

FINAL REPORT

HARVARD UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CALENDAR REFORM

MARCH 22, 2004

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REPORT OF THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CALENDAR REFORM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MARCH 22, 2004

INTRODUCTION

In September, 2003, the Academic Advisory Group, consisting of the President, Provost and Deans, established the Harvard University Committee on Calendar Reform, chaired by Sidney Verba, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and Director of the University Library, and including student and faculty members drawn from each of the University's Schools and Faculties. The Committee was asked to consider and propose calendar guidelines that "will place our Schools on a more coordinated academic schedule and enable students and faculty members to cross Harvard's internal borders with greater ease." On March 22, 2004, the Committee released its final report, adopted by a vote of 18 to 1. The Committee process, key recommendations, and considerations bearing on them are outlined below.

MEMBERSHIP AND PROCESS

The Committee brought together members of each of the University's faculties, including five faculty members from the FAS, two of whom sit on the Steering Committee of the FAS Curricular Review, and five students, graduate and undergraduate, who were selected by the Undergraduate Council and the FAS and University-wide Graduate Student Councils. The following individuals served on the Committee:

Sidney Verba (FAS, *Chair*)
Steven Hyman (Provost)
George Baird (GSD)
Lizabeth Cohen (FAS)
Harvey Cox (HDS)
Malcolm Cox (HMS)
Benjamin Friedman (FAS)
Jay Harris (FAS)
W. Carl Kester (HBS)
Daniel Koretz (HGSE)
Leonard Marcus (HSPH)
Harry S. (Terry) Martin (HLS)
Frederick Schauer (KSG)
Christoph Wolff (FAS)

Students:

David Buchwald (KSG, HLS)
Patrick Charbonneau (Graduate Student Council, GSAS)
Caron Lee (Harvard Graduate Council, HSPH)
Jennifer Stolper (Undergraduate Council)
Thomas Wright (Undergraduate Council)

The Committee met three times over the course of the fall semester. Between meetings, the Committee collected data on current school calendars, constraints, historical and statutory information, faculty and student concerns, and any other information that could be useful to the Committee's work. Specifically:

- Faculty representatives explored and reported on the potential implications of calendar changes in their respective Schools, and student representatives discussed various proposals with groups of undergraduate and graduate students;
- Registrars from each School submitted information regarding current practices (i.e. shopping period, pre-registration, etc.), accreditation or licensing constraints, joint classes and programs, cross-registration information for students both within and external to their Schools, and other issues particular to their Schools;
- The Committee surveyed and compared the academic calendars of other colleges and universities;
- The Committee reviewed past attempts at calendar change both at Harvard University and at peer institutions;
- The Committee collected data from university contacts and from national associations such as the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA). This included researching past publications on calendar change and its implications.
- Undergraduate members of the Committee consulted with members of the Student Affairs Committee of the Undergraduate Council and collected student responses through the Undergraduate Council website. Graduate student representatives consulted with the Harvard Graduate Council, which includes student representatives from all of Harvard's graduate and professional Schools.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Common Curricular Framework

The Committee “strongly endorses the view that achieving greater coordination of calendars across the University is important for promoting closer connections among faculty and students from different Schools in an era when excellence in education and scholarship depends increasingly on learning that extends across traditional organizational boundaries.”¹ To achieve these benefits, the Committee recommends that the University adopt the following framework to be observed in all Schools:

- A fall semester instructional start date in early September immediately following Labor Day in most or all years;
- Completion of fall semester exams (including reading period for those Schools that have it) before Winter Break;
- Conclusion of the academic year and Commencement by the end of May;
- Coordination of vacations such as Spring Break and Thanksgiving Break.

¹ One Committee member dissents from this view as noted in Section VII of the Report of the Harvard University Committee on Calendar Reform.

Within these basic guidelines, the timing and structure of activities such as reading and exam periods and course registration are to be determined by the individual Schools. Schools will also determine how, or whether, they wish to use the January time period based on their curricular needs.

Flexible January Time Period

In the Committee's view, a *4M-1M-4M* (four-month, one-month, four-month) model is the optimal way for achieving calendar coordination. This model permits Schools to use three to four weeks in January as a period for special classes, research, fieldwork, time abroad, or other structured intersession experiences.

The Committee notes, however, that it is also possible to achieve the most important elements of calendar coordination through a more flexible model, such as *4M-X-4M*, where the "X" is a period in January whose precise length and content would be determined by individual Schools based on their pedagogical and curricular needs. Thus, one School might choose to use the full month for special classes, research, or other structured intersession experiences, and another might choose simply to have an extended Winter Break ending toward the middle or end of January. Under this model, second semester classes might not start at precisely the same time in all Schools, but most of the benefits of calendar coordination would be retained.

Further Process

The Committee recommends that decisions concerning the adoption of common calendar guidelines be deferred until the completion of the curricular reviews currently underway in the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the Harvard Divinity School, the Harvard Medical School (and the Harvard School of Dental Medicine), and most particularly in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, so that specific calendar decisions within the common framework can flow from the curricular judgments of the respective faculties. This is especially important with respect to how the January time period will be used.

CONSIDERATIONS THAT INFLUENCED THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

In reaching its decision to recommend that the University move to a more coordinated calendar framework, including an earlier start date and first-semester exams before Winter Break, the Committee considered the following factors, among others:

- Greater coordination would facilitate cross registration and allow for more joint programs between faculties and peer institutions such as MIT. In an average semester, there are over 2,600 cross-registrations involving non-cross-listed courses in Schools or Faculties other than that of a student's primary registration. There are also large numbers of courses offered jointly and cross-listed between two or more schools. There are about 100 such courses per term in the FAS alone. Harvard currently offers 22 joint degree programs and several more will be added in the near future. Students and faculty have indicated that they would take courses or teach across faculties more if schedules were more coordinated among Harvard's Schools.

- There is broad support across the University for the move to a coordinated calendar within the framework outlined by the Committee. Every non-FAS School at Harvard either already has exams before the Winter Break or would like to move to that calendar. The three Schools other than FAS (HDS, HGSE, and GSD) that do not have exams before Winter Break feel that they must follow the FAS calendar because of their students' extensive cross-registration. In the absence of common calendar guidelines, therefore, these Schools feel compelled to follow a schedule that they consider sub-optimal for their own students.
- A significant reading period and the current number of instructional days could be maintained in a calendar featuring exams before Winter Break. Each School would have the flexibility to decide how to adjust instructional days, reading period, and exam period to accommodate this change. A significant reading period (8 to 11 days in both the fall and spring semesters, depending on the precise dates chosen for the beginning and ending of each term) could be preserved under the recommended schedule. Though this represents a slight reduction from the current 12 days in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, it remains longer than reading periods at most peer institutions, with the median reading period lasting 4.5 days. The longest reading periods elsewhere are at Princeton, with a reading period of nine days in both semesters, and Brown, with a reading period of twelve days in the spring semester (but only five days in the fall semester).
- Graduate and undergraduate students on the Committee have asserted that many of their peers would prefer a schedule in which the fall semester reading period and exams end before Winter Break, though such views are not unanimous. These students urged that such a change would not only allow for a longer and less stressful vacation period but also would be positive pedagogically, as it would eliminate long periods between instruction and examination.
- A fall semester ending before Winter Break could also create a longer period of research time for faculty, either through the creation of a longer Winter Break between semesters, or through the creation of a January term in which teaching would not be required without compensatory time elsewhere.
- Shifting the date of Commencement to the end of May would increase students' ability to compete for summer experiences, jobs, and internships.
- As noted, the recommended calendar framework could accommodate both a standard semester model (with a longer intersession than we currently have, as at many of our peer institutions such as Cornell, Brown, and Columbia) or a model in which January could be used for enhanced educational opportunities in the form of independent study, study abroad, mini-courses, internships, lab experiences, or even research papers carried over from a first semester with exams before Winter Break.

FINAL REPORT

HARVARD UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON CALENDAR REFORM

MARCH 22, 2004

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This report documents the Committee's charge and process, outlines the benefits of greater calendar coordination, sets out the Committee's recommendations for achieving greater coordination among calendars across the University, analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of various calendar models, and suggests ways to achieve reform. Appendices with more detailed information appear at the end of the report.

