff without adequate resources.

10. Threat to the Institutional Competitiveness in Recruitment, Scholarly Productivity and Retention of Faculty and Staff.
 - a. Recruiting faculty and staff is already challenging.
 - b. Risk of losing current faculty as some may choose seek institutions that offer a traditional academic rhythm with the option but not requirement to teach in the summer.
 - c. The pace of the proposed calendar and an expectation of a YRO calendar will make it harder to recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff.

Conclusion:

Across colleges and units, there is strong, consistent concern that the proposed 2027–2028 calendar is overly compressed, misaligned, and operationally unsustainable, with risks to institutional effectiveness, student success, quality teaching and learning, teacher-scholar model, faculty/staff /student well-being, regulatory constraints for the Maritime Academy, consequences to Financial Aid compliance, and institutional competitiveness in scholarship, recruitment and retention of high quality faculty and staff.

We urge the Executive Committee of the Cal Poly Academic Senate to carefully evaluate comprehensive feedback to the proposed 2027-28 calendar proposal to determine the implications to quality teaching and learning, the integrity and rigor of the curriculum, support of student, faculty and staff success and the original intent of converting to semesters. Current feedback strongly indicates that the proposed 2027–2028 calendar requires substantial revision before it can meet these standards.

A revised proposal should incorporate the recommendations provided in the comprehensive feedback document provided by the Registrar, supported by multi-year planning, clear policy frameworks, and demonstrated operational feasibility. It is further recommended that any subsequent calendar proposals, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding, be accompanied by a robust communication of the intention and scope of the provisions in the calendar proposal and an explanation as to the institutional priorities reflected in the proposal.

Expanded Summary

1. Threat to Regulatory Requirements and Credentialing Constraints for CP Maritime Academy

A. Summer Session 2027 only has 47 days of instruction. (June 1 – August 6)

- Academic scheduling must ensure compliance with minimum sea-time and instructional requirements, including:
 - At least 12 weeks of license-related sea-time courses (**May 24 – August 13th**)
 - 90 sea days for deck cadets (minimum)
 - 55 sea days for engine cadets (minimum)
 - There are only 11 weeks between beginning of Summer Term and Start of Fall term.
 - **Faculty required to report for Fall Semester on August 12th.**
 - **Fall Semester classes start on August 18th**
 - Summer Term and Sea Training Alignment
 - To meet minimum required sea-time) it is essential that:
 - Summer sea terms and internships begin immediately after commencement
 - There are no gaps between academic terms, or a formal “bridge” structure is created to preserve continuity and credit
 - Efficient sequencing is especially important given the compressed summer period for cadets.
 - 15-week semesters will allow for absences while maintaining compliance.

B. January 3rd Start for Spring Semester 2027 is problematic.

- The current start date (immediately after New Year’s) creates a significant conflict with Coast Guard (USCG) exam administration, which traditionally occurs during the first week of January.
- If USCG Exam overlaps with the first week of instruction, it effectively turns week one into a high-stakes testing period, disrupting instruction and campus operations.

C. USCG Licensing and Testing Requirements

- It is critical that USCG exam week(s) are clearly identified and protected in the academic calendar.
- Licensed cadets must have two opportunities for initial testing:
 - First: the first full week after January 1
 - Second: during Spring Break

D. End-of-Term and Credentialing Constraints

- Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMCs) cannot be distributed at commencement if final grades are not posted in time.
- Misalignment between grading deadlines and commencement creates administrative burdens (e.g., shipping credentials or requiring later pickup).

- Calendar design should ensure grades are finalized prior to commencement if in-person distribution is expected.

E. Cost and Staffing Implications

- Calendar structures that extend into holidays or non-academic periods increase the cost of maintaining secured watch and campus operations.
- Reducing unnecessary gaps or poorly aligned dates can help minimize these expenses.

