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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2008, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, Eugene Washington, convened the UCSF Academic Calendar Committee. The committee’s charge was to analyze the feasibility of a common academic calendar for UCSF and, if appropriate, make recommendations regarding how best to implement such a calendar.

The committee was chaired by Joseph I. Castro, Vice Provost of Student Academic Affairs, and included 14 members, with representatives of the four schools and the Graduate Division, the Academic Senate, Campus Life Services and Registrar Doug Carlson. The committee met between June and November 2008. The committee’s main findings and recommendations follow.

FINDINGS

1. A common academic calendar adopted by the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy and the Graduate Division is an essential tool to educate future leaders and foster innovation and collaboration, as stated in the UCSF Strategic Plan. This initiative will, among other things, facilitate the ability of students to enroll in cross-school electives, encouraging interprofessional, interdisciplinary education, and increase administrative efficiencies.

2. The major barriers that exist to implementing a common calendar include logistical concerns due to limited classroom space, curriculum requirements that necessitate a particular number of instructional days, and administrative concerns about ensuring student health coverage over the summer.

3. Currently, there is widespread support to adopt a common academic calendar from administrative, faculty, student and staff leaders across the campus. This positive response has resulted in a willingness to be flexible and creative in addressing challenges to successfully creating and implementing a common calendar.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee has made four recommendations. They follow:

1. Adopt a common academic calendar for the 2009-10 academic year.
   a. The committee recommends adopting a calendar for the 2009-10 academic year, using the common UC calendar as its basis. While the majority of the campus would follow this calendar, two exceptions would be made for various classes in the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine.

   i. While the School of Dentistry can mostly conform to the proposed calendar, the following exceptions exist: 1) The ID3 students have a longer summer session than the D3, D4, and ID4 students, and must begin the summer session earlier than the recommended common instruction start date. 2) The incoming D1 students are required to be present for a multi-day Introduction to Dentistry series of orientation events, and would also arrive on campus prior to the fall quarter start date. The committee believes that these
activities can be accommodated because they still fall within the quarter calendar. Lastly, certain rotations for D3, D4, ID3 and ID4 students will continue during quarter breaks in order to provide continuity of care to various clinics. These are part of multi-quarter courses and the courses will begin and end according to the academic calendar.

ii. Due to curriculum requirements, the first and second year students within the School of Medicine will need to begin their instruction before the recommended fall quarter start date.

b. In neither case are these courses the type of classes that would necessarily be open for cross-school student enrollment. Therefore, beginning the courses a short period before the official fall instruction start date would not hinder interdisciplinary opportunities for any UCSF students.

c. The proposed common 2009-10 academic calendar is attached.

2. Encourage “set aside” dates and/or times across the schools and Graduate Division for elective offerings.

a. In addition to a common fall quarter start date, the committee recognized the value of identifying suggested common dates and/or times for elective offerings open to interprofessional education. This would limit the possibility that students would experience scheduling conflicts with their core or required classes. While this was not within the committee’s original charge, we thought it would be useful to the campus. The committee will complete work on this task by early 2009.

3. Establish a mechanism for students to more easily identify elective offerings in the campus course catalog.

a. Currently, there is no centralized place where students can identify elective course offerings across the campus. This situation creates an unnecessary barrier for students to enroll in such courses. The committee believes that this barrier can be eliminated if the Academic Senate Committee on Courses of Instruction creates a new field on the course form for departments to indicate when a course is open to students outside the department. If this occurs, students could then identify such courses through the new on-line course schedule developed by Student Academic Affairs. We recommend that this change takes place as early as the 2009-10 academic year.

4. Explore the feasibility of a semester-based calendar.

a. Some schools have advocated for a semester-based academic calendar. Specifically, the School of Dentistry has expressed an interest in moving to a semester schedule, and the School of Medicine believes that a semester schedule would allow first and second year medical students to better align their schedules with a common calendar. The School of Nursing is also open to such a change. However, representatives of the Graduate Division, the School of Pharmacy and the Academic Senate
currently prefer the quarter system. As this committee was not explicitly charged with exploring the possibility of a semester-based calendar, we recommend that the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost charge a separate group to review the feasibility of implementing a common semester-based calendar at UCSF. This committee is open to a request by the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost to explore this matter during 2009.
I. INTRODUCTION

In May 2008, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, Eugene Washington convened the UCSF Academic Calendar Committee. The committee’s charge was to analyze the feasibility of a common academic calendar for UCSF and, if appropriate, make recommendations regarding how best to implement such a calendar.

The committee was chaired by Joseph I. Castro, Vice Provost of Student Academic Affairs, and included 14 members, with representatives of the four schools and the Graduate Division, the Academic Senate, Campus Life Services and Registrar Doug Carlson. The committee met between June and November 2008. The committee’s main findings and recommendations follow.