Charge and Membership

In September 2003, the President, Provost, and Deans issued the following statement describing the appointment and charge of a Committee on Calendar Reform:

“For decades, disparities among the calendars of Harvard's faculties and Schools have made it more difficult than it should be for students in one School to cross-register for courses in another. Correspondingly, faculty members have faced logistical obstacles in making their courses readily accessible to students from other parts of the University. The prospect of carefully considered calendar reform holds promise to redress these problems and promote closer connections among faculty and students across the University, in an era when excellent education and scholarship increasingly depend on learning that extends across traditional academic bounds.

In this spirit, during our retreat this summer, we agreed that the University should develop, adopt, and implement a set of calendar guidelines that will place our Schools on a more consistent academic schedule and enable students and faculty members to cross Harvard's internal borders with greater ease. While recognizing that each of our Schools' calendars has evolved in light of distinctive purposes and pedagogical imperatives (as well as accreditation requirements), we believe that substantially greater consistency of calendars will serve a vital educational interest in wider cross-enrollment opportunities, and thus alleviate what has been a chronic source of student frustration. Precisely what the calendar parameters should be, and what level of commonality is needed to produce the desired academic benefits, are questions warranting thorough deliberation and care.

Therefore, we have together asked Professor Sidney Verba to chair a University-wide committee to consider and propose calendar guidelines applicable to Harvard as a whole. The committee will be charged with recommending to the deans, provost, and president a set of calendar guidelines that will substantially improve opportunities for cross-enrollment between and among the University's different Schools.”²

² Source: *The Harvard Gazette*, September 25, 2003 (<http://www.hno.harvard.edu/gazette/2003/09.25/02-committee.html>).

Scope of Charge

The timing of the beginning of the academic year, Commencement, and vacations are set out in Statute Seven of the “Statutes of the University,” adopted and amended by the Governing Boards. The work of this Committee is therefore advisory only. It is intended to provide useful data and analysis bearing on the question of the desirability and feasibility of greater calendar coordination and how best to achieve it.

We were asked to consider and propose calendar guidelines applicable to Harvard as a whole that will “enable students and faculty members to cross Harvard's internal borders with greater ease.” To carry out this task, we have analyzed in some detail various models and frameworks that will make this possible and identified the potential impact of different approaches on curricular structure and opportunities. It is not within the scope of our charge to evaluate pedagogical or curricular issues. Rather we have sought to identify a framework that would enhance coordination while maximizing the flexibility of the several Schools to fulfill curricular and other needs and/or to innovate with new curricular patterns.³ In identifying the optimal framework or frameworks for coordinating the calendar across Harvard’s Schools, the committee had, nevertheless, to take into account current curricular practices and planning, pedagogical priorities, and various other constraints in the several faculties. Our recommendations are based on our mandate as informed by such considerations.

Membership

The committee brought together members of each of the University's faculties, including four members from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (in addition to the chair), two of whom sit on the Steering Committee of the FAS Curricular Review, and several students, graduate and undergraduate, who were selected by the Undergraduate Council and the FAS and University-wide Graduate Student Councils. The following individuals served on the Committee:

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Leonard Marcus (HSPH)
Harry S. (Terry) Martin (HLS)
Frederick Schauer (KSG)
Christoph Wolff (FAS)

³ While the Committee did not address the question of class scheduling, it may be an issue to be considered in the future for further calendar reform. Different faculties currently hold their courses on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday schedule, while others follow a Monday-Tuesday or Thursday-Friday schedule. Coordinating the length of class times and the starting and ending hours might also be helpful.

Students:

David Buchwald (KSG, HLS)
Patrick Charbonneau (Graduate Student Council, GSAS)
Caron Lee (Harvard Graduate Council, HSPH)
Jennifer Stolper (Undergraduate Council)
Thomas Wright (Undergraduate Council)

Committee Process

The Committee met three times over the course of the fall semester. Between meetings, the Committee collected data on current school calendars, constraints, historical and statutory information, faculty and student concerns, and any other information that could be useful to the Committee's work. Specifically:

- Faculty representatives explored and reported on the potential implications of calendar changes in their respective Schools, and student representatives discussed various proposals with groups of undergraduate and graduate students;
- Registrars from each School submitted information regarding current practices (i.e. shopping period, pre-registration, etc.), accreditation or licensing constraints, joint classes and programs, cross-registration information for students both within and external to their Schools, and other issues particular to their Schools;
- The Committee surveyed and compared the academic calendars of other colleges and universities;
- The Committee reviewed past attempts at calendar change both at Harvard University and at peer institutions;
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- Undergraduate members of the Committee consulted with members of the Student Affairs Committee of the Undergraduate Council and collected student responses through the Undergraduate Council website. Graduate student representatives consulted with the Harvard Graduate Council, which includes student representatives from all of Harvard's graduate and professional Schools.

THE BENEFITS AND PURPOSES OF CALENDAR COORDINATION AND REFORM

The Committee strongly endorses the view that achieving greater coordination of calendars across the University is important for promoting closer connections among faculty and students from different Schools in an era when excellence in education and scholarship increasingly depends on learning that extends across traditional organizational boundaries.⁴

Calendar coordination and reform would benefit both faculty and students in a number of ways. Greater coordination would facilitate cross registration and allow for more joint programs between faculties and peer institutions such as MIT. In an average semester, there are over 2,600

⁴ One Committee member dissents from this view as noted in Section VII of this Report and Appendix G (See Benjamin Friedman's memo).

cross-registrations involving non-cross-listed courses in Schools or Faculties other than that of a student's primary registration. There are also large numbers of courses offered jointly and cross-listed between two or more schools. There are about 100 such courses per term in the FAS alone. Harvard currently offers 22 joint degree programs and several more will be added in the near future.⁵ Students and faculty have indicated that they would take courses or teach across faculties more if schedules were more coordinated among Harvard's Schools. Given the trend toward greater cross-registration and collaboration and expected growth in joint degree programs, the current lack of calendar coordination imposes unnecessary barriers, such as varying instructional start dates, examination periods, and spring recess dates (thus often preventing students from having a break during the semester at all). These barriers to cross-registration have been major concerns raised at prior graduate student forums through the Harvard Graduate Council.

Additionally, there is broad support across the University for the move to a coordinated calendar within the framework outlined by the Committee. Every non-FAS School at Harvard either already has exams before the Winter Break or would like to move to that calendar. The three Schools other than FAS (HDS, HGSE, and GSD) that do not have exams before Winter Break feel that they must follow the FAS calendar because of their students' extensive cross-registration. In the absence of common calendar guidelines, therefore, these Schools feel compelled to follow a schedule that they consider sub-optimal for their own students.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING CALENDAR COORDINATION

To achieve these benefits, the Committee believes that it would be most advantageous to coordinate: (1) instructional start dates, (2) dates of completion of semester periods, (3) dates of holidays and recesses, and (4) the date of Commencement. In order to achieve greater coordination, the Committee recommends the following guidelines as a framework to be observed in all Schools:

- A fall semester instructional start date in early September immediately following Labor Day in most or all years⁶;
- Completion of fall semester exams (including reading period for those Schools that have it) before Winter Break;
- Conclusion of the academic year and Commencement by the end of May;⁷
- Coordination of vacations such as Spring Break and Thanksgiving Break.⁸

⁵ This is a very conservative estimate based on registrar-defined criteria. See Appendix E for a list of joint degree programs at Harvard University in 2003-04.

⁶ When Labor Day is late (when it falls on September 5-7), Harvard might need to consider one of two options: 1) it could either begin instruction before Labor Day, or 2) it could start classes after Labor Day but eliminate certain holidays (Columbus Day, Veterans Day) in order to preserve the number of instructional days. This second option could cause the first-year lawyering program at HLS to continue its fall semester into January in order to meet its accreditation time requirements. One student on the Committee indicated a strong preference for instruction starting before Labor Day, noting: "I strongly believe that when Labor Day falls on September 5-7, the fall term *should* start before Labor Day. The alternative, eliminating Columbus and Veterans Day, will not go over well with the student body. A calendar in which students work straight through from the beginning of September till Thanksgiving will create a stressful environment." Two faculty members on the Committee also expressed interest in starting classes before Labor Day on these years.

