

# Fall Break Implementation Proposal



November 2023

During Spring 2023, a work group was charged by the Provost to explore the feasibility of adding a break from classes in the fall semester, in addition to the Thanksgiving Break. The impetus for the charge was a recommendation with the University Senate to consider implementing a break as a result of their review of the University's policy on excused absences. The work group's core tasks and deliverables were:

- A recommendation on whether the university should consider implementing a fall break, with strong reasoning to support the recommendation.
- In the case that the group recommends implementing a fall break, options and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each should be considered.

The work group report is attached as Appendix A, in which it was concluded that a two-day fall break is feasible, with the preferred timing to be a Monday-Tuesday in early October. The rationale for this conclusion is discussed in the report. Given the need for planning well ahead of time, the earliest starting semester would be Fall 2025. The proposed change to Fall 2025 also requires a change to Summer 2025, so a decision will be needed before Summer 2025 scheduling begins in Fall 2024.

This document lays out the specifics of the required calendar changes for the academic years of Fall 2025 through Fall 2027. In all three years, the preferred break period is in the week before the Indigenous Peoples' Day weekend. Some of the general comments from the workgroup's report are repeated here for context.

The proposal assumes that the two break days are "no-class" days, but not additional university holidays, so employees would be expected to report to work on those days unless they use their personal or annual leave. We did not consider the use of Labor Day as a class day since it is a university holiday.

## General Comments on the Academic Calendar

Every six years, the university is asked by the University System of Maryland to draft six years of academic calendars for the campus, three years in advance. This last exercise was

completed in 2019 for the 2022-2027 academic years. We anticipate a request for the next cycle (2028-2031) sometime in the 2024 calendar year.

Annual calendars typically operate on a seven-year cycle, with the start and end dates shifting as the annual calendar shifts. In crafting the academic calendars, the Registrar deals with a set of federal, state, and university constraints that include: a regulated number of credit hours per term, adequate time to refresh the residence halls and facilities, avoidance of major religious days, a set number of days for final exams prior to commencement, the inclusion of a reading day, and enough time for main commencement and departmental ceremonies in spring.

With our standard MWF and T-Th course schedules, the state regulations result in the need for 45 MWF and 30 T-Th instructional days in each semester, ideally 75 total instructional days. Our calendar is sufficiently constrained that we typically can only fit 72 instructional days, (excluding final exam week). It should be noted that the federal guidance allows flexibility “consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education.”

### Key Principles for the proposed schedule

- Given the state and federal requirements, two days must be added to the Fall schedule to accommodate a two-day break. In each year we considered the balance between starting earlier and ending later. Given how close the end of the Fall semesters are already to the winter break, starting earlier seems to be the better option<sup>1</sup>. For example, extending the Fall 2025 calendar by two class days without starting earlier would push the last day of final exams to December 24. In Fall 2026 and Fall 2027, the last day of finals would be December 23.
- Final exam scheduling requires six days of exams, which in most years requires seven calendar days, avoiding scheduling exams on Sundays.
- Resident Life, Facilities, and academic support units all need time between terms to manage move-in and move-out of the residence halls, prepare facilities for the next term, and various administrative functions. The aim is for 9 days between summer and fall and 5 days between spring and summer. This cannot always be achieved, but priority is given to time between summer and fall.

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<sup>1</sup> In the work group report, a different set of options was laid out as a straw plan, but this did not take into account the impact on the summer term – for example the time between summer 2025 and fall 2025 would have been unacceptably short. A more careful analysis led to the decision to propose the earlier start choice rather than later end.

Achieving these principles sometimes requires changes to summer, winter, and/or spring terms as well. Below are some specific notes for each academic year. Proposed calendar modifications are in Appendix B. It should be noted that there are numerous other dates to work through (start/stop of sub terms, summer sessions, 12-week terms, etc.), but they don't influence the main start/stop dates of the semester so are not indicated in Appendix B. Highlights for each academic year are below.

