



# **ADJUSTING THE ACADEMIC CALENDAR TO FOSTER STUDENT & FACULTY SUCCESS**

A Report  
*from the*  
Academic Calendar Task Force  
*of the*  
University Faculty Council

*20 October 2025*

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## Executive Summary

The Task Force on Adjusting the Academic Calendar to Foster Student & Faculty Success was charged by Provost Underwood and Faculty Council President Smith on February 5, 2025 with the overall goal to “consider potential modifications to the CSU-Fort Collins academic calendar with the goal of fostering student and faculty success,” including consideration of mid-semester breaks, summer offerings, half-semester, shortening the length of semesters, and the introduction of a voluntary January term. The original charge included issues surrounding summer 801/401 course sections, but consideration of this issue was transferred to a separate parallel process early in the task force’s deliberations.

The following report includes consensus task force recommendations in these areas:

- Maintain a 48-week academic calendar (including Fall and Spring Semesters and a 12-week Summer Session with varying length components, as we use currently).
- Add January Term or “J-Term” (ideally four-weeks, beginning in December, attached to Fall Semester for grade-reporting purposes, faculty to be compensated as per Summer Session).
- Expand the number of Half-Term courses in the Fall and Spring Semesters and typically construe these as eight-week courses. (Supportive policies may be needed.)
- Add short breaks in the Fall and Spring Semesters (ideally, while maintaining current breaks in full as well as aligning all CSU breaks with Poudre School District breaks).
- Eliminate differently-scheduled formal “finals weeks” without, however, discouraging instructors, even implicitly, from offering final exams or other culminating academic assessments.

The above is best understood as principles which, if adopted at CSU-Fort Collins, would then guide the Office of the Registrar and Faculty Council in creating academic calendars that comply with germane federal and state law as well as accreditation requirements, and that allow for the practically necessary alignment of CSU-Fort Collins and CSU-Pueblo academic calendars.

## Introduction

Like tenure-and-promotion criteria and grading policies and practices, academic calendars give shape to university life, influence academic rhythms, and incentivize core behaviors. While not determining much on their own, one academic calendar may do more to foster faculty and student success than another. And while we are not free to construe calendars without reference to germane law, regulation, and academic necessities, neither are we bound to what obtains nor prevented from thinking anew about how best to achieve goals.

On February 5, 2025, CSU Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. Marion K. Underwood and Faculty Council President, Dr. Melinda Smith, together charged the *Task Force on Adjusting the Academic Calendar to Foster Student & Faculty Success*. The overall goal was given thusly: “consider potential modifications to the CSU-FC academic calendar with the goal of fostering student and faculty success.” We stress “student *and* faculty success.”

What do students need from an academic calendar? We posit that they need multiple types of opportunity—understood temporally as courses of various duration and calendaring, and hence of various pace and academic intensity and offered on various dates—to attempt and to earn academic credits toward an ultimate goal of an earned academic credential.

Along the way, students benefit from an academic rhythm that is conducive to learning and growth. This includes periods of intensive study and breaks from academic work altogether. Ideally, breaks facilitate renewal of energy, balancing academic and other activities, and support mental health and wellness. Students cannot learn if they are mentally exhausted.

The same is true for faculty. Faculty breaks, however, are not as helpful for those with school-age children if they are not aligned with the local school district breaks (although we acknowledge that it is difficult to achieve alignment). Beyond breaks, faculty, regularly engaged in research and scholarship as well as in instruction and service, benefit from calendars that offer opportunities to *balance* or, in other cases, *bundle* types of work into separate timeframes. Flexible calendars may help make managing such diverse responsibilities more manageable.

With such considerations in mind, the Task Force met to imagine ways in which Colorado State University (Fort Collins) might better foster student and faculty success via modifications in the academic calendar. The resulting proposals are best understood as principles that, were adopted as guides for the Office of the Registrar in crafting academic calendars, would advance student and faculty success without altering the fundamental structure of Fall and Spring Semesters and a 12-week Summer Session. Still, adding a “J-Term” and short fall and spring breaks, eliminating finals weeks, and doubling down on half-term courses in Fall and Spring, would likely change CSU’s academic metabolism.

**Recommendation #1: Maintain the 48-Week Academic Calendar**

Colorado's land-grant university is obligated to maintain not only the highest possible academic standards, but also the greatest possible access. The latter includes a range of applied and professional degree programs beyond core liberal arts and sciences, and a range of policies and practices designed to keep CSU broadly affordable, welcoming, and supportive of student and faculty success. An academic calendar that maximizes the dates during which the university is open for undergraduate and graduate education, for research and scholarship, and for community engagement throughout Colorado, the nation, and the world, is therefore consistent with our mission and essential for meeting strategic goals.