⁷ The timing of Commencement has changed several times since the inception of Harvard. It is set out in the Statutes of the University, which can be amended by the Governing Boards.

Within these basic guidelines, the timing and structure of activities such as reading and exam periods and course registration are to be determined by the individual Schools. Schools will also determine how, or whether, they wish to use the January time period based on their curricular needs.

WAYS OF ACHIEVING CALENDAR COORDINATION

Overview and Three Basic Models

Academic calendars are structured in a variety of ways. Most of our peer institutions use a semester system, though some use a quarter system. Since no Schools at Harvard currently use a quarter system, it is unlikely, in the Committee's view, that we will find ourselves turning to the quarter system as the basis for university-wide calendar guidelines. We have thus chosen to focus our attention on different versions of the semester system.

The Committee identified three basic calendar models, where the primary difference is found in the time between early September and the end of January.

In one model, used currently by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Divinity School, the Graduate School of Education, and the Graduate School of Design, there are two semesters in which the fall semester begins roughly two weeks after Labor Day, classes end before Winter Break, reading period begins after Winter Break and lasts approximately two weeks, the exam period is held in January, the second semester starts at the beginning of February, and Commencement is held in June. This model was not pursued by the committee as a common framework, because all the professional Schools either use or would prefer to use another model. The three faculties that currently use this model (HDS, GSE, GSD) report that they favor dropping this calendar. In addition, FAS is undertaking a curricular review, which is considering curricular changes that are inconsistent with this model.

The second model follows a “4M-1M-4M” structure (i.e. four-month, one-month⁹, four-month sessions). This model, used in varying degrees by several of Harvard's other professional Schools, features two semesters plus a one-month January mini-session or intersession. Under this model, classes begin in early September with fall semester examinations occurring before winter break. This is followed by a one-month mini-session or intersession and a spring semester beginning in early February. This calendar is used by a number of our peer institutions (e.g. Brown, Columbia, Cornell), as well as MIT, with whom we have considerable cross-registration.

⁸ The Committee recommends that Thanksgiving be at least three days; however, it is also possible to accommodate a full weeklong Thanksgiving break. This is possible under the proposed guidelines if one is willing to be flexible about starting the fall semester before Labor Day in late Labor Day years and/or holding classes on the two fall holidays (Columbus Day and Veterans' Day). Two undergraduate students on the Committee suggested that there ought to be a weeklong recess for Thanksgiving (Monday-Friday) in order to give students a more full break in the middle of the semester. One student indicated that students would be willing to sacrifice the two single-day holidays (Columbus Day and Veterans Day) in exchange for a weeklong holiday at Thanksgiving. Another student suggested that Yom Kippur be made a holiday.

⁹ The term “1-month” is used generally here to indicate a period of approximately 4 weeks (see Appendix C for discussion on “Ways of Thinking about the “1”).

The third model follows a structure where the calendar is comprised of two semesters with the fall semester beginning in early September and with finals occurring before winter break. In this model, the second semester starts in the middle to the end of January rather than at the beginning of February. For the remainder of the report, we will refer to this structure as the *4M-X-4M* model.

As discussed later in this report, there are complex variations in what Harvard's various Schools and schools within other colleges and universities do within the semesters and mini-session, including special programs and varied calendar details for different student groups. These variations are based on the nature of the curriculum, responses to external demands, or tradition.

Recommended Model for Maximum Calendar Coordination: *4M-1M-4M*

In the Committee's view, the way to achieve the most effective coordination of calendars would be through a *4M-1M-4M* model. The *4M-1M-4M* calendar structure would permit the University to achieve increased calendar coordination with minimum disruption to existing practices and greater flexibility for individual Schools. Our analysis assumes a starting date in early September (right after Labor Day in most or all years), completion of exams before Winter Break, a January mini-session for special classes or intersession experiences, the start of spring semester in late January or early February, and conclusion of the academic year by the end of May.¹⁰

It is also possible to achieve the most important elements of calendar coordination through a more flexible model, such as *4M-X-4M*, where the "X" is a period in January whose precise length and content would be determined by Schools based on their individual pedagogical and curricular needs.¹¹ Thus, one School might choose to use the full month for special classes, research, or other structured intersession experiences, and another might choose simply to have an extended Winter Break ending toward the end of January. Under this model, second semester classes might not start at precisely the same time in all Schools, but most of the benefits of calendar coordination would be retained.

Four Schools at Harvard currently use some form of *4M-1M-4M*, including the Law School (for their second- and third-year students), the Kennedy School of Government, the School of Public Health, and the Medical School (for their students in the Health Sciences and Technology program). The Business School (for their MBA students) follows a form of *4M-X-4M*, where students begin spring semester classes in the middle to end of January. Four Schools follow the current FAS two-semester model. Representatives from three of these Schools, the Graduate School of Education, the Divinity School, and the Graduate School of Design, have each indicated their School's interest and desire to move towards a *4M-1M-4M* schedule.¹² The FAS Curriculum Review Committee is also considering the possibility of recommending a shift to a *4M-1M-4M* calendar for curricular and pedagogical reasons, though the Committee is not scheduled to report initial recommendations to the Faculty until Spring 2004. If a January

¹⁰ See Appendix D for a chart illustrating examples of changes that could be made from the current FAS calendar to a possible *4M-1M-4M* calendar.

¹¹ For example, if HBS is unable to shift its calendar to accommodate the entire month of January as a separate intersession, exception could be made to allow for a 1-week flexibility.

¹² See Appendix G for memos from members of Committee on Calendar Reform.

session is not decided on by one or more of these faculties, a version of 4M-X-4M would still allow for most of the benefits for the calendar changes listed above.

Other Advantages of the Recommended Model

A 4M-1M-4M model could accommodate both a standard semester model (with a longer intersession than we currently have, as at many of our peer institutions such as Cornell, Brown, and Columbia) or a model in which January could be used for enhanced educational opportunities in the form of independent study, study abroad, mini-courses, internships, lab experiences, or even research papers carried over from a first semester with exams before Winter Break.

The 4M-1M-4M calendar model permits the same number of instructional days available under the current FAS semester system and maintains a significant reading period before exams.¹³ The 4M-1M-4M model would shift the winter break to follow, rather than precede, the completion of classes and the beginning of the reading and exam period for students. While there is division among students on the issue, our impression is that the weight of opinion is in the direction of ending the semester before Winter Break.

Graduate and undergraduate students on the Committee have asserted that many of their peers would prefer a schedule in which the fall semester reading period and exams end before Winter Break, though such views are not unanimous. These students urged that such a change would not only allow for a longer and less stressful vacation period but also would be positive pedagogically, as it would eliminate long periods between instruction and examination.

A fall semester ending before Winter Break could also create a longer period of research time for faculty, either through the creation of a longer Winter Break between semesters, or through the creation of a January term in which teaching would not be required without compensatory time elsewhere.

Additionally, this schedule would make the structure of fall and spring semesters more congruent while retaining the same number of instructional days.

At present, there is great variation in the use of January across our Faculties and Schools.¹⁴ For Faculties currently following the model used in FAS, January is considered part of the fall semester and is used for reading period and exams. For Faculties currently using a calendar that

¹³ In FAS, one way to achieve this is by administering final exams either over an eight-day period or with three exam sessions each day (morning, afternoon, and evening) – the plan used at Yale and other peer institutions. Special arrangements could be made for the few students who might face three final examinations on the same day. A significant reading period and the current number of instructional days could be maintained in a calendar featuring exams before Winter Break. Each School would have the flexibility to decide how to adjust instructional days, reading period, and exam period to accommodate this change. A significant reading period (8 to 11 days in both the fall and spring semesters, depending on the precise dates chosen for the beginning and ending of each term) could be preserved under the recommended schedule. Though this represents a slight reduction from the current 12 days in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, it remains longer than reading periods at most peer institutions, with the median reading period lasting 4.5 days. The longest reading periods elsewhere are at Princeton, with a reading period of nine days in both semesters, and Brown, with a reading period of twelve days in the spring semester (but only five days in the fall semester).