**Fall 2025:** This semester was already unusual because of the late start, just after Labor Day, resulting in a late finish. The semester start is moved into the week before Labor Day to avoid getting too close to the winter break. (Starting before Labor Day is more typical.) To leave adequate time between summer and fall, Summer 2025 will also be moved forward by two days. Summer 2026 has also been moved forward to prepare for the change in Fall 2026.

**Fall 2026:** The current start of Fall 2026, like most years, is the Monday before Labor Day. To accommodate the additional two days for the break, the start is moved three days into the earlier week, to Wednesday August 26, leaving the end of the fall final exam period as scheduled, on December 19. The Fall 2026 semester was already one day short (71 days), so moving back by three days brings it into alignment with other terms (72 days).

**Fall 2027:** The current start of Fall 2027 is also the Monday before Labor Day. The start is moved two days into the earlier week, to Thursday August 26. The end of the final exam period would remain on Tuesday December 21. To leave adequate time between summer and fall, Summer 2027 is moved earlier by two days, and this then also requires moving Spring 2027 earlier by two days to leave adequate time between spring and summer.

The resulting break periods are as follows (inclusive of weekends):

Calendar Year	Days between Spring/Summer	Days between Summer/Fall
2025	4	7
2026	5	8
2027	6	8

These new schedules would start our fall semesters earlier than the local county public schools begin their fall classes. Public schools typically begin the Monday prior to Labor Day. The alternative, however, would extend our fall semesters later into December which is also not desirable, particularly for those who travel for the winter break.

We recognize that many units across campus use the week before the start of class for various types of welcoming, training, and orientation events. Hopefully by establishing the calendar changes well in advance of the start, there will be time for adaptation.

### Appendices

[Appendix A](#) - Fall Break Work Group Report, Spring 2023

[Appendix B](#) – Proposed calendar adjustments for upcoming Fall years

# Fall Break Workgroup Report - June 2023

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## Charge

This workgroup was charged to explore the feasibility of adding a break from classes in the fall semester, in addition to the Thanksgiving Break. The group's core tasks and deliverables include:

- A recommendation on whether the university should consider implementing a fall break, with strong reasoning to support the recommendation.
- In the case that the group recommends implementing a fall break, options and an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each should be considered.

In addition to the charge, the group also considered:

- the impact on the schedule of classes and the overall academic calendar, delivery of coursework, campus/system policy, and the core mission of this institution to prepare our students for success
- particular kinds of classes that pose special challenges (e.g. laboratory or studio expectations)
- the length and timing of the break to find a compromise between the benefits of the mental health break and the loss of instructional time
- the restrictions and regulations regarding the number of faculty contact and instructional hours
- peer practices, specifically within the Big Ten Academic Alliance and USM
- the information-gathering processes as inclusive of the broader community's perspectives
- the impact on students who are unable to travel during the break
- other kinds of requests (e.g. a day off for elections)

## Background

This work is motivated by a [recommendation from the University Senate's Academic Procedures and Standard Committee](#) (APAS) in December 2022 to explore the benefits and complications of adding a short break from classes during the fall to the academic calendar. This work is well aligned with the goals of the *Fearlessly Forward* Strategic Plan, particularly our strategic commitment to invest in people and communities with the goal of becoming a coordinated community of care. This work sits squarely in that space.

### General Comments on the Academic Calendar

Every six years, the university is asked by the University System of Maryland to draft six years of academic calendars for the campus, three years in advance. This last exercise was completed in 2019 for the 2022-2028 academic years.

Annual calendars typically operate on a seven-year cycle, with the start and end dates shifting as the annual calendar shifts. For the upcoming years, Fall 2024 has the earliest start and finish dates (Aug 26 - Dec 17), and Fall 2025 has the latest (Sept 2 - Dec 20).