So why not an academic calendar that is *52 weeks*? The practicalities of recording and communicating final grades, including communicating their academic consequences to the students who earn them, necessitate two-week buffers around academic semesters. This is standard practice for Offices of the Registrar at CSU peer institutions and an unavoidable temporal component of sequenced educations that build from one term of study to another.

Since CSU currently maintains a 48-week academic calendar, the task force recommends no change to this basic structure. Our recommendations are, therefore, only modifications.

## **Recommendation #2: Add a January Term or “J-Term”**

Many CSU peer institutions—indeed, many colleges and universities generally—offer a three- or four-week term of study beginning either in December or in January and concluding prior to the beginning of the second main semester of study in an academic year. Given their principal location in the month of January, they are often called “J-Terms.”

The Task Force recommends that CSU add a J-Term. Several reasons recommend it:

- J-Terms permit students to undertake education abroad activities while retaining summer sessions for course work, employment, and for various other high-impact educational practices such as undergraduate research, internships, and tutoring.
- J-Term credit hours that are recorded as Fall Semester credit hours permit students who still require three or four credit hours to graduate *in January* rather than wait till May, which is the current practice. Increasing opportunities for credit accumulation and graduation success is a goal of the proposed academic calendar modifications.
- J-Terms provide faculty an option to offer specialized learning opportunities which take advantage of a compressed duration and earns faculty extra compensation.
- Having noted what a J-Term can do, let us stress that participation in J-Term is, as with Summer Session, wholly voluntary. There is no implicit expectation for J-Term participation for either students or for faculty. J-Term offers only new opportunities.
- Four-week J-Terms may begin in December, which is useful for accommodating four-credit-hour courses.

### **Recommendation #3: Expand Half-Term Coursework in Fall and Spring Semesters**

An eight-week course entails the same content and pursues identical learning objectives as a sixteen-week course. Academically speaking, there is no difference between the two modalities other than their respective durations, which, however, may affect the pace and potentially the academic intensity of learning, and may therefore suit or ill-suit different faculty and students, and different course material and learning objectives, differently. Prosaically, half-term courses are not for everyone. But they serve many useful purposes, and the Task Force therefore recommends expanding their use, when appropriate, in the Fall and Spring.

- Since the university aims to improve student persistence and graduation success, as measured by average time-to-degree and, for the student and their families, in total cost of attendance, it is helpful to increase the number and variety of half-term courses. They may be offered for eight weeks and online. They may be offered for eight weeks and sequenced with a second eight-week course for which the first is a requisite.
- Opportunities to attempt and earn credit hours constitute a fundamental component of the underlying academic economy of the university. Our proposal is to purposively expand, but also regulate and monitor, these opportunities. We can reduce barriers for student progress and success while maintaining the highest academic standards.
- Faculty may benefit from the multiplication of half-term courses even more than students already do, for expanding on this feature that already exists in the academic calendar means that faculty may better balance and perhaps bundle teaching responsibilities, creating time and space for dedicated scholarly activities.
- Academic policies and practices—and ultimately an emergent academic culture—would need to ensure no diminution in the academic quality and integrity of time-compressed and perhaps therein accelerated and intensified course work, such as we do when we set limits on the number of credit hours that a student may even *attempt* in a particular term of study (e.g., three or four-week J-Terms are often capped at three or four credit hours).
- The Task Force recognizes that this recommendation is likely the most potentially impactful for both faculty and students alike, for it adds a feature to Fall and Spring Semesters which are currently, while not rare, far less common than traditional 16-week courses. Commonplace half-term courses would significantly affect our academic lives.
- Given this recognition, the Task Force again stresses the need to anticipate and avoid as much as possible unintended and moreover perverse consequences. Introduction of additional half-term coursework should be undertaken carefully, with a mind toward avoiding overuse by students and with care for diverse faculty needs.

## Recommendation #4: Add Short Breaks to Fall and Spring Semesters

There is a long-held assumption in economics that “more is better.” But we know that, practically speaking, more is not always better nor is the treadmill of more upon more even sustainable! Learning, research and scholarly work such as the creation of artwork and live performance and engagement with and service to communities, all entail considerable and various expenditures of energy, intellectual and otherwise. The Task Force has consulted well-known as well as newly minted studies, including those produced by CSU colleagues, and concludes that additional short breaks in the Fall and Spring are needed to strengthen and meaningfully fortify the academic community against burnout and other ills of overwork, and to provide for work-life balance that nurtures sustainable faculty and student success. It is likely that additional short breaks will *improve* rather than diminish CSU academic quality.