2. Threat to Financial Aid Compliance related to 2027-28 Proposed Calendar

1. Financial Aid

- Calendar criteria requirements: Overlap between terms (even a single day) creates compliance issues for standard term programs
 - (for example, a summer term cannot begin before the official end of spring). This is something we're actively working through with the Summer Sea Term for 2027.
- Summer 2028 disbursement timing:
 - Summer 2028 – Begins on May 3rd
 - Spring grades are not fully posted until May 5, and summer aid eligibility is contingent on academic progress based on those grades.
 - Unable to disburse summer aid until May 8 (term begins on May 3). This timing should be considered in any planning that assumes earlier student access to funds.
- Term date alignment: Term start and end dates must align with the actual instructional period. For financial aid purposes, the term begins with the first day of instruction and ends with the last day of finals. If calendar dates extend beyond or fall short of those points, it creates issues with payment period definitions, disbursement timing, and compliance.
- Implications for Return of Title IV Funds:
 - Thanksgiving week: Having instruction on Nov. 22 and Nov. 23 means students no longer have a full week off, which has implications for Return of Title IV Funds calculations and how we define breaks in the payment period.

3. Threat to Instructional Quality related to 2027-28 Proposed Calendar

Compressed Calendar with Insufficient Time for Course Preparation and Revision

- Faculty report minimal to zero turn-around time between terms to:
 - Redesign courses, update materials, integrate new content
 - Weakens integration of research-informed teaching
 - Incorporate student feedback
- Course evaluations become less meaningful because feedback cannot be implemented before the next term begins

- Minimal or no transition time between terms (notably Spring → Summer)
- Shortened Winter break and
- Reduced Thanksgiving break (complicates travel to observe holiday)
- Near continuous instructional cycle

Negative Impact on Academics and Quality of Instruction:

- Reduced time for grading
 - Threat to quality and depth of grading feedback
 - Less meaningful evaluation of student learning
- Reduced time for course preparation and curriculum development
- Courses become less current, stagnant or rushed,
- Reduced responsiveness to student evaluations
- Potential degradation of instructional quality.

Several also raised student-facing problems, especially for prerequisite checking, add/drop timing, and registration if spring grades are not posted before summer deadlines.

Broader Concern Regarding Year-Round Operations (YRO)

Several respondents expressed concern that the calendar is being driven primarily by the goal of year-round operations, potentially at the expense of feasibility, sustainability, and instructional quality.

There is strong concern that this is a de facto move toward year-round operations without transparency or support. Multiple comments interpreted the calendar as an attempt to introduce YRO without clearly acknowledging that goal or providing a clear explanation, implementation plan, or resources. Some faculty said that if shortened or symmetric terms are the real objective, that should be stated openly and paired with support for curriculum redesign rather than introduced indirectly through the calendar.

Potential YRO Calendar - Risks to Instructional Quality, Accreditation, Licensing on YRO

- Resulting reduction in instructional weeks or contact hours
- Challenges for lab-based and accredited programs (e.g., ABET, USCG)

Academic Impact: Possible non-compliance with accreditation standards and reduced rigor in course delivery.

Compression of Instructional Time

- Concerns about:
 - Shortened or inconsistent term lengths
 - Movement toward 14-week or effectively shorter semesters
- Particularly problematic for:
 - Lab-based courses
 - Sequential and cumulative disciplines (e.g., math, engineering, sciences)

Impact:

- Reduced depth of coverage
- Loss of instructional content (e.g., fewer labs, fewer assignments)
- Potential misalignment with accreditation standards (e.g., ABET, USCG)

4. Threat to Required Academic Administrative Processes and Operations

- Compressed Calendar with very short breaks between terms compromises the following Academic Processes, for example:
 - Post Enrollment Requisite Checks (PERC)– students who fail a pre-requisite will remain enrolled in the next course.
 - Academic Probation and Disqualification (APDQ)
 - Internal Change of Major Agreement (ICMA) Processing
 - Academic Standing Appeals
 - Administrative tasks (advising, scheduling, system updates)
 - Class scheduling – adding class sections and assigning or hiring instructors to meet demand.
 - Processing contracts for part-time instructional faculty