¹⁴ See Appendix C for “Ways of Thinking About the ‘1’” for examples of how Harvard Schools currently use the January term.

treats January as a separate unit, January is used in various ways: as an extension of the fall semester (for work on papers, etc.), for special programs taught either by regular or “guest” faculty, for intensive research, for off-campus research or scholarly travel, for combinations of these activities, or just an extended winter break for students. If the 4M-1M-4M calendar were adopted across the University, it would present each School with the opportunity to develop uses for the January period, appropriate to that School’s curricular and pedagogical needs. The current semester model could also be retained with a longer break or intersession between semesters.¹⁵

Shifting the date of Commencement to the end of May would increase students’ ability to compete for summer experiences, jobs, and internships. An earlier Commencement would also ensure that the length of other summer activities such as Harvard Summer School and pre-fall orientation sessions would not be disturbed.

Beyond 4M-1M-4M, Harvard should also align vacation dates as part of its calendar reform. For example, the spring breaks for HMS 1st and 2nd year students, HSPH students, and HBS MBA students are held during different weeks from the rest of the Schools.¹⁶ While this is not an issue related to the beginning or ending of instructional periods, our committee’s charge was to recommend a set of guidelines that would facilitate cross-registration and collaboration amongst the faculties. Based on student feedback, this is an issue that inhibits cross-registration, because it can preclude students who cross-register from having a spring break, during which students look for jobs, fellowships, summer internships, catch up on work, or simply take a break.

Disadvantages of the 4M-1M -4M Model

While there are many merits to this model, there are also inevitable drawbacks. A move to a 4M-1M-4M calendar requires that the academic year start at the beginning of September, which would be a shift for several of the Schools.

If classes were to begin right after Labor Day, some activities might need to start before that. This might include pre-semester programs for entering students, training for teaching fellows, and library procurement of textbooks and course packets. One faculty member expressed concern that fewer professors might agree to participate in their department’s program for first-year graduate students, resulting in a decrease in the number of freshmen being advised by faculty members and the number of teaching fellows who would be well-prepared at the beginning of the term. Experience at peer institutions, however, suggests that faculty would probably adapt to a new calendar were changes to be made.

Finally, careful attention would have to be given to the timing of the second semester for HBS to accommodate its Academic Performance Review process.¹⁷

¹⁵ See the discussion of 4M-1M-4M above.

¹⁶ For the 2003-04 academic year, Spring Break is held on the following dates: March 8th-12th (1st and 2nd year HMS students), March 13th-21st (HBS MBAs), March 20th-28th (HSPH), and March 27th-April 4th (all other Schools). HBS decides its Spring Break by picking the halfway point in the semester, HSPH and HMS chooses the point between mini-sessions, and the other Schools do not follow any particular formula.

¹⁷ See Appendix G for W. Carl Kester’s memo on the impact of a 4M-1M-4M calendar on HBS.

ADDITIONAL PRAGMATIC ISSUES TO CONSIDER FOR CALENDAR REFORM

There are several pragmatic issues that need to be considered if we were to shift to a calendar within the recommended framework of an early September start, final exams before Winter Break, conclusion of the academic year and Commencement by the end of May, and coordination of vacations such as Spring Break and Thanksgiving Break.

First, when restructuring calendars, Schools will need to take special care to heed to federal financial aid regulations.¹⁸ This should not be a problem, so long as the Schools maintain the length of their semesters, which is feasible under the proposed calendar. Second, a switch to 4M-1M-4M could potentially impact certain student activities, such as athletics or student life activities. Third, there are several issues revolving around the start date of first semester. There may be some need for activity before Labor Day, such as Orientation programs, student move-in dates, etc. Furthermore, faculty teaching loads and responsibilities might need to be considered depending on how a January term is conceived and adjusted in faculties choosing to adopt a January term.

Additionally in certain specialized programs at professional Schools where there is no cross-registration, calendar coordination is not necessarily needed. In most cases, these include students who are not likely to be interested in or able to cross-register, and courses that are not generally open to or appropriate for students from other Schools (e.g. first-year lawyering program or clinical medicine courses for third- and fourth-year medical students).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends that the University adopt calendar guidelines, applicable to the University as a whole, encompassing the following framework:

- A fall semester instructional start date in early September immediately following Labor Day in most or all years;¹⁹
- Completion of fall semester exams (including reading period for those Schools that have it) before Winter Break;
- Conclusion of the academic year and Commencement by the end of May;²⁰
- Coordination of vacations such as Spring Break and Thanksgiving Break.²¹
- The Committee also recommends the 4M-1M-4M model as the optimal way for achieving calendar coordination. However, it suggests that the second model of 4M-X-4M (with the more flexible use of January) is also viable, achieves most of the benefits of calendar

¹⁸ See Appendix F for Federal Financial Aid Regulation Guidelines according to NASFAA.

¹⁹ When Labor Day is late (when it falls on September 5-7), Harvard might need to consider one of two options: 1) it could either begin instruction before Labor Day, or 2) it could start classes after Labor Day but eliminate certain holidays (Columbus Day, Veterans Day) in order to preserve the number of instructional days. This second option could cause the first-year lawyering program at HLS to continue its fall semester into January in order to meet its accreditation time requirements.

²⁰ The timing of Commencement has changed several times since the inception of Harvard. It is set out in the Statutes of the University, which can be amended by the Governing Boards.

²¹ The Committee recommends that Thanksgiving be at least three days; however, it is also possible to accommodate a full weeklong Thanksgiving break. This is possible under the proposed guidelines if one is willing to be flexible about starting the fall semester before Labor Day in late Labor Day years and/or holding classes on the two fall holidays (Columbus Day and Veterans' Day).

coordination, and is strongly preferable to the current situation in which some Schools have exams before Winter Break and others do not.²²

Within these basic guidelines, the timing and structure of activities such as reading and exam periods and course registration are to be determined by the individual Schools. Schools will also determine how, or whether, they wish to use the January time period based on their curricular needs.

The Committee recommends, further, that decisions concerning the adoption of these common calendar guidelines be deferred until the completion of the curricular reviews currently underway in the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the Harvard Divinity School, the Harvard Medical School (and the Harvard School of Dental Medicine), and most particularly in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, so that specific calendar decisions within the common framework can flow from the curricular judgments of the respective faculties.²³ This is especially important with respect to how the January time period will be used.

As noted, the Committee has made every effort to solicit and collect comprehensive information from each of the Faculties upon which we could base our recommendations; however, there will inevitably be issues that are unique to particular School environments or cultures that will need to be taken into careful consideration as the University moves toward implementation of more coordinated calendar guidelines. Out of 19 committee members, 18 voted in favor of these recommendations.²⁴ Some of those who voted in favor had particular concerns that are noted in footnotes throughout the report.

²² The Committee asserts that 4M-X-4M is significantly less desirable than 4M-1M-4M in achieving our goals (e.g. the second semester would not begin in a coordinated way, thus potentially creating barriers to cross-registration). To the extent that the difference in “X” between the Schools does not exceed a 7-day period, cross-registration is still feasible; however, if the difference in X between Schools is greater than one week, a student enrolled in a month-long experience at one School may experience difficulty cross-registering in courses at another School.

²³ One member of the committee indicated a preference for earlier action to adopt these recommendations; whereas the one member of the committee who voted against the report did so largely on the basis of the preference for finishing the curriculum review before implementation.

²⁴ One member of the Committee, a faculty member from FAS, voted against the report: “I vote ‘no’ on this report. Going to a 4-1-4 calendar before we’ve discussed the curricular aspects of such a change – what is everyone supposed to do in January? – seems entirely backward to me. Even for the more narrowly construed purpose of facilitating cross-faculty course registration, I think the gains to be had from synchronizing the start and end dates of the term are likely to be small compared with such matters as what days of the week and what hours of the day courses in the different faculties normally meet. If the purpose of this exercise is really to make cross-registration easier, why not remove those impediments first and see whether the start and end dates really seem to be deterring students from cross-registering? And if we’re not prepared to remove those more important impediments, then changing the calendar seems particularly pointless.” For a fuller explication of this point, see the letter from Professor Benjamin Friedman in Appendix G.

