



University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

Name:	Kristen O'Neil
Date:	9-29-2012
Title of Proposal:	Columbus Day
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Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):	Undergraduate
Description of issue/concern/policy in question:	Columbus Day, a national holiday, falls in the middle of Fall semester. Most school districts have this day off, along with many businesses and some colleges, but not the University of Maryland. I believe changing this policy will be beneficial to the students.
Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:	I believe we should be given Columbus day off. Many universities have what they call "Fall Break": a small vacation, usually only a few days, in the middle of the Fall semester. Similar to Spring Break, it gives out-of-state students an opportunity to visit home, gives students a chance to take a break from school work or catch up on it, and gives professors some time off or catching up time as well. Because we don't have a Fall Break, I believe having Columbus day off (one day in a 4 month semester) would nice for the students and faculty. We have Labor Day off, at the beginning of the semester when students can look over their syllabi and meet up with friends they haven't seen over the summer, but most students do not have any assigned work to be doing on that day off. In the middle of the semester there are exams, papers, and other assignments that one day off could be very useful to catch up on. It would also be nice to be able to use that long weekend to visit home if students haven't seen their families in a while (especially since the semester started).
Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:	Change the academic calendar to allow for this day off. Because it is only one day I do not believe the rest of the academic calendar will need to be changed in order to compensate for the time lost.

Additional Information:	Universities with Fall Breaks: Yale University (as of this year), University of Pennsylvania, Lynchburg College, Arizona State University, Purdue University, Pomona College, University of Louisville, Old Dominion University, University of Utah, Gannon University, Ball State University, Marquette University, California State University, and many more Universities considering a Fall Break: University of Southern California, Indiana University, and others.
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Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to senate-admin@umd.edu or University of Maryland Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall, College Park, MD 20742-7541. Thank you!