

# **ALTERNATIVE CALENDARS: RECOMMENDATIONS AND A PROGRESS REPORT**

Spring 2000 Educational Policies Committee

Topic: Local Senates

## **Abstract**

As a consequence of changes to the 175-day rule, many colleges are considering moving to alternative calendars. To assist in the deliberations on the multiplicity of issues involved in such a change, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is offering what are essentially two documents: 1) a set of recommendations regarding alternative calendars that was adopted by the Plenary Body; and 2) a series of frequently asked questions, or FAQs, regarding alternative calendars, along with their answers.

## **Recommendations**

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges makes the following recommendations to local academic senates:

1. Local academic senates should consult collegially and take a leading role in developing the process to determine calendar changes, including, but not limited to the formulation of criteria for selection to which all models will be subjected. Clearly such criteria will give primacy to student access and student academic success before desires to increase enrollment or to serve other administrative ends.
2. Local academic senates must ensure that the quality of educational programs and curricular offerings are not diminished by any change; rather, the desire is to improve both.
3. Local academic senates must work closely with their bargaining units to identify issues of concern and clarify appropriate provenances for decision-making as it affects faculty. Such decisions, within the shared governance process, will ensure respect for the delegated authority of the senates and the statutory and locally-negotiated responsibilities of the bargaining units.
4. Faculty should debate within and between disciplines the academic and pedagogical advantages and disadvantages of any proposed calendar.
5. Flex and Staff Development Officers must work with the local senates to ensure full opportunities for continued professional growth, exchange, and development within the contractual obligations, regardless of the calendar model.
6. Local academic senates, working with students as shared governance participants, should identify those populations of students most likely to be negatively impacted by changes and to identify their concerns.

7. Local academic senates should be advocates for unique programs or activities whose special or contractual demands must be considered.
8. Local academic senates should work with their bargaining agent to identify faculty (e.g., librarians and counselors) on whom differential responsibilities or opportunities might fall and to seek resolution of inequities.
9. Local academic senates must identify services and facilities necessary to instruction and to full college participation by their students; such faculty services as computing facilities, administrative support, duplication services, and the library must be matched by services that will provide full access to all students, regardless of their term of enrollment.
10. Faculty must remain sensitive to the demands these changes would place on staff and hourly employees and to understand how their own senate-adopted policies and practices might impact their workload.

Finally, the local academic senates must insist on mechanisms to retain shared governance and resist any efforts inadvertent or intentional to silence the voice of faculty by making significant decisions when faculty are not present on campus.