5. Threat to Maintenance/Refit of Instructional Facilities and Equipment

- Insufficient timelines and support staff personnel for:
 - Cleaning and maintenance of teaching facilities
 - Maintenance and refresh of classroom technologies
- Creates strain on campus infrastructure and staff workload.
- Laboratories require dedicated time for:
 - Technology and Equipment maintenance, repair and refresh
 - Safety system monitoring and maintenance
 - Hazardous material disposal
 - Restocking of required laboratory materials and disposal of completed experiments and expired materials/components
- Campus classrooms, laboratories, offices are not equipped with Air Conditioning or other cooling systems to accommodate for extreme temperatures in in the late Spring, Summer and early Fall months.

6. Threat to Teacher Scholar Model

“In addition, the proposed calendar is seen as limiting faculty capacity for research, curriculum development and program innovation, particularly given the reduced periods available for focused scholarly activity. This is compounded by ongoing changes to the academic calendar,

which have made it more difficult for faculty to plan effectively and develop long-term initiatives.”

Compressed Calendar that negatively impacts time for RSCA activities.

- Faculty report minimal to zero turn-around time between terms to:
 - Develop and pursue new and ongoing lines of research
 - Short interval between terms allows less time to prepare and submit funding proposals and manuscripts for publication
 - Lack of faculty research time between terms has detrimental effects on ability to complete ongoing fieldwork or archival work away from Cal Poly, and undermines research productivity.
- Facilities and Equipment used for both teaching and research may not be available for faculty and student research during compressed breaks or summer on YRO.

7. Threat to Alignment with External Systems

“The proposal is viewed as inconsistent with the original rationale for moving to semesters.

A recurring point was that faculty were told semester conversion would better align Cal Poly with other CSUs and community colleges. Many respondents argued this calendar does not resemble a conventional semester calendar and instead appears to move toward a year-round or symmetric-term model without clearly saying so.” (BCSM)

The proposed calendar places the academic year out of sync with:

- Other CSU Campuses
- California Community Colleges
- California K-12 calendars
- Internship Opportunities – particularly in public service
- Some Study Abroad opportunities
- Undergraduate research experiences (REU, Fellowships Abroad)
- Proposed Spring term concludes in late April, earlier than typical semester systems.
 - This may create challenges for internships, employment start dates, and graduate program transitions.
- Unaligned summer means the university will miss significant summer enrollment potential, particularly in terms of international and out-of-state students.
- Could hinder participation in CSU-wide initiatives (e.g., CSU Online course catalog).

Impact on Cal Poly Teacher Credential Programs: Calendar Does Not Align with K-12 Calendars

Credential programs at Cal Poly are required by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to have 600 hours of clinical practice as one requirement to earn a teaching credential in California. For our credential programs, these 600 hours are accrued in two terms (fall and spring). The proposed 27/28 AY calendar reduces the number of hours many of our credential students will accrue because of the early Cal Poly January start. Three of our districts would return from their winter break ~1-2 weeks later than Cal Poly's start of spring term, reducing the number of hours for students placed at these school sites (~25 hours). During the 25/26 AY, 40% of our students were placed in these three districts. During the 24/25 AY, 60% of our students were placed in these three districts. Although we anticipate that they will be able to meet their required hours, the Learn by Doing experience will be qualitatively different for these students.

- Spring break and overall term timing do not align with local districts (e.g., SLCUSD).
- Creates significant challenges for LS courses and any fieldwork dependent on K–12 classroom access.

Another challenge of the proposed 27/28 AY calendar is our credential students will conclude their clinical practice in April rather than May, limiting their ability to stay until almost the end of the district's school year. April is also a month when numerous state exams occur, providing our credential students with less instructional time during their clinical practice experience.