In crafting the academic calendars, the Registrar deals with a set of federal, state, and university constraints that include: a regulated number of credit hours per term, adequate time to turn over the residence halls, avoidance of major religious days, a set number of days for final exams prior to commencement, the inclusion of a reading day, and enough time for main commencement and departmental ceremonies. The elimination of the winter commencement has created some relief from this last constraint for the fall semester. However, it still has an impact in the spring, particularly on the time between the end of the spring semester and the start of the summer term. With our standard MWF and T-Th course schedules, the State regulations result in the need for 45 MWF and 30 T-Th instructional days in a given semester, ideally 75 total instructional days. It should be noted that the federal guidance allows flexibility “consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education” (see Appendix C).

It is also important to note that the university has effectively three academic calendars. In addition to the “standard” fall/winter/spring/summer semester calendar, there is a 12-week calendar used by a small number of professional graduate programs. There are also 7-week “sub-terms” within the standard fall and spring semesters. This latter is used almost exclusively by the master's programs within the Robert H. Smith School of Business. Our work focused mainly on the standard semester calendar, although we note some of the issues raised have to do with other ones towards the end of this document.

### Key themes

#### *Overall positive feedback*

The workgroup received generally positive feedback when surveying campus stakeholders. Most people saw a fall break as a beneficial change to the fall academic calendar. Students are interested in learning more about the university’s intentions behind instituting a fall break, although many believe this would generally support mental health for students and

faculty alike. Some units are concerned about a longer fall semester getting too close to the winter break.

#### *Impact on instruction*

While the feedback was positive overall, the predominant faculty concern has come from academic units with laboratory instruction. Faculty and schedulers within the Clark School of Engineering, the College of Agriculture, and the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences were consulted, and most indicated that a fall break is doable as long as there is enough time to prepare.

Another sector of instruction considered was that of the performing arts. School of Music ensembles and TDPS theater production courses are often working towards a performance deadline, but the actual calendar days available are less important such that a short break could be accommodated with enough lead time.

The School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation has studio courses that may be impacted. The schedules are apparently flexible enough to accommodate a break.

#### *Impact on administrative units*

The campus administrative units that were consulted generally indicated that a fall break is feasible, given advance notice. The units included Enrollment Management, Extended Studies, Student Financial Services, Resident Life, Residential Facilities, Dining, Athletics, Conferences & Visitor Services.

#### *Mental Health*

Mental Health concerns have increased significantly over the last number of years, especially for students, but also for faculty and staff. There is general consensus that a short break from classes in the fall would be a welcomed addition to reduce stress. The University Counseling Center has noted that, unlike prior years when there was an ebb and flow of service demands, the demand is consistently high, with more students with heightened distress that requires hospital transport. Anxiety is the top presenting concern, with the top two sub-areas being social anxiety and academic distress.

#### *Peer Practices*

Within the Big Ten Academic Alliance, nine out of fourteen schools have a fall break. Of those nine, six of the fall breaks are in mid-October for 2-3 days. Four of those six are scheduled at the beginning of the week (Monday/Tuesday) and the remaining two are scheduled at the end

(Thursday/Friday). One school offers a three-day break from Friday-Tuesday. The remaining three Big Ten schools with a fall break schedule it during the week of Thanksgiving. Also of those nine Big Ten schools, four have a winter session, and two of those four have a Reading Day. Other peer schools within USM and elsewhere were reviewed, and similarly, it was more common that a fall break was in place and that it was scheduled sometime in mid-October at the beginning of the week. Every school with a fall break started classes before Labor Day.

### Feasibility

Constraints on the calendar include the following:

- The university must adhere to federal, state, and Middle States guidance on the required number of class days to meet credit-hour requirements. As a result, adding a two-day break in the fall would require extending the length of the semester by two days.
- Residential Facilities, Dining Services, and other student services need time between the summer and fall semesters to prepare for the start of Fall.
- Generally, the institutions within the USM operate on a common calendar, so a change to our calendar will require socialization within the USM.
- Laboratory classes that meet one day per week and with many sections require a full week of class time along with setup/teardown time to maintain a schedule. Laboratory courses that involve animals may have associated time constraints due to the preparation of the animals.
- Adding two no-class days to the 12-week calendar, which is used by a small number of professional graduate programs, is nearly impossible just given the number of working days in the year.
- Adding two no-class days in October to the 7-week “sub-terms” that fall within the fall may result in some awkward pedagogical timing for the programs using those subterms.