- Many peer universities take two-day breaks in October and in February and in both cases designed to create de facto four-day weekends. They provide for albeit short but meaningful and effective respite amid otherwise long stretches of academic work.
- The Task Force recommends that additional short breaks supplement existing November and March breaks, and that we consider adjustment (shortening) of the duration of existing breaks to balance and tune the multiple timings.
- Many faculty care for school-age children. In recognition of their family needs, the Task Force encourages that CSU align scheduled breaks, including new shorter breaks, with as many local school districts calendars as is practically possible.
- Mental health and wellness are long-standing issues within academic communities, and of course more broadly as well. If we can create academic calendars that align with what experts agree best supports mental health, then we should act to do so while at the same time confident that we are strengthening the conditions which support student academic achievement and personal growth as well as faculty success.

## **Recommendation #5: Differently-Scheduled Finals Week**

Many instructors conclude courses with final exams or other culminating learning experiences (e.g., presentations of substantial individual or group projects). They do this for sound academic reasons, among them that summative evaluations and culminating applications of accumulated learning can demonstrate mastery of principal course learning objectives. Other instructors, however, no longer require final exams or culminating learning experiences, also for sound academic reasons, among them that a series of relatively lower stakes assessments returned as feedback throughout a term of study may accomplish the same ends but without introducing extraneous variables into course assessment, such as test-taking anxiety (which is real and disproportionately affects students with relatively less social and cultural capital and other resources), and the plain everyday vagaries associated with any date-specific and time-sensitive performances. It has been long understood that life can intrude on even the best laid plans.

As all politics is local, then so, too, is the question of whether final exams are needed and helpful versus unnecessary and unhelpful. Each instructor decides. The Task Force does not, therefore, recommend that CSU discontinue use of final exams. Instead, and to be clear, the Task Force recommends only that the university academic calendar no longer demarcates a *specialty-scheduled* Final Exam Week, and that the Office of the Registrar discontinues creating and assigning final exam time blocks for all academic courses of all types and durations.

- Without restating the rationale implied in the above, we would instead make explicit the value of two weeks of the academic calendar heretofore dedicated to final exams now available for *other intentional academic purposes which are required for accreditation*.
- This change in the academic calendar is apt to incentivize new behaviors, including refreshing of course content and greater use of the accumulated fruits of the scholarship of teaching and learning. The Task Force anticipates that student and faculty success would be facilitated and enhanced, not hampered and diminished, by this change.
- It may be counterintuitive, but elimination of an official Finals Week at CSU might well result in increased student learning and greater overall academic achievement. In any case, instructors would continue to be free to make their own choices and to assign and schedule exams or other culminating assessments as they wish and deem desirable.

The Task Force has considered additional ideas and proposals, including shortening Fall and Spring Semesters and rather than eight-week half-terms deploying seven-week half-terms instead. Likewise, some universities offer J-Terms in three rather than in four-week terms, while others do more to expand the time devoted to summer terms in hope of rendering them as equals to fall and spring terms of study. We discussed graduate as well as undergraduate student experience, and considered the needs and norms associated with different colleges and areas of study. Our five recommendations appear to us to cohere in helpful ways, reinforcing each other, and if implemented simultaneously, which is also our recommendation, are likely to meaningfully enhance both student and faculty success. We recognize, however, many viable combinations alongside a few hard-and-fast constraints.

**Reassigned Item: 401/801 Sections**

We might also note again that the summer session 401/801 section issue was part of our original charge but shifted to colleagues able to dedicate themselves to its study and for reasons associated with its considerable complexity as well as urgency associated with finding a workable solution. The 401/801 complex of issues continues, however, to inform our thinking concerning the academic calendar, especially with respect to summer session. CSU has enjoyed consecutive years of record summer session enrollment, online courses the dominant and growing modality of choice. We hope that our recommendations may at least not further confound and may even help alleviate the tension between online courses offered by CSU Summer (401) and those offered by CSU Online (801), at least in terms of student and faculty success. Greater use of half-terms may make similar summer terms more attractive for both faculty and students, while additional breaks during Fall and Spring may replenish energies for summer course work and enrichment, where the former can decrease time-to-degree and the latter are de facto requirements for post-graduate success. CSU Summer will play a key role in facilitating CSU faculty and student success.