UCSF COMMON ACADEMIC CALENDAR COMMITTEE

Appointed Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Doug Carlson</td>
<td>Registrar, Student Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Castro</td>
<td>Vice Provost, Student Academic Affairs Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phaedra Bell</td>
<td>Director of Curricular Affairs, School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Gold</td>
<td>Professor, Department of Medicine (Academic Senate representative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella Hsu</td>
<td>Associate Vice Chancellor of Campus Life Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janice Humphreys</td>
<td>Associate Prof &amp; Vice-Chair, Department of Family Health Care Nursing, School of Nursing (Academic Senate representative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Kahl</td>
<td>Vice Chair, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, School of Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Kilmer</td>
<td>Director, Office of Student and Curricular Affairs, School of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Kirkland</td>
<td>Assistant Dean for Clinical Administration, School of Dentistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Loeser</td>
<td>Associate Dean, Curricular Affairs, School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Martin-Holland</td>
<td>Associate Dean, Academic Programs, School of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Nelson</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, Graduate Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy Perry</td>
<td>Associate Dean for Education, School of Dentistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia Watchmaker</td>
<td>Associate Dean, Student and Curricular Affairs, School of Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
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Committee Staff

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Kleinhofer</td>
<td>Planning Analyst, Student Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronica Nepveu</td>
<td>Executive Assistant to the Vice Provost, Student Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naledi Saul</td>
<td>Special Projects Coordinator to the Vice Provost, Student Academic Affairs/Associate Director, Office of Career and Professional Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between May and November 2008, the subcommittee held a series of meetings to explore the benefits of and barriers to adopting a common academic calendar, and, if feasible, to develop a single calendar. It sought comments and advice from key leaders in each of the schools, the Graduate Division and Academic Senate (including the faculty councils in each school), Student Academic Affairs Directors, Campus Life Services Directors, the Associated Students of UCSF, the Graduate Student Association, and the Postdoctoral Scholars Association.

In conducting its work, the subcommittee:

• Discussed and stated the benefits of a common academic calendar. Identified and addressed concerns and barriers to implementing a common academic calendar.
• Identified which UC institutions are currently on a common academic calendar
• Developed a draft common academic calendar for 2009-10.
II. THE CASE FOR A COMMON ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Promoting Interdisciplinary and Interprofessional Education

The committee recognizes that the adoption of a common academic calendar is a key component to achieving many of the goals envisioned in the UCSF Strategic Plan. While the idea of a common calendar has been of general interest for some time, the creation of this committee was motivated by a discussion among the Deans during the 2008 School of Medicine Retreat while planning for the Pathways to Discovery initiative. In seeking input from faculty, staff and students across UCSF, it is clear that there exists a wide appreciation of the potential gains to be achieved from embracing a single calendar. Committee members have been encouraged by the level of support by campus constituents and willingness to be flexible in addressing the challenges to adopting a common calendar.

The UCSF Strategic Plan envisions a community where, “students and trainees are immersed in a culture that embraces interdisciplinary, interprofessional and transdisciplinary educational programs.” A common calendar fosters that vision by facilitating cross-school enrollment for UCSF students. Currently, students interested in participating in classes outside of their home school or program find their ability to do so limited by the various start dates of the different curricula. In addition to encouraging cross-educational experiences at UCSF, this initiative will also lower the barrier to intercampus exchanges and learning experiences at other UC campuses and local universities, including San Francisco State University and the University of San Francisco, both of which operate on the semester system. Through these opportunities, students will gain exposure to a wider variety of interdisciplinary experiences and perspectives that will complement the education taught in their own schools.

UCSF faculty would also benefit from a common academic calendar. Synced scheduling would increase the possibility for faculty to collaborate in curriculum and co-teaching opportunities across schools, which is a goal of the UCSF Strategic Plan. The Schools and the Graduate Division could also leverage each other’s faculty to teach common courses. Finally, adoption of a single calendar would also help the Schools and Graduate Division by enabling students to more easily move from their degree program curriculum into the self-supporting certificate program curriculum.

Administrative Efficiencies

In addition to educational benefits, there are administrative efficiencies that can be achieved by pursuing a common academic calendar. A single calendar is expected to reduce the resources expended by centralized administrative services to accommodate multiple school schedules in fulfilling responsibilities such as collecting student fees and conducting the student census. A common start date would also benefit campus life services, including the UCSF Bookstore, Fitness and Recreation Center and Facilities Management, as well as Transportation Services (especially with planning of shuttle service between the Mission Bay and Parnassus sites). Finally, this initiative would also help to address an equity issue in student housing, as students in schools and programs with later start dates currently have more difficulty in securing housing, since places are often offered on first come, first served basis.

