

**Rutgers University Senate**  
**Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee**  
***Draft Response to Charge S-1509***  
**June 2017**

Background

One of the legislative powers of the University Senate is to set the University academic calendar. This calendar is followed, with relatively minor variations, by all the schools and colleges in Rutgers-Camden, Rutgers-Newark, and Rutgers-New Brunswick and by three schools in RBHS. It is not followed by either of the medical schools, the dental school, or the School of Health Professions. Issues related to the academic calendar are traditionally considered by the Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee (ASRAC).

As part of its responsibility for the academic calendar, the Senate has traditionally prepared a multiyear default University academic calendar. This collection of approved calendars for a number of successive academic years is followed as a default unless the Senate approves changes to a given yearly calendar or calendars before the year(s) in question. Adopting a multiyear default calendar does not restrict the ability of the Senate to revisit any of the calendars at any time.

The most recent default calendar expired several years ago and the Senate was asked to prepare a new one. To start the process, Mary Mickelsen, Administrative Assistant to Senate Executive Secretary Ken Swalagin, prepared a draft default calendar covering the years 2014-15 thru 2030-31 (a 17-year cycle). ASRAC was then charged with reviewing the draft calendar, making any needed changes, and presenting the result to the full Senate for approval.

Recommendations

ASRAC has reviewed the draft default calendar and made a number of changes so that all the yearly calendars reflect all the changes approved by the Senate in recent years. These changes are as follows:

1. changes to the fall academic calendar in years in which Labor Day falls on September 5 or September 7. These revisions, which involve changes in designations of class days, were made so that classes meeting on Monday only do not have their first class meeting late in the second week of the semester.
2. moving University Commencement (now only the New Brunswick and RBHS commencement) to the Sunday immediately following the end of spring final exams.

All the above changes from the previous default calendar were approved by the Senate in 2012 and 2013. (*add links*). In addition, ASRAC now recommends one additional change; namely, a revision of the fall academic calendar in the years (2021-2022 and 2027-2028) in which Labor Day falls on September 6. When ASRAC recommended and the Senate approved the changes to the fall calendar for years in which Labor Day falls on September 5 or September 7, no change to the calendar for years in which Labor Day falls on September 6 was made because ASRAC failed to agree on the best calendar for those years. None of the calendars proposed at that time satisfied the criteria ASRAC had set; namely,

- Monday-only classes should not have their first meeting late in the second week of the semester.
- There should be at most two changes of class day designations.
- There must be the State-mandated 14 full weeks of classes.
- There should be one or, if possible, two reading days between the end of classes and the beginning of final exams.
- There should be no final exams on Dec. 24th.

ASRAC has now agreed on a revised calendar for fall 2021 and fall 2027. This recommended calendar satisfies all the above criteria. Moreover, there are two reading days and no classes meet the day before Thanksgiving. We ask, therefore, that the Senate approve this recommended revision as well as approving the adoption of the attached default academic calendar.

#### 2016-17 ASRAC Members

Cotter, Martha, At-Large NB (F), Co-Chair  
 Winkler, Matt, NB Staff, Co-Chair  
 Artun, Tuna, SAS-NB (F)  
 Bhuyan, Sanjib, SEBS (F)  
 Boikess, Robert, At-Large NB (F)  
 Chayko, Mary, SCI (F)  
 Covington, Anthony, Student Charter  
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 Dasari, Babu, UC-C (F)  
 Drachtman, Richard, RWJMS (F)  
 Feldman, Cecile, RSDM Dean (A)  
 Flores, Nathaniel, GS-NB (S)  
 Goh, Chon, SB-C (F)  
 Gursoy, Melike, Engineering (F)  
 Haddon, Pehobe, Camden Chancellor (A)  
 Kuzma, Lynn, UC-N Dean Designee (A)

Lindenmeyer, Kriste, FAS-C Dean (A)  
 Marchetta, Josephine, Alumni Association  
 Markosian, Christopher, SAS-NB (S)  
 Moseray, Millicent, SON (S)  
 Parmar, Veenat, SPH (S)  
 Potter, Cathryn, SSW Dean (A)  
 Salmond, Susan, Nursing Dean (A)  
 Samant, Asha, RSDM (F)  
 Santana, Engelbert, Newark Staff  
 Schwartz, Robert, NJMS (F)  
 Shapses, Sue, SEBS (F)  
 Singh, Gurpreet, PTL-N (F)  
 Szatrowski, Ted, At-Large (F)  
 Thornton, Suzanne, GS-NB (S)  
 Zurlo, Karen, SSW (F)