



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
UNIVERSITY SENATE

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October 25, 2012

Kristen O'Neil
0104 Baltimore Hall
College Park, MD 20742

Dear Ms. O'Neil,

The Senate Executive Committee (SEC) examined the proposal entitled, "Columbus Day (Senate Doc. No. 12-13-19)" at its meeting on October 17, 2012.

The SEC carefully reviewed the proposal and discussed the University System of Maryland (USM) policies related to academic calendars. Specifically, the Policy on the Academic Calendar (III-5.00) (<http://www.usmh.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionIII/III500.html>) states:

1. *All institutions of the University System of Maryland will follow a common academic calendar to assist student planning, facilitate joint and cooperative programs and appointments, simplify student and faculty movement among institutions, and facilitate use of distance education technologies throughout the System.*
2. *The common academic calendar will provide sufficient time for instruction and examinations as recommended by the Middle States Association and as stipulated by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Within the common framework, each president shall be authorized to adjust class time to meet instructional needs.*
3. *The features of the common calendar will include:*
 - a. *a fall semester which begins before Labor Day, except in those calendar years when a start after Labor Day can also accommodate the requirements for class meeting time, interrupted by a recess for Thanksgiving. The final examination period will conclude on or before December 23.*
 - b. *a minimum of fourteen instructional days over a three-week period in January available for institutions to use for an academic winter session or, for those institutions which do not plan to offer coursework, an extended winter holiday.*
 - c. *a spring semester interrupted by a one-week common spring break. The final examination period will conclude prior to Memorial Day.*

After careful consideration, the SEC agreed that the USM policy is not within the purview of the University Senate and that the Board of Regents (BOR) and the Chancellor must approve any changes to this policy. Therefore, a University Senate review was not appropriate. You can contact the BOR to make changes to USM policy if you would like to pursue this issue further. Thank you for taking the time to craft a proposal for Senate consideration. Should you have any questions about the SEC's decision, please do not hesitate to contact, Reka Montfort at 301-405-5804.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MNS', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Martha Nell Smith
Chair

MNS/rm