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

1L: First-year law student at Harvard Law School

2L: Second-year law student at Harvard Law School

3L: Third-year law student at Harvard Law School

4M-1M-4M: “The 4-1-4 calendar consists of a four-month session followed by a one-month short session and another four-month session. The first term starts in late August to early September and ends in early December, and is followed by the one-month session, which typically occurs in January. The third term generally starts in mid-January or early February and ends in May. An additional summer session may exist.” (Source: AACRAO 2000-2001 Academic Calendars Study: Analytical Profiles of Calendar Use and Conversions)

AACRAO: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (www.aacrao.org)

FAS: Faculty of Arts and Sciences (Harvard)

GSAS: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Harvard)

GSD: Harvard Graduate School of Design

HBS: Harvard Business School

HDS: Harvard Divinity School

HGSE: Harvard Graduate School of Education

HLS: Harvard Law School

HMS: Harvard Medical School

HSPH: Harvard School of Public Health

HST: Health Sciences and Technology program at Harvard Medical School

IAP: Independent Activities Period, which refers to January term used at MIT and for the Harvard Medical School Health Sciences and Technology program

KSG: Kennedy School of Government (Harvard)

MIT: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

NASFAA: National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (www.nasfaa.org)

NP: New Pathways program at Harvard Medical School

WinterSession: January term used at Harvard School of Public Health

Appendix B

January 2004 Schedules at Harvard University

Below is a summary of the January schedules at the different Schools at Harvard University.

FAS, GSAS, GSD, GSE, and HDS currently have their reading and exam periods during January. The same is true for the first-year HLS lawyering program and the HBS doctoral program. GSD must have, at the very least, 13 weeks of classroom instruction in order to meet their accreditation requirements, which could be accomplished with finals before winter break if classes started earlier in September.

Currently, HLS (2L, 3L), KSG, SPH, and HMS (HST) use the month of January as winter terms during which they either offer classes or intersession experiences. Students at KSG can use the winter term (the month of January) in a few ways: (1) in-class final exams are held in December, but many papers, projects, and take-home exams are not due until January. Many of these projects are long term papers that could be submitted before winter break, but the January deadline allows students more flexibility; (2) Students can take an accelerated or intensive course that is offered, but this is not required. The courses can either be valued at a full credit (equivalent to a semester-long course) or a half-credit; (3) Students often use that time to do field research in another country for their Policy Analysis Exercise Papers (second-year thesis); and (4) Others use the time to get involved in volunteer activities such as working on political campaigns.

During SPH's WinterSession, students can participate in elective courses, travel tutorials, field research, non-credit skill-building seminars, and other enrichment activities. Any required courses offered are not exclusive to WinterSession.

At HMS, there are different schedules for the two MD programs, the New Pathway (NP) and the Health Sciences and Technology (HST) programs. The NP has its own curriculum that does not currently follow the traditional academic calendar. However, the ongoing HMS curriculum reform initiative creates an opportunity for reconsideration of the advantages and potential disadvantages of a 4-1-4 schedule. The HST program follows the same calendar as MIT (MIT uses a 4-1-4 calendar). The Division of Medical Sciences at HMS already follows the GSAS calendar. Likewise, HSDM follows the more traditional calendar of holding final exams after winter break. While complex and needing further study, HMS and HSDM do not anticipate insurmountable accreditation problems by converting to a 4-1-4 calendar.

Currently, MBA students at HBS begin classes in the middle of January, but there are no licensing or accreditation constraints which would prevent HBS from coordinating the beginning of the spring semester with the other Harvard Schools. They currently have their last day of exams on May 7, but if they pushed their spring semester start to the beginning of February, HBS would still be able to conclude its courses before the end of May, right along with the other Schools. HBS also holds their MBA spring break during a different week from the rest of the Schools.²⁵

According to the HLS registrar, HLS must follow and meet the American Bar Association's (ABA) minimum standard requirements in order to be an approved law school. Currently, by applying the most stringent standards, the requirements at HLS insure that their students would be eligible to sit for any U.S. state bar exam.

Consequently, for course and residence requirements, the following apply regarding the current ABA guidelines:

- (a) *"An academic year shall consist of not fewer than 130 days on which classes are regularly scheduled on the law school, extending into not fewer than eight calendar months. Time for reading periods, examinations, or other activities may not be counted for this purpose."*
- (b) *"A law school shall require, as condition for graduation, successful completion of a course of student in residence of not fewer than 56,000 minutes of instruction time, except*

²⁵ In 2004, HBS Spring Break for MBAs is March 13th-21st and the other Schools hold their Spring Breaks from March 27th-April 4th.

as otherwise provided. At least 45,000 of these minutes shall be by attending regularly scheduled class sessions at the law school confirming the degree.”
In all events, the 130 day-day requirement of Standard 304(a) and the 56,000-minute requirement of Standard 304(b) should be understood as separate and independent requirements.
Additionally, a semester hour of credit requires not fewer than 700 minutes of instruction time, exclusive of time for examination. To achieve the required total of 56,000 minutes of instruction time, a law school must require at least 80 semester hours of credit.

“At HLS, first year students have a fall and spring semester consisting of at least 70 days each, totaling 140 days. Their classes are scheduled in 50-minute components. As an example a five-credit 1L class would meet three times per week for 14 weeks totaling 42 days for a particular semester. At 250 minutes per week, the total minutes for a 1L basic class is 3500 minutes for the term, the ABA minimum requirement.

“Currently, first-year HLS students start classes right after Labor Day. Finals are held after Winter Break for 1Ls over three days that are spaced out over a span of 5-6 days (the faculty do not want the finals to be on consecutive days, rather they want them to have a day break between each final exam day). Also, their class periods run for 50 minutes, whereas the class periods for 2L and 3L students run for 60 minutes. 2L and 3L students have a “fly-out” week, which is a period when they do not have classes, giving them an opportunity to attend interviews and be recruited by law firms, judges for clerkships, etc. This extra time causes the class periods to be of an increased length because they must get in a certain number of minutes per course in order to meet ABA requirements.

“The curriculum for second and third-year HLS students consists of 60 class days each in the fall and spring term, and 14 days in the winter term, totaling 134 days. The difference for second and third-year student schedules is their classes meet for sixty minutes rather than fifty-minute components. A five-credit 1L class meets for 250 minutes per week and a five credit 2L & 3L class meets for 300 minutes per week. 2L and 3L students need the January term to get in all the required credit hours/minutes. Because of the different requirements for first-year students, there are two different calendars for the first year students and the second and third year students.”²⁶

In order for HLS to fully coordinate their calendar to a 4-1-4 structure, they would have to have to have the flexibility to begin the fall semester before Labor Day during years in which Labor Day is late because of the structure of their 1L final exams period.

²⁶ Source: Steve Kane, HLS Registrar (October 30, 2003)

Appendix C

Ways of Thinking About the “1”

The January/winter term is being used in a variety of ways both within and outside Harvard, and there are a range of financial and administrative implications to be considered in thinking about a shift to a January term.

Examples of Use

Institutions use the “1” in several different ways. The length of time used during the January term varies from two weeks to one month, and some institutions make it optional, while others make it mandatory for a certain number of years (e.g. requiring January term activities for two out of four years).

Currently at Harvard, HLS, KSG, SPH, and HMS use the month of January as winter terms during which they either offer classes or intersession experiences²⁷:

- Students at KSG can use the winter term (the month of January) in a several different ways:
 1. In-class exams are held in December, but many papers, projects, and take-home exams are not due until January. Many of these projects are long term papers that could be submitted before winter break, but the January deadline allows students to have more flexibility.
 2. Students can take an accelerated or intensive course that is offered, but this is not required. The courses can either be valued at a full credit (equivalent to a semester-long course) or a half-credit.
 3. Students often use that time to do field research in another country for their Policy Analysis Exercise Papers (second-year thesis).
 4. Others use the time to get involved in volunteer activities. One student noted that several students would be going to New Hampshire to work on Presidential campaigns this January.
- During SPH’s WinterSession,²⁸ students can participate in elective courses, travel tutorials, field research, non-credit skill-building seminars, and other enrichment activities. Any required courses offered are not exclusive to WinterSession. One student describes her experience going abroad:

Winter Session at HSPH has allowed me to have wonderful overseas opportunities that I most likely could not have had without a 4-1-4 calendar model. This past January (2003), I went on a three-week field study to Cuba to learn about the health care system there. (This was significantly better than the one-week trip to Cuba that HSPH students made during spring break prior to the calendar reform.) This academic year, I am going to Santiago, Chile, to learn about the health reforms made during the past couple decades, hospital decentralization, and community medicine. Other winter session overseas trips are to Kerala, India and Durban, South Africa.

