January 23, 2015

Dr. Dean Neikirk
Secretary of the General Faculty and Faculty Council
ENS 635 (C0803)

Dear Dean:

I write to give my approval to the “Proposal from the University Academic Calendar Committee to Extend the Thanksgiving Break,” Documents of the General Faculty 11508-11512. On May 5, 2014, the Faculty Council approved the proposal. It was to be presented to the General Faculty at a specially called meeting on September 15, 2014, but there was not a quorum. The legislation was returned to the Faculty Council, which met immediately following the adjournment of the special General Faculty meeting. Following discussion of the legislation, voting members of the Faculty Council approved the legislation by a show of hands, twenty-seven in favor, nineteen against. By copy of this message to Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Pedro Reyes I am also notifying UT System of the implementation of this legislation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

William Powers, Jr.
President

WP/lac

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Pedro Reyes, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UT System
    Dr. Gregory Fenves, Executive Vice President and Provost
    Mrs. Patti Ohlendorf, Vice President for Legal Affairs
    Dr. William Beckner, Chair, Faculty Council
    Dr. Hans Hoffman, chair, University Academic Calendar Committee
    Mr. Shelby Stanfield, Vice Provost and Registrar
    Ms. Debbie Roberts, Executive Assistant, Office of the General Faculty
September 16, 2014

William Powers Jr.
President
The University of Texas at Austin
MAI 400
Campus Mail Code: G3400

Dear President Powers:

Enclosed for your consideration is a proposal from the University Academic Calendar Committee recommending extending the Thanksgiving break to include the Wednesday just prior to Thanksgiving. To maintain a minimum of forty-two MWF classes as stipulated in the Principles for Development of the Academic Calendar, the committee also proposes that the fall semester begin the fourth Wednesday of August (as we do currently) and extend classes in the fall semester by one day. Student dead days would fall on Tuesday and Wednesday rather than on Monday and Tuesday, and final exams would be scheduled Thursday through Wednesday. The deadline to report final grades would be extended to 4:00 pm on Friday and to extend the semester (D 11508-11512). On May 5, 2014, the Faculty Council approved the proposal. It was to be presented to the General Faculty at a specially called meeting yesterday, but there was not a quorum, the legislation was returned to the Faculty Council, which met immediately following the adjournment of the special General Faculty meeting. Following discussion of the legislation, voting members of the Faculty Council approved the legislation by a show of hands, twenty-seven in favor, nineteen against. Final approval resides with you with notification to UT System.

Please let me know if you have questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Dean Neikirk, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

Enclosure

DPN: dir

xc: Gregory Fenves, executive vice president and provost
    Patricia Ohlendorf, vice president for legal affairs
    Janet Dukerich, sr. vice provost
    Carol Longoria, assistant deputy to the president

Electronic copies via email:
    Bill Beckner, chair, 2014-15 Faculty Council
    Hans Hofmann, chair, University Academic Calendar Committee
    Shelby Stanfield, registrar
    Lydia Cornell, assistant to Janet Dukerich
DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

PROPOSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CALENDAR COMMITTEE TO EXTEND THE THANKSGIVING BREAK

On behalf of the University Academic Calendar Committee, Professor Hans Hofmann (committee chair, integrative biology) submitted the following proposal recommending the extension of the Thanksgiving break to include the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and to amend the Principles for the Development of the Academic Calendar accordingly.

The Secretary has classified this proposal as legislation of *major* interest to the General Faculty. The Faculty Council will discuss the proposal at its meeting on April 14, 2014, and will vote on the legislation at its meeting on May 5, 2014. Afterwards, the voting members of the General Faculty will consider the proposal on a no-protest basis. Final approval resides with the president with formal notification to UT System.

[Signature]
Dean Neikirk, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

Posted on the Faculty Council website (http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/) on April 3, 2014.
PROPOSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC CALENDAR COMMITTEE TO EXTEND THE THANKSGIVING BREAK

Proposed Amendments to the Academic Calendar
Extend the Thanksgiving break to include the Wednesday just prior to Thanksgiving. To maintain a minimum of forty-two MWF classes as stipulated in the Principles for Development of the Academic Calendar, the committee proposes that the fall semester begin the fourth Wednesday of August (as we do currently) and extend classes in the fall semester by one day. Student dead days would fall on Tuesday and Wednesday rather than on Monday and Tuesday, and final exams would be scheduled Thursday through Wednesday. The deadline to report final grades would be extended to 4:00 PM on Friday.