## Appendix A: Task Force Membership

### Co-chairs:

- Joseph DiVerdi, Vice Chair Faculty Council, Professor, Chemistry, CNS;
- Steve Dandaneau, Associate Provost and Executive Director of UERU, CLA

### Members:

- D. Tobiassen Baitinger, Executive Director/University Registrar
- Steve Benoit, Faculty Council Executive Committee, Associate Professor, Mathematics, CNS
- Alan Bright, Professor, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, WCNR
- Helen Caprioglio, Associate Provost, CSU Pueblo
- Kauline Cipriani, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence, Professor, CVMBS
- Roze Hentschell, Chief Academic Officer CSU System, Professor, English, CLA
- Jordan Jarrett, Assistant Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, WSCOE
- Laura Jensen, Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness
- Kimberly Miloch, Chief of Staff & Associate Vice Provost for Organizational Leadership
- Chigozie Ozor, Director of Academic Relations, ASCSU
- Michelle Stanley, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, Professor, Music, CLA
- Alysha Tarantino, Director of CSU Online
- Sara Anne Tompkins, Associate Dean, Graduate School, Associate Professor, Psychology, CNS
- Anne Van Arsdall, Director of CSU Summer
- Jonathan Zhang, Associate Professor, Marketing COB

## Appendix B: Task Force Organization & Process

Initial Plan 2025.02.23:

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Create four sub-groups with the following "areas of responsibility" to study and recommend policy.

- I. Create a mid-semester (fall only) break. Adjust Thanksgiving break as necessary.
- II. Resolve 801/401 summer sections and facilitate the increase/maximize of summer course offerings.
- III. Create half-semester course schedule (sixteen weeks / 2 -> eight weeks) offerings throughout the calendar year.
- IV. Shorten fall and semesters; sixteen to fifteen weeks or eight to seven weeks, as necessary.

Admittedly, these four areas are not completely orthogonal yet they carve up the larger issues into manageable chunks which can be (perhaps) be more expeditiously addressed.

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2. We suggest the following task force members join the four sub-groups.

- I. Kauline Cipriani, Chigozie Ozor, Sara Anne Tompkins (D. Tobiassen Baitinger)
- II. Michelle Stanley, Anne Van Arsdall, Steve Benoit, Alysha Tarantino (D. Tobiassen Baitinger)
- III. Jon Zhang, Alan Bright, Jordan Jarrett (D. Tobiassen Baitinger)
- IV. Roze Hentschell, Laura Jensen, Joe Donley, Kellie Ens, CSU Pueblo Rep (D. Tobiassen Baitinger)

With Joseph DiVerdi, Steve Dandaneau, and Kim Miloch floating among them all, along with D. Tobiassen Baitinger, in recognition that the Office of the Registrar must have input across the board.

These are suggestions only based on our assessments of individual interests, areas of responsibility and expertise. We explicitly suggest that task force members shuffle themselves around as they like and request that any changes are reported back to the co-chairs. The co-chairs will strive to join with each sub-group regularly.

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3. The sub-groups go off for a few weeks (three or four?) to make a first cut at the areas. The sub-groups are asked to stay in touch with the co-chairs during this interval. Amy Barkley has kindly offered to assist with some arranging of meetings; sub-groups are instructed to reach out to her as desired. Co-chairs stand ready to assist in the logistics.

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4. The entire task force will reconvene after the above interval to share quick, short interim "reports" on status, decisions, recommendations, issues, unresolved issues and so on.

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5. Rinse, repeat until satisfied and finished. A final report will be assembled, reviewed, agreed upon and approved by the entire task force.

Initial Plan 2025.04.02:

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We (in the editorial sense) have had a few weeks to meet as sub-task forces (hereafter "groups") and to take a pass at the individual charges. Sincere thanks on your work to date (thoughtful AND diligent). We co-chairs have had the opportunity to communicate with a few of the groups on some details which has all been positive. We're going to move to the transition leading into phase II (drum roll, please).

First, the transition.

We need to meet as the task force in its entirety to take a look, as in snaps requested (suggested?) that each group anoint a Speaker to lead that group's "presentation" to the entire task force. No formal presentation is necessary or requested - pick your own poison or find your bliss to share with us all what you think about your part of the charge. We'll be meeting on teams or something so if your bliss is to use some digital graphics then please do so. If all your group's members wish to speak simultaneously then good luck with that. If you wish to share something prior then by all means do so, either via the teams channel Amy has kindly created or this sort of email.

We'll conspire to complete this within a single hour to respect everyone's schedule.

After this synod has been completed, we (in the chair sense) will take stock of the situations, see where the smooth and rough edges are, and attempt to help guide the groups into situations where we can begin to contemplate a (final) report.

Right. Would that it will be so easy. Let's meet, see what we have and figure out the next steps together. Some charges will be easier and more difficult to bring to any sort of closure.

Stay tuned for a meeting invite.