Further, students are able to arrange internship opportunities independent from HSPH (other than seeking approval from their advisors and the registrar). For example, a classmate of mine went to Geneva for six weeks last year to work for the Global Fund. Another friend will return to Cambodia (where she did her summer internship) this coming January to continue her research. Winter session also proves to be an opportune time for students to focus on their thesis.

- At HMS, the Health Sciences and Technology program (HST) follows the same calendar as MIT, while the Division of Medical Sciences follows the GSAS calendar. During the HST January period, often referred to as Independent Activities Period (IAP), four for-credit courses are offered. HST students may conduct research or engage in extracurricular offerings.
- HLS must meet the American Bar Association’s minimum standard requirements in order to be an accredited law school. With the exception of those students who use the time in January to get credit for independent clinical work or to participate in the Winter Term Writing Program, second- and third-year law students (2Ls

²⁷ For further information on the value of the winter term for students, various Schools have student evaluation forms that gather student feedback on the academic value of their Winter Session experiences.

²⁸ <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/registrar/WinterSession/index.shtml>

and 3Ls) are required to take a course during the January term to get in all the required credit hours and minutes. The courses offered are often unique to January, but others are intensive and condensed versions of courses available during regular semesters, which meet daily. Some of the offerings include practical training as extensions of highly theoretical Fall or Spring Term courses.

MIT uses the month of January for an Independent Activities Period (IAP) during which members of the MIT community (students, faculty, staff, and alums) are provided with an “opportunity to organize, sponsor and participate in a wide variety of activities, including how-to sessions, forums, lecture series, films, tours, recitals and contests.”²⁹ Full-time regular students in either the fall or spring terms may take IAP subjects for no additional tuition charge; however students are not required to take subjects to retain their student status between the fall and spring terms. Students at MIT may also cross-register in winter session offerings at particular other institutions such as Wellesley College.

Financial Considerations

HSPH found that there were three primary financial issues relating to their transition to a 4-1-4 calendar structure in June 2000: compensation for faculty time, availability of funds for new course development, and tuition structure. They addressed faculty compensation through a larger budget change in support for teaching efforts. In 2003, HSPH established a grant program for the development of new courses. Finally, WinterSession is attached to one of the regular terms (fall or spring semester) within the tuition structure such that full-time tuition paid for one of the terms would cover the cost for WinterSession. Part-time students at HSPH pay on a per-credit basis and were not affected by the change. When the WinterSession was attached to the fall term for registration and full-time tuition purposes, students were not able to receive the proceeds of their second-term student loans until February. Thus, the term association has been changed so that loan proceeds can be released at the beginning of January.

Some universities require separate and minimal tuition fees for their January terms, while others include the fees as part of the regular semesters. Other issues to consider include services such as library and computer lab hours, health care, and residence halls and food service.

Faculty

January term Faculty include guest faculty and alumni with special expertise as well as the regular faculty of the institution. Some institutions allow adjuncts to teach during the shortened term, while others do not. HLS sometimes has visitors who are unable to be at HLS for extended periods teach or co-teach traditional courses or specialized subjects that could not otherwise be offered.

Additionally, some require faculty to teach a certain number of winter terms within a prescribed period of time. At HLS, Winter Term courses count toward faculty teaching loads on the same credit-hour basis as their Fall or Spring Terms.

Several institutions use a specified “January term committee” to provide administrative oversight for the period. HSPH uses its Committee on Educational Policy to provide oversight of the WinterSession and an administrative committee to oversee operational details.

Other Benefits

Other advantages associated with a January term include an opportunity to reduce time to degree and to reduce course backlogs that may exist. It also provides a concentrated timeframe that may be conducive to learning particular subjects.

²⁹ <http://web.mit.edu/iap>

Appendix D

Example 2003-2004 FAS Academic Calendars Under Each Model

The example chart below juxtaposes the current FAS academic calendar schedule and an example of the proposed academic calendar schedule. It illustrates the types of changes that could occur if Harvard (specifically FAS) adopted the $4M-1M-4M$ model. This is only one example of the $4M-1M-4M$ calendar, and the choice of dates may vary according to lengths of reading and exam periods, vacation dates, and instructional start dates.

Event	Current Calendar used at Harvard FAS³⁰	$4M-1M-4M$ Calendar Model³¹
First Day of Fall Classes	15-Sep	2-Sep
Last Day of Fall Classes	16-Dec	3-Dec
Fall Final Exams begin	17-Jan	11-Dec
Fall Final Exams end	27-Jan	19-22-Dec
# of Fall Instructional Days	63 ³²	62
# of Fall Reading Period Days	12	8-11 ³³
# of Actual Fall Examination Days	8 ³⁴	8 ³⁴
Intersession/Mini-Session	28-Jan to 3-Feb	Month of January
First Day of Spring Classes	4-Feb	2-Feb
Last Day of Spring Classes	7-May	4-May
Spring Final Exams begin	20-May	13-May
Spring Final Exams end	28-May	20-May
# of Spring Instructional Days	62	62
# of Spring Reading Period Days	12	8-11 ³³
# of Actual Spring Examination Days	8 ³⁴	8 ³⁴
Commencement	10-June	28-31-May³⁵

³⁰ GSD, GSE, and HDS use similar calendars.

³¹ In a year when Labor Day is late, if the first instructional day is after Labor Day, it puts great pressure to reduce the reading period to five days or to eliminate two of the fall semester holidays (e.g. Columbus Day and Veterans Day). Several institutions solve this problem by starting classes before Labor Day. This analysis assumes a 3-day Thanksgiving holiday.

³² FAS schedules 63 instructional days in the fall semester and 62 instructional days in the spring semester. There is no pedagogical reasoning behind this incongruity.

³³ A significant reading period (8 to 11 days in both the fall and spring semesters, depending on the precise dates chosen for the beginning and ends of each term) could be preserved under the recommended schedule. Though this represents a slight reduction from the current 12 days in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, it remains longer than reading periods at most peer institutions, with the median reading period lasting 4.5 days. The largest reading periods elsewhere are at Princeton, with a reading period of nine days in both semesters, and Brown, with a reading period of twelve days in the spring semester (but only five days in the fall semester).

³⁴ For the 2003-04 Fall Semester, examinations are held on 8 days over a period of 11 calendar days, and for the 2003-04 Spring Semester, examinations are held on 8 days over a period of 9 calendar days. This is because Harvard holds two exam periods each day and none on Sundays. In one recommended model, finals could occur over a span of 8 days. This could include either holding exams on Sundays or during three exam sessions per day.

³⁵ The timing of Commencement has changed several times since the inception of Harvard. It is set out in the Statutes of the University, which can be amended by the Governing Boards.

Appendix E

Joint Degree Programs at Harvard University in 2003-04

This is the list of 22 joint degree programs amongst the Schools at Harvard University in 2003-04, as reported by each School's Registrar or Academic Affairs Office.

- JD/MBA (HLS and HBS)
- JD/MPA/ID (HLS and KSG)
- JD/MPH (HLS and SPH)
- JD/MPP (HLS and KSG)
- JD/MPP/UP (HLS and KSG)
- MD/MPH (HMS and SPH)
- MD/MS (HMS and GSAS)
- MD/PhD (HMS and GSAS)
- PhD Programs:
 - Committee on the Study of Religion (GSAS and HDS)
 - Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Planning (GSAS and GSD)
 - Biological Sciences in Dental Medicine (GSAS and HSDM)
 - Biological Sciences in Public Health (GSAS and HSPH)
 - Biostatistics (GSAS and HSPH)
 - Business Economics (GSAS and HBS)
 - IT and Management (GSAS and HBS)
 - Organizational Behavior (GSAS and HBS)
 - Health Policy (GSAS, KSG, HBS, HSPH, and HMS)
 - Division of Medical Sciences (GSAS and HMS)
 - Political Economy and Government (GSAS and KSG)
 - Public Policy (GSAS and KSG)
 - Social Policy (GSAS and KSG)
 - Biophysics (GSAS and HMS)

Appendix F

Financial Aid Regulations

Provided by: Susan Luhman, NASFAA Training & Technical Assistance staff (askregs@nasfaa.org)

Here is a document that discusses academic calendars and payment periods for Title IV programs. For more information, I would also suggest you review pages 2-31 to 2-41 in volume 2 of the 2003-04 Federal Student Aid Handbook.