Proposed Amendments to the Principles for the Development of the Academic Calendar
- In the fall, Labor Day will be observed and the [three]four-day Thanksgiving holiday ([Thursday] Wednesday through Saturday) will be observed.
- The following pattern for setting final examination periods in the long session should be observed:
  - [Friday] Monday — Last class day
  - [Saturday]
  - [Sunday — No class day]
  - [Monday — No class day]
  - Tuesday — No-class day
  - Wednesday — Exam day #1 No-class day
  - Thursday — Exam day #1[2]
  - Friday — Exam day #2[3]
  - Saturday — Exam day #3[4]
  - Sunday — No-class day
  - Monday — Exam day #4[5]
  - Tuesday — Exam day #5[6]
  - Wednesday — Exam day #6
  - Thursday
  - Friday
  - Saturday — Graduation day

Rationale: In November 2013, the Senate of College Councils endorsed a resolution in support of an extended Thanksgiving break that would allow a travel day for students and would also provide additional study time close to the final exam period. The resolution points out that many of our peer institutions offer the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving as an official holiday. The students requested that the University Academic Calendar Committee consider their resolution (see Appendix A).

The University Academic Calendar Committee considered the Senate of College Councils resolution and agreed with the students that, unlike the proposed Fall Break (D 10139-10147) considered by the Faculty Council and General Faculty last year, cancelling classes the Wednesday before Thanksgiving would have little impact on instruction given that the majority of laboratories are not taught during that week. Additionally, many faculty members already do not require attendance or cancel Wednesday class before Thanksgiving to allow students to travel.

The committee met six times since September to consider how the academic calendar and the Principles for the Development of the Academic Calendar (Appendix B) might be amended to allow for an extended Thanksgiving break and maintain seventy days of instruction in the fall semester.

On March 17, 2014, four options were presented to the Faculty Council for discussion (D 11445-11449). After a lengthy dialogue, Faculty Council members asked the committee to present a proposal with only one option; refer to the March 17 minutes. On March 27, 2014, Registrar Shelby Stanfield met with Dr. Hillary Hart (Faculty Council chair and distinguished senior lecturer, civil, architectural, and environmental engineering) and Professor Hofmann to discuss the four options mentioned at the March 17, 2014, Faculty Council meeting as well as a fifth option, the one being proposed in this document. On April 1, 2014, by majority vote, the University Academic Calendar Committee endorsed the new option.
Appendix A

The Senate of College Councils
November 21, 2013
S.R. 1306

IN SUPPORT OF AN EXTENDED THANKSGIVING BREAK

WHEREAS, In Spring 2013, the Academic Calendar Committee of Faculty Council presented a proposal regarding a two day break to occur during the fall semester; and,

WHEREAS, The proposal did not pass a vote of the General Faculty; and,

WHEREAS, The Academic Calendar Committee has expressed interest in either tabling changes to the calendar indefinitely or disbanding the committee entirely if no action is brought forth this year; and,

WHEREAS, The current academic calendar only provides a two day break for the Thanksgiving Holiday; and,

WHEREAS, An alternative idea which emerged during discussion and deliberation was considering altering the week of Thanksgiving break; and,

WHEREAS, Many institutions including University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill1, University of Michigan2, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign3, University of Indiana4, Ohio State University5, University of Kansas6, Kansas State University7, Iowa State University8, University of Oklahoma9, Oklahoma State University10, Baylor University11, Brown University12, Harvard University13, Yale University14, Princeton University15, and Georgetown University16, offer at least the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving as an official holiday; and,

WHEREAS, The concerns raised by faculty during the Fall Break deliberations are not an issue here as the week of Thanksgiving has never been a full instructional week; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Stelby Stanfield, Vice Provost and Registrar, reported that making the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving an official holiday would not present major issues in the arrangement of the academic calendar provided we maintain 70 instructional days; and,

---

2 http://www.ro.umich.edu/calendar/fa13.php
3 http://admissions.illinois.edu/academics/calendars.html
4 http://registrar.indiana.edu/official-calendar/official-calendar-fall.shtml
5 http://registrar.osu.edu/staff/archive_bigcal_sem.pdf
6 http://www.registrar.ku.edu/fall-2013-academic-calendar-date
7 http://www.k-state.edu/cgi-bin/eventview/registrar/academic
8 http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/calendar/cal-fall13
9 http://www.ou.edu/admin/facesen/minutes/1000jm.htm
11 http://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/123151.pdf
12 http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Registrar/calendar.html
13 http://www.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/calendar?mini=2013-10
14 http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/2013%E2%80%932014-academic-calendar
16 http://registrar.georgetown.edu/calendars/
WHEREAS, Since the Fall semester always begins on a Wednesday, the schedule can be easily altered because of the two available days in August; and,