### Recommendations

Our analysis focused on two particular years: Fall 2024, which has the earliest start/stop (Aug 26 - Dec 17), and Fall 2025, which has the latest start/stop (Sept 2 - Dec 20). As such, some years would require an earlier start to the semester, and in other years a later end.

Realistically, the earliest implementation would be in Fall 2025 since scheduling and planning for Fall 2024 is already underway. We included consideration of Fall 2024 as an example.

In general, it appears that a two-day break, resulting in extending the length of the fall semester by two days, would be feasible. The committee considered three general options.



**Thanksgiving:** Based on the feedback received and from earlier discussions, we came to the conclusion that extending the Thanksgiving week would not accomplish the goal of stress reduction, given how late Thanksgiving is in the semester. For example, in Fall 2024 there are only two TTh and four MWF class days between Thanksgiving and Reading Day.

Beginning in the Fall of 2016, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving was designated a “no-class” day, allowing time for travel for the holiday for students who need to do so. It resulted in a five-day break (including the weekend). Some instructors have noted that continuity of learning is disrupted during the week of Spring Break, and so, concerns were raised about implementing a weeklong break over Thanksgiving, especially as final exams approach. This is also the point in the academic calendar when performance-based classes have their culminating performances. Removing days from the calendar at this time would significantly complicate scheduling performance venues in The Clarice. However, it should be noted that using Thanksgiving week to implement a longer fall break would be the least disruptive to laboratory instruction schedules.

**Election Day:** Another possible option would be to use the timing of Election Day – the Tuesday after the first Monday of November in even-numbered years. While the timing of the break would be better than Thanksgiving, it is still relatively late in the semester as well as being close to Thanksgiving. In Fall 2028, for example, Election Day and Thanksgiving are just two weeks apart. Given that Election Day is always on a Tuesday, a rational option would be a Mon/Tues break rather than just a single day. In odd years, this date is not particularly relevant.

The University offers [guidance](#) on voting for students, faculty, and staff, and typically provides [resources](#) and [reminders](#) as Election Day approaches.

**Mid-October:** This timing would put a break approximately halfway through the number of instructional days. A one-day break connected to a weekend would, of course, be even more feasible if this were identified as the preferred option.

We recommend that if a two-day break were implemented, they remain “no-class” days rather than university closures or holidays and that the break should use one MWF day and one TTh day. While there were some differences of opinion as to whether a Thu/Fri period or a Mon/Tu period would be preferable, we recommend that a Mon/Tu break be considered with higher priority, although the impact on specific units should be considered. Friday

afternoons tend to be a light instruction period and students who do wish to travel home could use this time without losing more class time. On the other hand, in some years the Thu/Fri break is more feasible from a scheduling perspective.

We learned that Indigenous Peoples' Day (Columbus Day) is an important recruitment day for Undergraduate Admissions since it is available for many parents and prospective students. Many students participate in hosting visitors, and there is interest among parents and students to visit classes. Consequently, this would not be a good choice for a fall break day.

Appendix B<sup>1</sup> contains sample calendars with a two-day break for Fall 2024 through Fall 2028, showing the two options of two days in mid-October or two days at the time of Election Day. In most years, the sample calendars assume no change in the start date, since they already start one week prior to Labor Day.

There will likely be a significant number of students who would remain on campus for a short break. We recommend, therefore, that the university develop a strategy for some programming during those days. Among the 30,000 undergraduate students enrolled, there are approximately 7,000 who live outside of the DelMarVa region (including 650 international students). While only a fraction of those students are in UMD's residence halls, these give an indication of students who might likely remain on or near campus over a short break.