ACADEMIC CALENDARS

Schools organize their academic calendars in a variety of ways, and the methodology used affects the eligibility of students for and delivery of Title IV program funds. A term is a segment of an academic calendar. In a term-based program, the academic calendar is divided into at least two segments. Terms are discrete periods during which all classes are scheduled to begin and end.

Standard terms

Standard terms include quarters, trimesters, and semesters, and the terms are approximately the same length. Semesters and trimesters are approximately 15 weeks long; full-time enrollment is at least 12 semester credits, and academic progress is measured in semester credit hours. Quarter terms are approximately 10 to 12 weeks in length; full time is at least 12 quarter credits, and academic progress is measured in quarter credit hours. Note that the length of the term helps determine the type of credits awarded in a standard term. In a standard term, the payment period is the semester, trimester, or quarter as applicable.

Nonstandard terms

In a nonstandard term, while all coursework is expected to begin and end within a discrete period of time, that period may not be a semester, trimester, or quarter. In addition, the terms may be of unequal length. Some nonstandard terms are the length of a semester (15 -16 weeks) but award quarter credits. Others are the length of a quarter (10 - 12 weeks) but award semester credits. In a nonstandard term, the payment period is the nonstandard term.

Nonterm

An academic calendar may be classified as nonterm for a variety of reasons. The following are characteristics of nonterm calendars:

- Courses do not end within a discrete period of time
- Courses overlap terms
- Self-paced and independent study courses span terms,
- There are sequential courses that do not end within a term, and
- Progress may be measured in clock hours.

For a thorough treatment of payment periods in nonterm programs see the discussion that follows and disbursement rules for those programs (see *Volume 8 — FFEL/DL* for specific information on FFEL and Direct Loan disbursements).

Under the payment period definition, there are three sets of requirements: one for term-based credit hour programs, one for nonterm credit hour programs, and one for clock hour programs. There is no separate definition for clock hour programs that are offered in terms.

Payment period for term-based credit hour programs

For a program offered in semester, trimester, quarter, or other nonstandard academic terms and measured in credit hours, the payment period is the term. For example, if a loan period includes all three quarters of an academic year, the loan must be disbursed in three substantially equal payments. Programs that are offered in modules are not necessarily counted as programs measured in terms. The phrase *other academic terms* (also known as nonstandard terms) refers to those structured educational intervals that do not fit into a normally defined semester, trimester, or quarter term. For example, other academic terms could include six five-week terms. A school may choose to group modules together and treat the entire period as a standard term. (For example, grouping three five-week modules

together to create a 15-week *semester*; or grouping four one-month modules into a 16-week *term* would be acceptable).

ACADEMIC YEAR REQUIREMENTS

Thirty-week minimum of instructional time

Every eligible program, including graduate programs, must have a defined academic year. **The academic year is defined program by program.** A school, for example, might even have two versions (day and night, for example) of the same academic program and define the academic year differently for the two versions. **Academic year cite** 34 CFR 668.3(b) An academic year is a period that begins on the first day of classes and ends on the last day of classes or examinations during which an institution provides a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time. For an *undergraduate* educational program, in an academic year, a full-time student is expected to complete at least:

- twenty-four semester or trimester credit hours or 36 quarter credit hours for a program measured in credit hours; or
- 900 clock hours for a program measured in clock hours.

If an otherwise eligible program includes less than 30 weeks of actual instructional time, a school must make certain adjustments in calculating the eligibility of students for FSA funds (see Volume 3–Pell Grant Program and Volume 8 – Direct Loan and FFEL Programs for additional information). The Department grants schools discretion to establish the number of credit hours a full-time *graduate or professional* student is expected to earn over an academic year.

Determining academic year length

A school may have different academic years for different programs or cohorts of students in programs, but must use the same academic year definition for

- Calculating all FSA awards for students enrolled in a particular program, and
- All other FSA program purposes, such as the certification of loan deferments.

To determine the number of weeks of instructional time, a school must count the period that begins on the first day of classes and ends on the last day of classes or examinations.

A week of instructional time and an academic year

Unless an administrative reduction (as explained below) has been approved by the Department, an academic year is defined as containing at least 30 weeks of instructional time. If an otherwise eligible program includes less than 30 weeks of actual instructional time, the school must make certain adjustments in calculating the eligibility of students for FSA funds.

For all programs, a *week of instructional time* is any period of seven consecutive days in which at least one day of regularly scheduled instruction, examination, or (after the last day of classes) at least one scheduled day of study for examinations occurs. (Instructional time does not include periods of orientation, counseling, homework, vacation, or other activity not related to class preparation or examination.) A week in which there is not at least one scheduled day of instruction cannot be counted as one of the 30 weeks of instructional time. (see the discussion under *Week of Instructional Time* in chapter 1) **Week of instructional time cite** 34 CFR 668.8(b)

The November 1, 2002 regulations (effective July 1, 2003) eliminated the definition of a week of instructional time that was known as the 12-hour rule. There is now one definition for a week of instructional time. Schools had the option of implementing this rule as early as November 1, 2002.

Appendix G

Compilation of Memos re: 4M-1M-4M from Committee Members

These are the compiled memos from members of the Committee on Calendar Reform in response to the following questions posed in a request on November 26, 2003:

1. Are there any practical issues/impediments raised by this proposed change? If you are in a School that has recently moved from a semester system to a 4-1-4 system, please highlight issues that your School encountered in the transition and how they were addressed.
2. What would be the advantages or disadvantages to having this model implemented within your School?
3. Are there other concerns that you have about this shift?
4. If you currently have a January term, please describe how the term is used in your School, what requirements are placed on students with regard to the January term, and what requirements are placed on faculty (and how faculty teaching time in January is credited). Please provide specific examples of how the term is used.
5. What is the basis of your comments (personal observation, discussion with registrar, summary of informal discussions, etc.)?

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (FAS)

Liz Cohen (Howard Mumford Jones Professor of American Studies; Director, Charles Warren Center for American History, Department of History) and Jay Harris (NELC), members of FAS Curriculum Review Steering Committee

The following are our thoughts concerning the proposed calendar guidelines from the perspective of FAS and the curricular review currently in process. We would very much appreciate receiving responses from other schools where the 4-1-4 system is operative. Please send those to cohen3@fas.harvard.edu.

1. If the FAS should decide to adopt the 4-1-4 system, then we'll be in great shape with this calendar. The curricular review steering committee and the pedagogy committee seem to be leaning in that direction. BUT if the larger FAS faculty resists, or we decide there are too many impediments, then students will have a very long break in January which might be problematic for the continuity of extracurricular activities and academic learning, especially serious research assignments. We also need to calculate the costs for Harvard and individual students of starting two weeks earlier and being in session all through January. (Ending two weeks earlier in the spring might help offset those costs.)
2. Students and faculty would benefit, we think, from exams before holiday break not only in freeing them psychologically but also in building in more academic intensity during the fall semester. Now too many students put off reading and course work "for reading period." That said, faculty will have to be realistic about the amount of work that can be accomplished without the holiday break time included. The curricular review committee sees a January term as offering opportunities for student-faculty contact, international experiences, unconventional learning that requires off-campus experiences, intensive teaching such as languages or science laboratory work, or extensive research projects etc. Coordinating the calendars among Harvard's schools will make faculty from other schools available not just for Freshmen Seminars and regular courses, but also for January teaching.
3. We might want to re-think the Dec. 22 closing date, as this allows limited time for travel before Christmas. Most schools using this calendar end by 12/20 at the latest, and we will probably need to do the same. This would mean shortening reading period from 10-12 days to 8-10 days. This, with an eight day exam period would still yield a 16 days reading/exam period, longer than peer institutions except for Princeton. (This last paragraph has not been seen by Liz Cohen).

Benjamin Friedman (William Joseph Maier Professor of Political Economy)

I'll address four of the five questions you raised in your November 26 instructions to members of the committee. (Since FAS doesn't currently have a January term, your #4 is moot for us). Because several of these questions run together in my thinking, however, I won't separately itemize what I have to say. But I hope the connections to the questions you posed will be clear nonetheless.

