

# Ad Hoc Committee on Calendar Reform

March 7, 2018

# Committee Membership

<b>Chair:</b> Aarti Gupta, Computer Science	<b>Secretary:</b> Liz Colagiuri, Office of the Dean of the College
Cole Crittenden, The Graduate School	Olivia Ott '20
Elizabeth Davison, GS, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering	Connor Pfeiffer '18
Polly Griffin, Office of the Registrar	Gideon Rosen, Philosophy
Casey Lew-Williams, Psychology	Matthew Salganik, Sociology
Pedro Meira Monteiro, Spanish & Portuguese	Michael Strauss, Astrophysical Sciences
Erika Milam, History	Sankaran Sundaresan, Chemical & Biological Engineering
Mala Murthy, Molecular Biology (Spring 2017)	Toni Turano, Office of the Dean of the Faculty

# Committee Process and Timeline

Spring 2017

- Committee charged with proposing a calendar that would move the fall semester earlier, finish fall-term exams before the winter break, and create a flexible activity period in January

October 2017-  
January 2018

- Campus-wide conversations with faculty, staff, and students
  - Discuss the different choices and trade-offs
  - Gather feedback

January 2018

- Launch FAQ site to share latest information and calendar mock-ups
- Survey faculty and student on a specific proposed calendar (Jan 25 – Feb 9)

March 2018

- Draft report
- Advance proposal to Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy

# Real Problems with the Current Calendar

- The Fall term continues over winter break
  - Ending in December would benefit student learning and retention of course material (61% faculty agree)
  - Holding finals in December would benefit students' mental health (63% faculty agree)
- Multiple breaks in Fall term
  - Interrupts the flow of teaching and makes it more difficult to sustain momentum
  - High cost associated with repeated travel over breaks (low-income families, international students)
- Out of sync with activities outside of Princeton, such as:
  - Summer jobs/internships, study abroad, outside courses

63% of faculty and 72% of students surveyed would support moving fall term finals before winter break

81% of students surveyed said the current placement of finals in January makes them feel stressed over winter break

*None* of our peer schools has a calendar like ours, with Fall term ending after winter break

# Suggested Changes for Calendar Reform

## **1. Move Fall final exams to December, finish semester before break. Start and end Spring term one week earlier.**

- Requires starting Fall term earlier
- Reduces time gap between last day of class and reading period/final exams in Fall
- Aligns with summer jobs, study abroad, and summer courses/programs
- Gives a true holiday break so students are re-charged for the Spring
- Creates parity between Fall and Spring semesters

## **2. This would create a flexible 2-week space in January for academic and other programs: "Wintersession"**

- Optional participation (for students, for faculty)
- Non-credit bearing activities
- Opportunity for exploration, hands-on learning, reinforcement

# Wintersession Opportunities

*Students currently schedule casual learning opportunities during the 1-week intersession. Last year, the USG offered 63 courses of two to four hours each, taught by grad and undergrad instructors. 383 students participated, with 1123 activity registrations.*

## **Two-week, non-credit, exploratory window could be used for:**

- Academic Content and Skills
- Workshops
- Student Research
- Teaching by Graduate Students
- Travel
- Service
- Experiential Learning
- *Mini* Princeternships

## **Maintain January window for departmental activities**

- Faculty search, graduate student admissions, general examinations
- Faculty will be expected to be available in January (except those on leave)

# Calendar Parameters as of October 2017

## Stays the Same

- 12 weeks of teaching
- Fall JP Deadline in January
- 3-day Thanksgiving Break \*
- 3-week Winter Break
- 1-week Spring Break

\* 3 weekdays, could become 1 week

## Under Consideration

- Start of classes \*\*
- 9-day Reading Period
- 11-day Exam Period
- 1-week Intersession
- 1-week Fall Break

\*\* Determines duration of Summer

# Fall 2017 Campus Conversations

October 2017

—

January 2018

- Chairs & Directors, DGS, and DepReps
- 15+ Departments
- 4 Committees (Classrooms & Schedule, Course of Study, Examinations & Standing, Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy)
- Council of College Heads, Humanities Council
- USG and GSG
- Staff: ODOC, ODUS, EVP, Athletics
- *Happy to meet with others upon request!*



# Calendar Parameters: Current Thinking

## Stays the Same

- 12 weeks of teaching →

- Widespread support, consistent with prior survey data

- Fall JP Deadline in January →

- Due first Friday of Wintersession to allow time for advising before final submission
- Juniors will most likely work over the winter break, but that's a trade-off they're willing to make in one year out of four

- 3-day Thanksgiving Break →

- Interest in making this a full-week break to eliminate partial week and absenteeism
- No available days to do so

# Calendar Parameters: Current Thinking

## Under Consideration

- Start of classes
- 9-day Reading Period
- 11-day Exam Period
- 1-week Intersession
- 1-week Fall Break

