

To: Gary Laver, Chair, Academic Senate
From: Dustin Stegner, Chair, Academic Senate Instruction Committee
Date: December 15, 2015
Subject: Fall 2015 Quarterly Report

During Fall 2015, the Academic Instruction Committee met twice. In the first meeting, the committee focused on recommendations for the 2017-18 Academic Calendar. The chair then presented the committee's recommendations to the Academic Senate Executive Committee, and the recommendations were unanimously approved. In addition to the official calendar options provided by the Registrar's Office, the committee discussed two issues. First, at the request of an academic senator, the committee was asked to solicit feedback on the decision to move to a week-long Thanksgiving Holiday (rather than the Wednesday-Friday holiday that is in place for the 2015-16 academic calendar). The feedback from across the university was very mixed—but one of the themes that emerged from it was that the Thanksgiving holiday is disruptive to instruction because week 11 and the finals examination period are separated by the holiday break. Second, the committee asked for comment across the different colleges about the possibility of an earlier start time to the fall quarter so that the quarter would end the Friday before Thanksgiving. This would solve the problem of the Thanksgiving holiday disruption and create a more substantial winter break for students, especially out-of-state and international students, to return home and for faculty to prepare for the winter and spring quarters. This is an issue that has been discussed in the past, but has not been formally pursued.

In the second meeting, the committee discussed its charges for the academic year. In addition, the committee generated feedback on the statement on competency-based assessment of student learning. In the winter quarter, the committee will be focused on generating a report on office hours and revising the campus cheating policy.

Finally, the chair met with Gary Laver, Chair of the Academic Senate, and Ken Brown, Chair of the Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee, to discuss the migration of student evaluations online and scheduled a presentation at the start of the winter quarter to the Academic Senate.