### Issues for specific academic programs

Undergraduate chemistry instruction represents a unique challenge due to the specific number of laboratory hours required by its professional society. Lower-level chemistry course enrollments are such that lab sections must be offered five days per week, and they require setup/teardown preparation time that creates challenges for modifying the schedule. Otherwise, various suggestions for alternative lab instruction have been discussed, based on experiences during the pandemic. These include a dry-lab week, an independent activity lab, or an analysis week. During the discussion, it became clear that specific calendar adjustments would need to be reviewed on a year-by-year basis.

Twenty-two professional graduate programs follow the 12-week/4-term calendar (although some of these are online versions of on-campus programs), with a total enrollment of about 500 graduate students. These program directors expressed concern about introducing a

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix B removed since it is out-of-date, please see follow-up November 2023 report.

break in an already extremely tight schedule. The students in these programs are often working professionals who have a goal of completing the program as quickly as possible.

More generally, the primary request for the semester-based masters and doctoral programs is if the calendar were to be lengthened, they would like to avoid going much further into December. There is an inherent tension between Labor Day and the Christmas holiday, however, and depending on the specifics of the calendar, the semester may need to either start earlier or end later. Our review of the Fall 2025 calendar, which ends on December 20, was a good reference point.

Several of the Smith School's masters programs use the 7-week sub-terms to deliver 2-credit courses. A small number of other academic units also use the 7-week subterms, with the majority being graduate-level courses. They are typically scheduled Monday-Thursday. Implementation of a Mon/Tues break in one or the other of the sub-terms would create a need for making up significant instructional time.

Some graduate program directors expressed the sentiment that later in the semester, rather than the middle, is a more stressful time for graduate students. It is conceivable that undergraduate students and graduate students respond differently to their academic pressures given the variation in type and intensity of the work.

Prior to making a final decision as to whether to implement a break and when, we recommend strongly that some socialization among students, faculty, and staff be carried out. While we have attempted to reach a wide audience, there may be consequences we have not uncovered.

### Areas to consider moving forward

#### *Student workload*

There is a concern that to keep up with the class pace, faculty may be inclined to assign work over the break or front load work as a break approaches. This would need to be mitigated to ensure that students receive a true break, as is the university's intent.

#### *Programming with intent*

The university should consider offering health and wellness programming to connect the implementation of a fall break with the initial trigger, our community's mental health.

#### *Student travel*

If a fall break were implemented, it would be important to track how many students choose to stay on and around campus, versus how many travel. This is important for future programming considerations as it relates to the arts and student affairs, as well as for services (and related expenses incurred) that would need to be provided by the Division of Student Affairs.

### Workgroup members

*Chair:* Elizabeth Beise Professor of Physics and the Senior Associate Provost

*Members:*

Adrian R. Cornelius, Executive Director of Enrollment Management & University Registrar

Chetan Joshi, Director, University Counseling Center

Lisa J. Kiely, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Ombudsperson

Amy J. Karlsson, University Senator/APAS Committee Chair and Associate Professor,  
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

Michael P Montague-Smith, Principal Lecturer and Director of Undergraduate Studies

Autumn Dawn Perkey, University Senator and Graduate Student

Michael Votta, Professor, Conducting & Ensembles, Director, Bands, Director, UMD Wind  
Orchestra

Aiden Daniel Wechsler, Undergraduate Student and Dir. Academic Affairs, SGA

*Support:* Kathleen Perry, Assistant to the Provost

### Appendices

[Appendix C](#) – Definition of a Credit hour (Federal, State, and Middle States Expectations)

Addendum – Additional Considerations

## Credit Hour definition and COMAR

June 2023

### Federal Definition of a Credit Hour - [34 CFR 600.2](#)

*Credit hour:* Except as provided in [34 CFR 668.8\(k\)](#) and [\(l\)](#), a credit hour is an amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that

- (1) Reasonably approximates not less than -
  - (i) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time; or
  - (ii) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours; and
- (2) Permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.

