



Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	05/05/16
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

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S.A. Resolution #60 Adjusting the Cornell Academic Calendar

ABSTRACT: This resolution recommends moving February Break to the weekend including the final Sunday in February and adding undergraduate students to the 2017 Faculty calendar committee.

Sponsored by: Justin Selig '17, Dale Barbaria '19

Whereas, February break currently falls on the Weekend of President's Day - typically the third weekend of February - two weeks following winter break and six weeks before Spring Break,

Whereas, February break was proposed on May 9th 2012 by the Calendar Committee of the Faculty Senate to fall on the third weekend of February,

Whereas, on September 12th 2012, Provost Fuchs adopted the plan to have February Break in order to "help address university concerns about student stress" and

Whereas, Provost Fuchs stated "A winter break will be added on the Monday and Tuesday of Presidents Week (the third week in February). This allows the weeklong spring break to be scheduled two-thirds of the way into the semester, in late March – breaking the semester into thirds."

Whereas, the placement of February Break in the academic calendar places little time between the beginning of the semester and the break

Whereas, Provost Fuchs also proclaimed, "Finally, in accordance with the Faculty Senate's resolution, the academic calendar will be subject to periodic review by the Senate's Educational Policy Committee. The first review will be undertaken in spring 2017, three years after the implementation of the revised calendar, with further reviews at five-year intervals."

Whereas, on April 29th 2016, Professor Robert Thorne, member of the Educational Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate, stated "The February break, coming after only 13 or 18 days of instruction (1/5 to 1/4 of the way into the semester) is academically pointless, and does little if anything to reduce student stress at a time in the semester when they have no stress. A more sensible timing would be near the first peak in the preliminary exam schedule, which occurs 2-3 weeks later," and

Whereas, Professor Thorne also stated, "The gap between February break and Spring break (28 days, or 40% of the semester) is too long, and includes a long, high-stress period."

Whereas, the Student Assembly Charter states, "The Provost will consult with the SA in the formulation of the University Calendar. The SA may review and ask for reconsideration of the calendar before it becomes final. In addition, the SA may propose changes in the calendar to the Provost."

46 **Be it therefore resolved,** the Student Assembly recommends to the Provost that February Break be
47 moved annually from the weekend of President’s Day to the weekend with the last Sunday in
48 February so as to consistently provide sufficient class time between the start of the semester and
49 February Break,
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51 **Be it further resolved,** that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Dean of Faculty and the Chair of the
52 Educational Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate.
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54 **Be it finally resolved,** that the Faculty Senate should include four members of the undergraduate
55 student body, including the Chair of the Student Assembly Academic Policy Committee, when
56 the Faculty Senate reviews the Academic Calendar in Spring 2017
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58 **Respectfully Submitted,**
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60 Justin Selig ‘17
61 *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*
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63 Dale Barbaria ‘19
64 *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*
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66 Evelyn Nam ‘16
67 *Member, Academic Policy Committee*
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69 Shreya Mantrala ‘18
70 *Member, Academic Policy Committee*
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72 Alexis Pollitto ‘18
73 *Member, Academic Policy Committee*
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75 *(Reviewed by: Academic Policy Committee, 05/01/16, 12-0-0)*