We also have concerns about the impact these consecutive years of changes may have on our K-12 district partners. Our district partners will be adjusting as we make the switch from quarters to semesters for the 26/27 AY and then will need to adjust again for the 27/28 AY (if the current proposed calendar is implemented). With the anticipation of YRO requiring a different calendar for 28/29 AY, our districts will have had four years of shifts to the credential students' clinical practice schedule. These changes may impact the School of Education's ability to recruit mentor teachers to host our credential students.

Summer Term for the 27/28 AY Calendar

Maintaining a shorter summer term session is essential to continuing to be able to recruit for our graduate and credential programs. Two of our master's degree programs (Curriculum and Instruction and Education Leadership and Administration) end their program in summer and rely on a 5-week summer session immediately after the conclusion of spring term. A summer term ending in mid-August would be detrimental to students completing these graduate programs since they would be unable to apply for administrative positions for the following academic year since their degree would not be awarded before the start of the K-12 school year. A 5- or 7-week summer session immediately after spring term is critical for these two graduate programs.

Our single subject credential program begins their program in summer and relies on a 5-week summer session immediately before fall term. Since an undergraduate degree is required before a student can enroll in a credential program, a summer that begins in May prior to all other

CSUs and UCs finishing their terms would be detrimental to the single subject program's enrollment numbers and the demographics of the single subject program. A 5- or 7-week summer session right before the start of fall term is critical for this credential program.

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8. Threat to the Student Experience

Faculty concerns about the student experience were also central. Many had concerns about access to student research opportunities ... "Faculty also expressed concern about the potential impact on student success and experience. The compressed schedule, combined with inconsistent term structures during the transition period, may make it more difficult for students to plan internships, participate in study abroad and engage in other high-impact learning opportunities. There is also concern that reduced or poorly timed breaks – such as a shortened Thanksgiving period – may negatively affect class attendance and overall engagement."

Faculty also worried about access to summer research, course sequencing, registration logistics, and the impact on students who are off flowchart or depend on timely prerequisite clearance. The drawbacks for students—lack of alignment with internship calendar, lack of overlap with friends and family, lack of time for community/religious observance, lack of rest—may undermine Cal Poly's strong record of student recruitment.

Some comments argued the calendar could make an already difficult enrollment environment worse:

- Not enough time off for rest, leading to burnout and increases in the kinds of mental health crises that the university is already struggling to address

- Latinx students celebrate Christmas through January 6th and need at least that additional week.
- Summer semester doesn't align with other summer breaks in US or internationally, which may make Cal Poly much less attractive to students who want to spend their holidays with friends and siblings.
- A summer term that begins in May excludes community college students who may want to take classes in the summer or first year students who want a jump start but don't graduate from high school until June.

Student concerns reported:

- No Thanksgiving Break in the Fall.
- Extremely tight turnarounds between terms. Nearly back-to-back between Summer 27-Fall 27 and Spring 28-Summer 28.
- Spring ends on May 2 and begins on May 4.
- Spring end date is earlier than most other universities.
- Spring break comes early and not after the half-way point or in the Spring. It seems to be placed to avoid St. Patrick's Day events.
- How will mid-year move-ins and move-outs be managed.
- Off-campus housing leases will not align with this calendar and will cause issues with gaps in housing availability.
- Calendar will impact on student organization leadership roles that current run on a traditional election timeline in March and start of August.
- Calendar is out of sync with employment cycles and internship recruitment.
- **On YRO - Faculty Availability:** With rotating faculty schedules, how will students be supported when their faculty advisor or mentor is away during a term students need to discuss/plan senior projects and/or graduate school/blended program applications?

9. Threat to Faculty, Staff and Student Productivity and Wellbeing

Responses indicate there are strong concerns that the proposed calendar will create consequential challenges, to productivity and wellbeing, "...with the dominant view that the proposed calendar is operationally impractical, misaligned with the stated rationale for semester conversion, and insufficiently responsive to prior faculty input."

Faculty report – insufficient time for research, course design. Short breaks provide no opportunity for vacations longer than a few days. Repeated duty cycles and unclear as to faculty service timelines and expectations surrounding RPT.