Feedback is ALWAYS welcomed and appreciated,  
Co-chairs, DiVerdi and Dandaneau

- BTW and FWIW, here are the four sub charges for reference and convenience:  
I. Create a mid-semester (fall only) break. Adjust Thanksgiving break as necessary.  
II. Resolve 801/401 summer sections and facilitate the increase/maximize of summer course offerings.  
III. Create half-semester course schedule (sixteen weeks / 2 -> eight weeks) offerings throughout the calendar year.  
IV. Shorten fall and semesters; sixteen to fifteen weeks or eight to seven weeks, as necessary.  
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**Appendix C: Task Force Charge**

1. Creating a mid-semester Fall Break to foster academic success and student and faculty mental health
2. Maximizing summer session offerings and academic engagement
3. Developing strategies for resolving the inequity of 801/401 sections in the summer in which students in the same course currently pay different tuition rates
4. Creating two seven-week half-semester options within each of the fall and spring semesters to allow students and faculty more flexibility in course offerings
5. Shortening the Fall and Spring Semesters by one week to promote student and faculty success

## **Appendix D: Supporting Documents & Data**

### **Faculty Council Statement on Reduced Credit-Hour Degree Programs**

#### STATEMENT ON REDUCED CREDIT-HOUR DEGREE PROGRAMS

21 November 2024

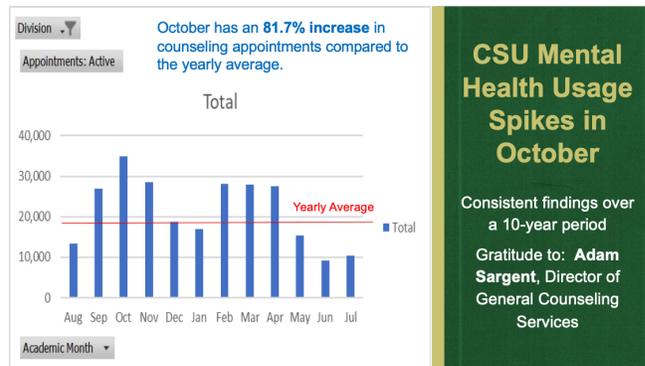
The Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) recently issued guidance on offering reduced-credit (90 credit-hour) bachelor's programs. In response to this guidance, the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CDHE) are considering future revisions to Colorado Revised Statutes section 23-1-125(1)(a) and/or section 23-1-125(2) that might allow for reduced credit-hour degree programs (i.e., "bachelor's" degree programs with fewer than 120 credit hours) at four-year institutions of higher education in Colorado.

With this context in mind, the Colorado State University (CSU) Faculty Council Executive Committee does not support the use of the 'bachelor's' label for reduced credit-hour degrees, as it would cause confusion for both students and employers, and advocates for a broader conversation around naming of these degrees.

While the CSU Faculty Council Executive Committee supports expanding options for students and broadening access to higher education in general, we believe such an impactful change should be implemented thoughtfully and in collaboration with the institutions that will be asked to deliver these programs.

## Mid-Semester Fall Break

The creation of a mid-semester Fall Break to foster academic success and student and faculty mental health was considered.



Housing and Dining Services are supportive and opine:

- Conversation with Craig Chesson and Mari Strombom
- Aligning fall break with local school districts, especially Poudre, would benefit students and staff.
  - *If 2 days – Friday & Monday align*

Peer institutions examined were mixed on the inclusion of fall breaks. Additional details are available in Task Force archives.

- 18 peer institutions investigated
- 39% Have an additional fall break
- What are local school districts doing for Fall break
- [Fall Break Committee Tracker.xlsx](#)

Strong support was found on campus from Faculty, Staff, and Students.

Task force recommends implementation of an additional fall break in the month of October without reservation. It is also recommended to shorten the existing Thanksgiving break from a full five-day week to Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Next steps include examination of impact upon contact hours and on semester calendar.

## Shortening of Spring and Fall Semesters

Shortening the Academic calendar from sixteen (16) to fifteen (15) weeks was considered.

### Academic Considerations

1. **Curriculum Adjustment:** Courses will need to be restructured to ensure all essential content is covered within the shorter timeframe/longer class periods. This might involve condensing lectures, reducing the number of assignments, or integrating more intensive learning activities.
2. **Assessment Scheduling:** Exams and major assignments and Final Exam schedule would need to be rescheduled or redistributed to fit the new timeline, ensuring students have adequate time to prepare.
3. **Instructional Quality:** Maintaining the quality of instruction is crucial. Faculty may need support and training to adapt their teaching methods to the shorter semester/longer class period.
4. **Contact Hours by Instructional Activity:** Adjustments will need to be required for courses that do not follow the standard three contact hours model, including labs, music and art classes, internships, thesis/dissertation, etc.
5. **Mid-Semester Break:** Introducing a break in the middle of the semester can help manage workload and stress for both students and faculty. Faculty engagement: Shorter instructional semester might allow faculty to be on contract a bit earlier than when the semester starts allowing time for attendance at events like convocation, department retreats, orientations, and professional development opportunities.
6. **Academic space:** Need to ensure that resources such as classrooms, labs, and libraries are available and efficiently utilized within the new schedule.
7. **CSU Online** may be impacted by shift in schedule, specifically faculty appointments.