### MHEC – [COMAR 13B.02.02.16](#)

#### D. Credit Hours.

- (1) An in-State institution shall award 1 credit hour for:
  - (a) A minimum of 15 hours, of 50 minutes each of actual class time, exclusive of registration, study days, and holidays;
  - (b) A minimum of 30 hours, of 50 minutes each of supervised laboratory or studio time, exclusive of registration, study days, and holidays;
  - (c) A minimum of 45 hours, of 50 minutes each of instructional situations such as practica, internships, and cooperative education placements, when supervision is ensured and learning is documented; or
  - (d) Instruction delivered by electronic media based on the equivalent outcomes in §D(1)(a) of this regulation, and may include a combination of telelessons, classroom instruction, student consultation with instructors, and readings, when supervision is ensured and learning is documented.
- (2) One quarter hour of credit is awarded for instruction equivalent to 2/3 of the contact hours required for 1 credit hour.

**Middle States (now known as Mid-Atlantic Commission on Higher Education) Policy**

[Credit Hour Policy](#) (effective July 1, 2022) follows the federal definition.

*C. Credit hour.* An amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that (1) reasonably approximates not less than (i) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time; or (ii) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours; and (2) permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels. (federal definition in 34 CFR § 600.2).

## Additional Considerations

### Major Jewish Holidays in the Fall Semester

We were asked to consider the alignment of the two major Jewish holiday periods -- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur -- with a potential break. This is relevant only if a break is considered in mid-October. While the Jewish holiday dates, which are based on a lunisolar calendar, vary from year to year on the Gregorian calendar, in some years they are observed in early October. The alignment of Yom Kippur with Columbus Day in Fall 2024 and Fall 2027 would preclude a break weekend at that time because they would conflict with recruitment weekends. Given the timing of the holidays in other years (mid- to late September), we do not recommend trying to align a break with these times.

Holiday	Start (sundown)		End (nightfall)	
Rosh Hashanah 2023	Friday	Sept 15	Sunday	Sept 17
Yom Kippur 2023	Sunday	Sept 24	Monday	Sept 25
Rosh Hashanah 2024	Wednesday	Oct 2	Friday	Oct 4
Yom Kippur 2024	Friday	Oct 11	Saturday	Oct 12
Rosh Hashanah 2025	Monday	Sept 22	Wednesday	Sept 24
Yom Kippur 2025	Wednesday	Oct 1	Thursday	Oct 2
Rosh Hashanah 2026	Friday	Sept 11	Sunday	Sept 13
Yom Kippur 2026	Sunday	Sept 20	Monday	Sept 21
Rosh Hashanah 2027	Friday	Oct 1	Sunday	Oct 3
Yom Kippur 2027	Sunday	Oct 10	Monday	Oct 11
Rosh Hashanah 2028	Wednesday	Sept 20	Friday	Sept 22
Yom Kippur 2028	Friday	Sept 28	Saturday	Sept 30

### Impact on Athletics and Student Athletes

We consulted with the Division of Athletics as to whether the addition of a break would be disruptive to training. As long as those students still have access to on-campus housing, the expectation is that the impact would be minimal, and if anything, beneficial as it would allow a period of practice and training without the demands of coursework.

# Proposed Adjustments to Calendars to Accommodate a Fall Break

## 2025 – 2026 PROPOSED ACADEMIC CALENDAR CHANGES

**Note: Summer 2025 will be moved forward, ending Tuesday, August 20**

### Fall Semester 2025

First Day of Classes	<del>September 2 (Tuesday)</del> August 27 (Wednesday)
Labor Day	September 1 (Monday)
Fall Break	October 6-7 (Monday-Tuesday)
Thanksgiving Recess	November 26-30 (Wednesday-Sunday)
Last Day of Classes	December 12 (Friday)
Reading Day	December 13 (Saturday)
Final Exams	December 15-20 (Monday-Saturday)

### Winter Term 2026

Classes Begin	January 5 (Monday)
Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday	January 19 (Monday)
Classes End	January 23 (Friday)