WHEREAS, Students stand to benefit from the change by having reduced uncertainty in visits to their homes for Thanksgiving and by providing additional study time close to the scheduling final exam period; therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, The Senate of College Councils supports declaring the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving as an official holiday; and, be it further,

RESOLVED, The Senate of College Councils calls upon the Academic Calendar Committee of Faculty Council to consider and bring forth this proposal to the full Faculty Council; and, be it further,

RESOLVED, That this resolution be sent to Dr. Hillary Hart, Chair of Faculty Council; Dr. Charles Roeckle, Deputy to the President; Mr. Shelby Stanfield, Vice Provost and Registrar, and all members of the Academic Calendar Committee

AUTHORS: Andrew Clark (President, Senate of College Councils)
Alice Liu (Recruitment and Retention Co-Chair, Senate of College Councils)
Sam Kames (Recruitment and Retention At-Large Representative, Senate of College Councils)

SPONSOR(S): Robert Belanger (Policy Director, Senate of College Councils)
Appendix B

Principles for the Development of the Academic Calendar

These principles were originally promulgated in April 1975, and amended by the University Council in April 1979; March 1983; and February 1984; and by administrative action in June 1990. They were amended by the University Council in April 1992, and again by the Faculty Council in April 2007.

1. Coordinating Board guidelines shall be followed in establishing the beginning dates, length of session, and ending dates of all sessions.

2. The committee considers a seventy-five day semester (comprising forty-five Monday, Wednesday, and Friday meeting days and thirty Tuesday and Thursday meeting days) to be ideal in length. Realizing the impossibility of achieving this in the fall semester, the committee holds that there shall be a minimum of seventy class days in a semester (forty-two Monday, Wednesday, and Friday meeting days and twenty-eight Tuesday and Thursday meeting days).

3. In the fall, Labor Day will be observed and the three-day Thanksgiving holiday (Thursday through Saturday) will be observed.

4. In the spring, Martin Luther King Day will be observed.

5. In the spring, the University will recess for one week’s vacation beginning the Monday after the eighth week of classes.

6. In the summer, Independence Day (July 4) shall be observed if it falls on a weekday.

7. Long-session semesters should begin on Monday whenever possible. Long-session graduation days should occur on Saturday, except when the fall graduation day would otherwise be on December 25, then Friday, December 24, will be designated graduation day.

8. The following pattern for setting final examination periods in the long session should be observed:

   - Friday — Last class day
   - Saturday
   - Sunday — No-class day
   - Monday — No-class day
   - Tuesday — No-class day
   - Wednesday — Exam day #1
   - Thursday — Exam day #2
   - Friday — Exam day #3
   - Saturday — Exam day #4
   - Sunday — No-class day
   - Monday — Exam day #5
   - Tuesday — Exam day #6
   - Wednesday
   - Thursday
   - Friday
   - Saturday — Graduation day

9. There shall be at least one full week between Commencement in the spring and the beginning of the summer session and at least one full week between graduation day in the summer and the beginning of the fall semester.

10. The summer session shall be of eleven weeks duration, comprising two five and one-half week terms (including registration, class days, and examination days). A schedule will also be provided for nine-week and whole-session courses. There will be a minimum of twenty-five class days in the first term and twenty-five class days in the second term. Second-term registration will run concurrent with the first-term final examinations.

11. Two-day periods for examinations shall be provided for all summer terms and sessions.

12. The calendar of the School of Law is established by the School of Law. It must conform to Coordinating Board principles and to the rules of the American Bar Association. In setting its calendar, the School of Law shall also follow the pattern established by the preceding principles as closely as possible.

13. The calendar for the MBA program in the McCombs School of Business is established by the McCombs School of Business. It must conform to Coordinating Board principles. In setting its calendar, the McCombs School of Business shall also follow the pattern established by the preceding principles as closely as possible. 17

---

17 Revision approved by the Faculty Council on January 25, 2010, and approved by the president on March 18, 2010 (D 7791-7806).