Shorten by 1 day in Fall; same in Spring

- Strong student support for not changing this
- Allows faculty to not lower expectations for end-of-term work
- Need minimum 8 days for accreditation


Change to 2-week Wintersession

- Optional, non-credit bearing activities
- Allow flexibility
- Recommend funding to cultivate and support innovative offerings

**Spring term moves up by one week**

# Calendar Parameters: Current Thinking

## Under Consideration

- Start of classes 
- 11-day Exam Period
- 1-week Fall Break

Considered three choices for Fall:

1. Early Start (Aug 25 – 31)
2. Post Labor Day Start (Sept 3 – 9)
3. **Midway Start (Sept 1 – 6)**



Exam Period shortened to 7 days

- Students would have at most 1 exam per day
- Add exam slots on Sunday; allow reschedules



Preserve full-week of Fall Break

- Unique to Princeton
- Supports course-related travel and activities
- Does not create additional partial weeks

# Current Thinking: Shortened Exams/Full Fall Break

2017-2018 - Sample

- **Midway Start:** Fall term begins on Tuesday after Labor Day (Sept 2–6), or Wednesday before Labor Day (Sept 1, 2)
- Seven year cycle of calendars
  - Classes start *after* Labor Day in 5 out of 7 years
- One-week Fall break
- Fall exams conclude between December 19 and 23
  - Exam period shortened to 7 days
- 2-week Wintersession
- Spring term begins and ends one week earlier than current
- Summer is 1 day shorter in 5 out of 7 years; 1 week shorter in 2 out of 7 years (counting from Commencement)

	Orientation (includes OA and CA)
	Classes in Session
	Breaks/classes not in session
	Reading period
	Wintersession (NEW)
	Dean's Date
	Exam Period



# Side-by-Side Comparison (Current v. Proposed)

## 2017-2018

Current Calendar



## 2017-2018

Proposed Calendar



	Orientation
Yellow	Classes in Session
Blue	Breaks/classes not in session
Yellow	Reading period
Green	Wintersession (NEW)
Purple	Dean's Date
Red	Exam Period

# Peer Institutions

	Fall Term Starts	Fall Term Ends	Fall Break Week Days	TG Break Week Days	Reading Days	Exam Days	Winter-session?	Spring Term Begins	Spring Term Exams End
<b>Cornell</b>	8/23 – 8/29	12/15 – 12/21	2	3	3 – 4	8	3 weeks, for credit	1/21 - 1/27	5/16 – 5/23
<b>U Penn</b>	8/25 – 8/31	12/19 – 12/22	2	2	2 – 4	8 – 9	No	1/10 – 1/16	5/8 – 5/14
<b>Yale</b>	8/27 – 9/02	12/17 – 12/22	3	5	6	6	No	1/13 – 1/19	5/6 – 5/11
<b>Harvard</b>	8/30 – 9/5	12/19 – 12/20	1	3	5 – 7	10 – 11	1 week, non-credit	1/22 – 1/28	5/12 – 5/18
<b>Proposed Princeton</b>	9/1 – 9/6	12/19 – 12/23	5	3	8/9	7/9	2 weeks, non-credit	1/24 – 1/30	5/12 – 5/18
<b>Columbia</b>	9/2 – 9/8	12/19 – 12/23	2	3	2 – 3	7 – 8	No	1/16 – 1/22	5/11 – 5/17
<b>Brown</b>	9/3 – 9/9	12/20 – 12/21	1	2.5	5	9 – 10	3 weeks, for credit	1/21 – 1/27	5/15 – 5/20
<b>Current Princeton</b>	9/11 – 9/16	1/22 – 1/28	5	3	9	11	No	1/31 – 2/6	5/21 – 5/27

**All of our peers start Fall term in late August/early September and end in December**

*Questions?*

# Survey Response Rates

Faculty – 70%	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>707</b>
Full Professor (357)	69%
Assoc Professor (78)	82%
Asst Professor (144)	73%
Lecturer/Instr (128)	63%
Humanities (227)	69%
Social Sciences (164)	68%
Natural Sciences (181)	69%
Engineering (119)	75%
Other (16)	84%

Undergraduates – 45%	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>2339</b>
Seniors (456)	35%
Juniors (537)	41%
Sophomores (649)	50%
First-years (697)	53%

Graduate Students – 40%	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>1113</b>
PhD G1/G2 (431)	46%
PhD G3/G4 (324)	39%
PhD G5/G8 (204)	30%
WWS Masters (99)	58%
Other Masters (55)	34%
Humanities (251)	38%
Social Sciences (304)	41%
Natural Sciences (301)	37%
Engineering (257)	42%



# When comparing this proposed calendar to the University's current calendar, which calendar do you favor?