Staff report – loss of non-student workdays to complete administrative and facility renewal processes. Limited time for vacations longer than a few days.

Students – expected fatigue, disengagement and absenteeism.

“Synchronizing spring break with the local K–12 calendar emerged as a particularly important request. Multiple faculty specifically and emphatically asked that spring break be aligned with the **San Luis Coastal USD calendar**. This appears to be one of the clearest actionable requests in the feedback. The concern is both practical and morale-related: misalignment creates family and caregiving difficulties for faculty, staff, and students with school-aged children, and many respondents see local calendar alignment as a basic quality-of-life issue the university should prioritize.”

Increased workload without adequate resources:

- Lecturers and Support Staff report expanded responsibilities without compensation.
- Additional Professional and Support Staff will be needed in Campus Health and Wellbeing, Library Services, College Advising/Student Services Centers.
- More support staff will be needed but there appears to be no plan to do so.
- Hiring more support staff is seen as:
 - unrealistic on the proposed timeline
 - difficult to training on onboarding requirements for support staff

Several calendar details are viewed as impractical or inequitable:

- Saturday Workdays
- Instructional days during Thanksgiving week
- Framing spring break as Monday-Sunday.
- Proposed calendar adds additional challenges and costs for those who must have child/dependent care services.

Staffing, Workload, and Burnout

- How are staff supposed to recharge mental batteries/avoid burnout and quiet-quitting if they are going from one term to another within a day?
- Is Cal Poly going to hire more staff employees to help out? If we are always short in budgets, how can we possibly cover what needs to be done with the staff we currently have?
- “Breaks” for staff are not BREAKS from work. They allow time to do all the things that there isn’t enough time for during the academic year.

- Staff Burnout: The lack of a "bridge" between Spring and Summer, combined with a January 3rd start, means advising staff will have very few periods of low-intensity work. How will staff be supported?

Faculty and Employee Retention / Work Conditions

- Staff already worried and looking at other employment: "Seeing this calendar prompted me to look at other university openings – I do not feel like my department is being considered at all, and other universities are not taking this action."
- Many of our staff and faculty rely on the relaxed nature of summer to catch up on work but also be more involved in their children's lives. With year-round operations, are we expected to find other ways of having our children taken care of without any expectations of a raise or similar compensation?
- Longer, well-structured summer terms can positively impact faculty morale by allowing time for a meaningful break with their families after Summer Sea Training and before the Fall semester.

Workload Balance and Career Growth:

Loss of course development and research productivity - Lack of faculty prep time between terms has detrimental effects on ability to update courses, lectures, and generally stay current. Lack of faculty research time between terms has detrimental effects on ability to complete ongoing fieldwork or archival work away from Cal Poly and undermines research productivity and progress toward tenure and promotion.

Threats to success and recruitment of chairs - Lack of quieter time in the year will undermine chairs/department heads to complete long range administrative plans, compromising department success and reducing the likelihood of competent and enthusiastic department leadership

10. Threat to the Institutional Competitiveness in Recruitment, Scholarly Productivity and Retention of Faculty and Staff.

- Recruiting faculty and staff is already challenging due to the high cost of living and lack of housing in San Luis Obispo. Adding the expectation of a year-round operation will make it harder to recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff.
- Risk of losing current faculty: High quality faculty often choose institutions that offer a traditional academic rhythm with the option but not requirement to teach in the summer. Faculty who conduct research and work with students on research during the

summer may decide to leave Cal Poly and go to a place that costs less to live and pays more.

- Additional Cost for Dependent Care- Proposed AY 27-28 calendar conflicts with approved AY 27-28 SLO Coastal Unified School District calendar, which will negatively impact faculty & staff with dependents (for instance, at \$30/hour for a nanny, the overlap of new term schedules with SLOCUSD will cost faculty about \$4400 in extra childcare). For faculty with need for elder care services will range closer to \$45.00 per hour.