Even recognizing these tremendous benefits, the committee acknowledged both logistical and administrative challenges in achieving a single academic calendar. However, with the cross-campus feedback and support, it is also able to recommend strategic solutions to address each issue. At present, staggered start dates create
flexibility around the successful scheduling of the limited classroom space, particularly during mid-term and final exam periods. The committee recognized that the Registrar would need to work closely with faculty in each of the schools to identify and address scheduling conflicts, particularly around the exam period. Also, the first year program in the School of Dentistry and the first and second year programs in the School of Medicine would require a greater number of instruction days to fulfill their curriculum requirements than the proposed academic calendar would allow, if every school began on the same fall start date. Furthermore, current flexibility allows the Schools and Graduate Division to schedule around important professional development experiences for their students, such as national conferences, and this change would need to be taken into account. Lastly, committee members raised administrative concerns about ensuring continuous coverage of student health insurance over the summer for new and graduating students. The committee recommended working with Student Health Services to ensure that students retained current coverage.

III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the committee’s charge included making recommendations about a single calendar, it also wanted to address the Academic Senate’s recommendation to “include a way to facilitate scheduling of courses to encourage students to take classes outside their own school.” Our findings and the recommendations arising from these findings are described below.

FINDINGS

1. A common academic calendar adopted by the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy and the Graduate Division is an essential tool to educate future leaders and foster innovation and collaboration, as stated in the UCSF Strategic Plan. This initiative will, among other things, facilitate the ability of students to enroll in cross-school electives, encouraging interprofessional, interdisciplinary education, and increase administrative efficiencies.

2. The major barriers that exist to implement a common calendar include logistical concerns due to limited classroom space, curriculum requirements that necessitate a particular number of instructional days, and administrative concerns about ensuring student health coverage over the summer.

3. Currently, there is wide-spread support to adopt a common academic calendar from administrative, faculty, student and staff leaders across the campus. This positive response has resulted in a willingness to be flexible and creative in addressing challenges to successfully creating and implementing a common calendar.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The committee distilled its findings into four recommendations.

1. **Adopt a common academic calendar for the 2009-10 academic year.**
   a. The committee recommends adopting a calendar for the 2009-10 academic year, using the common UC calendar as its basis. While the majority of the campus would follow this calendar, two exceptions would be made for various classes in the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine.

   i. While the School of Dentistry can mostly conform to the proposed calendar, the following exceptions exist: 1) The ID3 students have a longer summer session than the D3, D4, and ID4 students, and must begin the summer session earlier than the recommended common instruction start date. 2) The incoming D1 students are required to be present for a multi-day *Introduction to Dentistry* series of orientation events, and would also arrive on campus prior to the fall quarter start date. The committee believes that these activities can be accommodated because they still fall within the quarter calendar. Lastly, certain rotations for D3, D4, ID3 and ID4 students will continue during quarter breaks in order to provide continuity of care to various clinics. These are part of multi-quarter courses and the courses will begin and end according to the academic calendar.

   ii. Due to curriculum requirements, the first and second year students within the School of Medicine will need to begin their instruction before the recommended fall quarter start date.

   b. In neither case are these courses the type of classes that would necessarily be open for cross-school student enrollment. Therefore, beginning the courses a short period before the official fall instruction start date would not hinder interdisciplinary opportunities for any UCSF students.

   c. The proposed common 2009-10 academic calendar is attached.

2. **Encourage “set aside” dates and/or times across the schools and Graduate Division for elective offerings**
   a. In addition to a common fall quarter start date, the committee recognized the value of identifying suggested common dates and/or times for elective offerings open to interprofessional education. This would limit the possibility that students would experience scheduling conflicts with their core or required classes. The committee identified Monday afternoons as a starting point for coordinating the scheduling of course electives. We recommend that the committee implementing the Pathways to Discovery work on coordinating such course offerings.

3. **Establish a mechanism for students to more easily identify elective offerings in the campus course catalog.**
a. Currently, there is no centralized place where students can identify elective course offerings across the campus. This situation creates an unnecessary barrier for students to enroll in such courses. The committee believes that this barrier can be eliminated if the Academic Senate Committee on Courses of Instruction creates a new field on the course form for departments to indicate when a course is open to students outside the department. If this occurs, students could then identify such courses through the new on-line course schedule developed by Student Academic Affairs. We recommend that this change takes place as early as the 2009-10 academic year.

4. **Explore the feasibility of a semester-based calendar**
   
a. Some schools have advocated for a semester-based academic calendar. Specifically, the School of Dentistry has expressed an interest in moving to a semester schedule, and the School of Medicine believes that a semester schedule would allow first and second year medical students to better align their schedules with a common calendar. The School of Nursing is also open to such a change. However, representatives of the Graduate Division, the School of Pharmacy and the Academic Senate currently prefer the quarter system. As this committee was not explicitly charged with exploring the possibility of a semester-based calendar, we recommend that the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost charge a separate group to review the feasibility of implementing a common semester-based calendar at UCSF. This committee is open to a request by the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost to explore this matter during 2009.