### Administrative Considerations

1. **Calendar Coordination:** Adjusting the academic calendar to ensure alignment with holidays, breaks, and other institutional events is essential.
2. **Calendar Alignment with PSD** and/or other local school districts should be on our radar.
3. **Uniform Time Code** (e.g. MWF 9-9:50) would need to be analyzed and may need to be adjusted to meet contact hours. May impact classroom space and we would need to expand the day to accommodate the extra minutes added to each class.
4. **Contact Hours:** Currently, CSU exceeds minimum contact hour requirements, providing flexibility for closures due to weather. This would need to be considered.
5. **Communication:** Clear communication with students, faculty, and staff about the changes and how they will be implemented is vital to ensure a smooth transition.
6. **Compliance:** Adhering to contact hours and accreditation standards is crucial. Institutions must follow policies set by bodies such as the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Specialized accreditation bodies would need to be consulted. CDHE: Semester System Term: One Base Contact Hour = a minimum of 750 minutes. This translates to a minimum of fifteen 50-minute hours per semester. See Table 17 on page 7-8 of CDHE's FTE Guidelines. HLC guidelines are available.
7. **Policies** (curriculum handbook, e.g.) would require revision.

## Student Impact

1. **Workload Management:** Students may face a more intense workload, which could impact their stress levels and overall well-being. On the other hand, introducing a break in the middle of the semester can help manage workload and stress for both students and faculty.
2. **Support Services:** Enhanced academic support services, such as tutoring and counseling, may be necessary to help students cope with the accelerated pace. Student facing offices (CRCs, Health Network, etc.) would need to adjust schedule and staffing.
3. **Housing and Dining:** Adjustments in housing and dining services may be needed to accommodate the new schedule. Revenue generation and cost adjustments for students should be considered.
4. **International Students:** Visa and housing issues may arise as international students adjust to arriving earlier or later. Coordination with Office of International Programs would be necessary.
5. **Athletics** schedule would need to be considered, especially students who begin their practices during the summer.
6. **Military** tuition and housing allowances would need to be considered.
7. **Student employment and work study opportunities** may be impacted.

## Financial Considerations

1. **Tuition and Fees:** Adjustments may be needed to ensure that tuition and fees reflect the new semester length without compromising the institution's financial stability.
2. **Operational Costs:** Changes in the academic calendar can affect operational costs, including staffing, maintenance, and utilities.
3. **Financial Aid:** Ensuring that financial aid delivery and student experience are supported under the new schedule is crucial. Title IV regulations require a minimum 30-week academic year for the University to administer aid in a standard term format.
4. **Billing and Cash Flow:** Adjustments in billing timeframes and cash flow management will be necessary to align with the new semester structure.

## Strategic Roadmap Alignment

Transitioning to a 15-week semester should align with the institution's strategic roadmap. Currently, this initiative does not appear on the draft of the strategic roadmap.

## System Alignment:

CSU Pueblo was required to move from a 15 to a 16-week semester to accommodate the Banner integration project. The campus began the new semester length in 2022. Aligning with a 15-week semester would be a reversal for them and would need to be carefully communicated and managed amidst other major projects and an impending presidential transition. CSUP and CSU are currently aligning major systems including IT, HR, Finances, and soon, Canvas.

Strong opinions from the faculty on both sides of this question (shortening versus retention) were informally observed. Very few intermediate opinions were received.

Task force recommends **not shortening** the academic semester from sixteen to fifteen weeks.

## CSU Online Instruction Brief

### Background

Since 2014-15, CSU has operated two parallel online instruction systems: CSU Online (section 80X) and residential online courses (section 40X). While this dual system positioned CSU well for pandemic pivots, it has created significant tuition inequities and operational challenges that impact students and staff alike.

### Core Goal: Create student success through tuition equity

#### Current tuition rates differ for the *same* online courses:

- CSU Online (resident/non-resident): \$476/credit
- CSU Residential (resident): \$482/credit with COF
- CSU Residential (non-resident): \$1,130/credit (with 30% reduction)

Students taking identical courses pay significantly different amounts depending on their enrollment pathway—a fundamental inequity that contradicts institutional values and the goal for student success.