### Spring Semester 2026

First Day of Classes	January 26 (Monday)
Spring Break	March 15-22 (Sunday-Sunday)
Last Day of Classes	May 12 (Tuesday)
Reading Day	May 13 (Wednesday)
Final Exams	May 14-20 (Thursday-Wednesday)
Commencement - Main Ceremony	May 20 (Wednesday)
College/Department Ceremonies	May 21 (Thursday)
College/Department Ceremonies	May 22 (Friday)

### Summer Term 2026

Sessions I and I-A Begin	<del>June 1 (Monday)</del> May 27 (Wednesday)
Juneteenth Holiday	June 19 (Friday)
Independence Day Holiday	July 3 (Friday)
Sessions I and I-B End	<del>July 10 (Friday)</del> July 8 (Wednesday)
Sessions II and II-C Begin	<del>July 13 (Monday)</del> July 9 (Thursday)
Sessions II and II-D End	<del>August 21 (Friday)</del> August 18 (Tuesday)

*All dates are potentially subject to change.*



## 2026 - 2027 PROPOSED ACADEMIC CALENDAR CHANGES

**[Summer 2026 has been moved forward by two days, ending August 19]**

### Fall Semester 2026

First Day of Classes	<del>August 31 (Monday)</del> <b>August 26 (Wednesday)</b>
Labor Day	September 7 (Monday)
<b>Fall Break</b>	<b>October 5-6 (Monday-Tuesday)</b>
Thanksgiving Recess	November 25-29 (Wednesday-Sunday)
Last Day of Classes	December 11 (Friday)
Reading Day	December 12 (Saturday)
Final Exams	December 14-19 (Monday-Saturday)

### Winter Term 2027

Classes Begin	January 4 (Monday)
Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday	January 18 (Monday)
Classes End	January 22 (Friday)

### Spring Semester 2027

First Day of Classes	<del>January 27 (Wednesday)</del> <b>January 25 (Monday)</b>
Spring Break	March 14-21 (Sunday-Sunday)
Last Day of Classes	<del>May 13 (Thursday)</del> <b>May 11 (Tuesday)</b>
Reading Day	<del>May 14 (Friday)</del> <b>May 12 (Wednesday)</b>
Final Exams	<del>May 15-21 (Saturday-Friday)</del> <b>May 13-19 (Thurs – Wed)</b>
Commencement - Main Ceremony	<del>May 24 (Monday)</del> <b>May 19 (Wednesday)</b>
College/Department Ceremonies	<del>May 25 (Tuesday)</del> <b>May 20 (Thursday)</b>
College/Department Ceremonies	<del>May 26 (Wednesday)</del> <b>May 21 (Friday)</b>

### Summer Term 2027

Sessions I and I-A Begin	<del>June 1 (Tuesday)</del> <b>May 27 (Thursday)</b>
<b>Juneteenth Holiday</b>	<b>June 18 (Friday)</b>
Independence Day Holiday	July 5 (Monday)
Sessions I and I-B End	<del>July 9 (Friday)</del> <b>July 8 (Thursday)</b>
Sessions II and II-C Begin	<del>July 12 (Monday)</del> <b>July 9 (Friday)</b>
Sessions II and II-D End	<del>August 20 (Friday)</del> <b>August 18 (Wednesday)</b>

*All dates are potentially subject to change.*

## 2027 - 2028 PROPOSED ACADEMIC CALENDAR CHANGES

**[Summer 2027 has been moved forward by two days, ending August 18]**

### Fall Semester 2027

First Day of Classes	<del>August 30 (Monday)</del> <b>August 26 (Thursday)</b>
Labor Day	September 6 (Monday)
<b>Fall Break</b>	<b>October 4-5 (Monday-Tuesday)</b>
Thanksgiving Recess	November 24-28 (Wednesday-Sunday)
Last Day of Classes	December 13 (Monday)
Reading Day	December 14 (Tuesday)
Final Exams	December 15-21 (Wednesday-Tuesday)

**Any necessary revisions to Winter 2028, Spring 2028, and Summer 2028 will be made once the Fall 2028 calendar is drafted with the inclusion of a 2-day Fall Break.**

*All dates are potentially subject to change.*