#### Key Challenges

- Students struggle to navigate the system and find cost-effective enrollment options
- COF unavailable for CSU Online courses, disadvantaging some students
- Different drop deadlines for 401 vs 801 sections create confusion for students and faculty

#### Operational Burden:

- Heavy administrative lift for Admissions, Registrar, and Financial Aid
- Manual processing requirements strain staff resources
- Departments sometimes manipulate enrollment caps to steer students toward revenue-favorable sections
- Inconsistent cross-listing of 401/801 sections

#### Revenue Complexity:

- CSU Online uses entrepreneurial revenue-share models are not standardized
- Residential courses follow the 2-3-6 model (50% colleges, 33% Provost, 17% Central)
- Conflicting incentives drive departmental behavior rather than student success

#### Proposed Solutions

Solving this issue is fundamental to student and faculty success along with goals of efficiency for the campus. With three failed reform attempts, difficult decisions about this entrenched system need to be made. While no solution is perfect, maintaining the status quo perpetuates inequity and inefficiency, antithetical to the One CSU goal.

Options were created by the subcommittee task force that ranged from a third semester model to a one-campus model that blends RI and Online instruction into one central system. We recognize that our solution does not take into account the multitude of issues that may impact revenue, systems, infrastructure, policies and processes of the greater University.

Therefore, our subcommittee believes that system changes that are this involved require CSU Leadership insight and decision making. We will supply our 8-page historical report on the 401/801 issue upon request.

Board of Governors' Peer Institutions – Selected Academic Calendars

Academic Calendar (M-F)	USU	U of U	UVU	SUU	Weber	Utah Tech	Colorado State
	70 (14, 15, 14, 14, 13) 35 (7, 7, 7, 7)	71 (14, 15, 14, 14, 13) 34 (6, 7, 7, 7)	70 (13, 14, 15, 14, 14) 35 (6, 7, 8, 7, 7)	65 (11, 12, 14, 14, 14) 32 (5, 6, 7, 7, 7)	71 (14, 15, 15, 14, 13) 38 (7, 8, 8, 7)	72 (14, 16, 15, 15, 12)	74 (14, 15, 15, 15, 15)
<b>FALL SEMESTER 2024</b>							
First Day of Classes	35 (7, 8, 7, 7, 6) August 26 (M)	37 (8, 8, 7, 6) August 19 (M)	35 (7, 7, 7, 7, 7) August 21 (W)	33 (6, 6, 7, 7, 7) August 28 (W)	33 (7, 7, 7, 6, 6) August 26 (M)	August 19 (M)	August 19 (M)
First 7-week Session	Aug. 26 - Oct. 14	Aug. 19 - Oct. 4	Aug. 21 - Oct. 9	Aug. 28 - Oct. 11	Aug. 26 - Oct. 17	August 19 (M)	August 19 (M)
Labor Day	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)	September 2 (M)
Fall Break	October 18 (F)	October 7-11 (M-F)	October 17-18 (R-F)	October 14-15 (M-T)	October 18 (F)	October 18, 21 (F, M)	September 2 (M)
Second 7-week Session	Oct. 15 - Dec. 6	Oct. 7 - Dec. 5	Oct. 10 - Dec. 6	Oct. 16 - Dec. 6	Oct. 21 - Dec. 6	Nov. 27-29 (W-F)	Nov. 25-29 (M-F)
Thanksgiving Holiday	Nov. 27-29 (W-F)	Nov. 28-29 (Th-F)	Nov. 25-29 (M-F)	Nov. 25-29 (M-F)	Nov. 28-29 (Th-F)	Nov. 27-29 (W-F)	Nov. 25-29 (M-F)
No-Test Week	Dec. 2-6 (M-F)	December 5 (Th)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 5 (Th)	December 6 (F)
Last Day of Classes	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)	December 6 (F)
Reading Day	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)
Final Examinations	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-12 (M-Th)	Dec. 9-13 (M-F)
	70 (13, 15, 14, 14, 14) 35 (6, 8, 7, 7, 7) 35 (7, 7, 7, 7, 7)	70 (13, 15, 14, 14, 14) 38 (6, 8, 8, 8, 8) 32 (7, 7, 6, 6, 6)	70 (13, 15, 14, 14, 14) 35 (6, 8, 7, 7, 7) 35 (7, 7, 7, 7, 7)	65 (11, 12, 14, 14, 14) 31 (4, 6, 7, 7, 7) 34 (7, 6, 7, 7, 7)	69 (13, 14, 14, 14, 14) 38 (6, 8, 8, 8, 8) 31 (7, 6, 6, 6, 6)	72 (13, 15, 15, 15, 14)	74 (14, 15, 15, 15, 15)
<b>SPRING SEMESTER 2025</b>							
First Day of Classes	35 (6, 8, 7, 7, 7) January 6 (M)	38 (6, 8, 8, 8, 8) January 6 (M)	35 (6, 8, 7, 7, 7) January 6 (M)	31 (4, 6, 7, 7, 7) January 8 (W)	38 (6, 8, 8, 8, 8) January 6 (M)	January 6 (M)	January 21 (T)
First 7-week Session	Jan. 6 - Feb 25	Jan. 6 - Feb 28	Jan. 6 - Feb 25	Jan. 8 - Feb 21	Jan. 6 - Feb 28	January 6 (M)	January 21 (T)
M.L. King, Jr. Day	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)	January 20 (M)
President's Day	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)	February 17 (M)
Second 7-week Session	Feb. 26 - April 22	Mar. 3 - April 22	Feb. 26 - April 22	Feb. 24 - April 18	March 10 - April 21	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 17-21 (M-F)
Spring Break*	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 3-7 (M-F)	March 10-14 (M-F)	March 17-21 (M-F)
Festival of Excellence	April 16-22 (W-T)	April 22 (T)	April 22 (T)	April 1 (T)			
No-Test Week	April 22 (T)	April 22 (T)	April 22 (T)	April 18 (F)	April 21 (M)	April 24 (Th)	May 9 (F)
Last Day of Classes	April 22 (T)	April 23 (W)	April 23 (W)	April 18 (F)	April 21 (M)	April 25 (F)	May 9 (F)
Reading Day	April 23-29 (W-T)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 21-24 (M-Th)	April 22-24 (T-Th)	April 28 - May 1 (M-Th)	May 12-16 (M-F)
Final Examinations	April 30 - May 2 (W-F)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 24-25 (Th-F)	April 25-26 (F-Sa)	May 2 (F)	May 16 (F)
Commencement	April 30 - May 2 (W-F)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 24-30 (Th-W)	April 24-25 (Th-F)	April 25-26 (F-Sa)	May 2 (F)	May 16 (F)
	66 (12, 14, 14, 13, 13) 33 (5, 7, 7, 7, 7) 33 (7, 7, 7, 6, 6)	54 (10, 12, 12, 10, 10) 27 (4, 6, 6, 6, 5) 27 (6, 6, 6, 4, 5)	65 (12, 13, 14, 13, 13) 34 (5, 7, 8, 7, 7) 31 (7, 6, 6, 6, 6)	66 (12, 14, 14, 13, 13) 33 (5, 7, 7, 7, 7) 33 (7, 7, 7, 6, 6)	67 (13, 14, 14, 13, 13) 33 (5, 7, 7, 7, 7) 34 (6, 7, 7, 6, 6)	56 (10, 12, 12, 11, 11) 28 (4, 6, 6, 6, 6) 28 (6, 6, 6, 5, 5)	57 (11, 12, 12, 11, 11) 37 (7, 8, 8, 7, 7) 38 (8, 8, 8, 7, 7)
<b>SUMMER SEMESTER 2025</b>							
Monday	May 5 (M)	May 12 (M)	May 7 (W)	May 12 (M)	May 5 (M)	May 12 (M)	May 19 (M)
Full Session	May 5 - August 8	May 12 - August 1	May 7 - August 8	May 12 - August 15	May 5 - August 14	May 12 - August 1	May 19 - August 8
First Half Session	May 5 - June 20	May 12 - June 19	May 7 - June 25	May 12 - June 27	May 5 - June 20	May 12 - June 20	May 19 - July 11
Memorial Day	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)	May 26 (M)
Juneteenth	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)	June 16 (M)
Second Half Session	June 23 - August 8	June 20 - July 30	June 26 - August 8	June 30 - August 15	June 23 - August 11	June 23 - August 1	June 16 - August 8
Independence Day	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)	July 4 (F)
Pioneer Day	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 4 (F)
Final Examinations	July 24 (Th)	July 31 - Aug. 1 (Th-F)	July 24 (Th)	July 24 (Th)	August 12-14 (T-Th)	July 24 (Th)	July 4 (F)
USU	<a href="https://www.usu.edu/calendar/academic/">https://www.usu.edu/calendar/academic/</a>						
U of U	<a href="https://registrar.utah.edu/academic-calendars/">https://registrar.utah.edu/academic-calendars/</a>						
UVU	<a href="https://www.uvu.edu/schedule/">https://www.uvu.edu/schedule/</a>						
SUU	<a href="https://www.suu.edu/search/?q=academic+calendar">https://www.suu.edu/search/?q=academic+calendar</a>						
Weber	<a href="https://www.weber.edu/registrar/2025-2026_academic_calendar.html">https://www.weber.edu/registrar/2025-2026_academic_calendar.html</a>						
Utah	<a href="https://catalog.utahtech.edu/academiccalendar/">https://catalog.utahtech.edu/academiccalendar/</a>						