The main point to state at the outset is that I've heard nothing – absolutely nothing – to persuade me that shifting to the early-start calendar you describe is a good idea for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The only argument we've heard that may have intellectual substance, in my judgment, is that the early start would be necessary to facilitate having a separate "January term." But the Faculty has yet to discuss the merits of the proposal for a January term, and so we're not in a position to say whether that more fundamental change would be good or bad. As you know as well as I (probably better), experience with this arrangement at other institutions has produced mixed results, and there is a lot of opinion (again, presumably a lot better informed than mine) on either side of the issue. Further, as everyone agrees, simply saying that we might have a January term leaves an enormous number of questions unanswered. Presumably, in good time the Faculty will have that discussion, both the advocates and the opponents of the idea will express their views, and some combination of the principal proponents and our administrators will address at least some of the many questions involved. I'm keeping an open mind. But until such time as that discussion has taken place, it makes no sense to change the FAS calendar to pave the way for a curriculum change that we haven't decided to make.

Leaving aside the open question of a potential January term, I do not see serious value in any of the other arguments our committee has heard. Supposedly this call for change in the calendar is going to make it easier for students enrolled in one faculty to cross-register for courses in another. But the discussion in our committee made clear that no one is contemplating allowing FAS students in any numbers to enroll in courses at the Business School or the Law School, for example, where the demand would be greatest. Further, for students from those faculties who would like to take FAS courses, the different starting dates for the fall term seem to have little real bearing. Is it really a problem if a law student arrives in Cambridge at the beginning of September and has to wait two weeks for one of his classes to begin to meet?

A parallel argument having to do with the supposed difficulty of recruiting Law School or Business School faculty members to teach FAS courses – the freshman seminar program was mentioned in particular – also fails to withstand inspection. Are we to be seriously worried that an HLS or HBS professor would hesitate to teach a freshman seminar because, although he or she is already here in Cambridge as of Labor Day, the course couldn't begin to meet until the third week in September? One might perhaps reply that the problem is not the beginning of term but the end. But the Freshman Seminar Office tells me that whether a seminar meets in January is entirely up to the instructor, and half or fewer of the seminars actually do so.

If the university is serious about making it easier for students enrolled in one faculty to cross register in courses offered by another, the far more important impediment to remove is the difference between faculties like FAS where courses are taught on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday schedule and faculties where courses are taught on a Monday-Tuesday or Wednesday-Thursday schedule. Presumably coordinating the length of class times and the starting and ending hours would also be important (I know less about those details). Compared to these difficulties of cross-registration, worrying about law students or business students who have to focus only on the courses they are taking in their own faculties for a couple of weeks, before also picking up an extra course in FAS or the Kennedy School, seems almost beside the point.

Importantly, you asked us to say whether the early-start calendar would pose difficulties of its own. Clearly it would. The question, of course, is how major these are. To be sure, nobody can argue that they are insurmountable. Most other institutions do begin earlier than we begin, and they make their calendars work very well. The issue is not what can work and what can't, but how to weigh the competing advantages and disadvantages.

Let's be clear: While the proposal is for classes to begin right after Labor Day, in fact the important business of the Faculty – and most of its members – will start much earlier than that. Do departments have pre-classes programs for their entering graduate students? (Mine certainly does.) Do faculty members take on freshman advisees? (As you know, FAS has – for all the right reasons – been mounting a major effort to get more faculty members to serve as freshman advisers, rather than simply turning our incoming undergraduates over to their proctors, who often know little or nothing about Harvard's undergraduate system, and who only by accident are in the academic fields that

their advisees are considering entering.) Do professors teaching fall term classes need to meet in advance with their teaching fellows? Or consult with the libraries? Or be on hand to engage in the annual hassle with the hard-working but woefully understaffed folks who prepare the course reading packets and source books?

An “in the trenches” view, from the perspective not of our administrators dreaming up new grand designs but of the people who actually get into the classroom and teach our students, quickly suggests a long list of such practical problems. Each one, stated in isolation, may sound like a small inconvenience. (Are they really smaller, however, than a law or business student’s having to wait for two weeks until his or her FAS class starts?) But taken together they mean that the real business of our faculty will begin not after Labor Day but some time in mid August.

What then? Two possibilities follow. One is simply that more faculty members will duck these responsibilities. Fewer professors will agree to participate in their department’s program for first-year graduate students. The number of freshmen being advised by faculty members will go down rather than up. Teaching fellows will be less well prepared at the beginning of the term. And so on. In each case we have the all too familiar result that although our administrators talk a lot about improving the intellectual quality of what we do, when it comes to a conflict between educational quality and administrative convenience the wrong side wins out. (I should repeat here that I am holding aside the matter of a January term – which, if the Faculty decides to go forward with the idea, could constitute an educational argument for the proposed calendar change.)

The other possibility is that everyone on the faculty will step up to his or her responsibilities and nothing of educational value will be sacrificed. The only difference then is that the academic year will be a few weeks longer. (It is important to keep in mind that the proposal offered is not to adopt the calendar used at Yale, for example, in which the fall term ends before Christmas, and the spring term begins shortly after New Year’s and ends much earlier than ours, but rather to begin our fall term at Labor Day and keep our spring term as it is.) Would this shorter summer break cut down on faculty members’ ability to do their research? Would it put our students at a disadvantage in the job market? (Some people claim that our existing calendar already puts them at a disadvantage, and I have no way to evaluate this claim; but making our academic year two to three weeks longer would surely make whatever problems do exist in that regard worse.) Would it make recruiting new faculty more difficult?

Nobody knows. But the issues at stake surely seem large compared to the matter of students who want to cross-register having to wait two weeks before an FAS class begins. And, in contrast, some of them are issues of first-rank intellectual and educational importance.

As you see, I think the proposed change is a poor idea for FAS (to repeat once more, holding aside the question of a January term). I see few advantages – certainly no significant ones – and lots of drawbacks, ranging all the way from minor annoyances to serious matters of intellectual and educational import. I strongly urge that the Faculty of Arts and Sciences put the horse back in front of the cart by deferring any decision on calendar change until after we have had our discussion of the proposal for a January term and come to a decision on that far more important, and logically prior, question.

I hope these remarks will be of some use. Let me close by saying (in response to your question #5) that the views I have expressed here are entirely my own, but that I have learned much from informal discussions about the matter with many of our colleagues and many of our students, as well as with friends who teach at other institutions. But I have certainly not carried out any kind of formal inquiry, or even a formal discussion, among either colleagues or students.

I wish you well, Sid, as you try to put together the responses you are receiving from the different members of our committee. I also wish you and your family a very happy, healthy and safe new year.

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN (GSD)

George Baird (G Ware Travelstead Professor of Architecture)

The main issue for the GSD in respect to the proposed calendar change is twofold. First there is the fact that on account of the number of existing cross-registrations of our students in FAS courses, we are unavoidably tied to the FAS fall semester schedule. Second, on account of the "design studio" component of our curriculum, we have to schedule a week of end-of-semester studio reviews - after the last week of classes, and before exam week. The combination of these two circumstances typically results in our fall semester end-of-semester reviews running right up against Christmas (this year we will end on December 19, and this is a relatively good year). Given this, the members of the GSD community are generally, strongly supportive of some such calendar change as has been proposed by our committee thus far.

With this general opening comment, let me now turn to the 5 questions that have been put to us.

1: The practical issues/impediments that have been raised for us have simply to do with moving the beginning of fall semester classes forward to Labor Day. Clearing January of the remaining January fall semester curriculum components will not be difficult for us.

2: As is implied by the above introduction, the great advantage of the proposal would be to enable us to complete the entire work of the fall semester comfortably ahead of Christmas, and to use the January break for other academic purposes.

3: There are two concerns. First is that there is a reluctance among the members of the GSD community I have consulted, to make the total length of the academic year any longer. Hence a desire has been expressed to move Commencement forward, by the same amount of time as the beginning of the fall semester is moved forward, under any implemented version of the proposed calendar change.

Second, a concern has been expressed by a few members of the community that the fall semester lacks a mid-semester break such as the spring semester does have. And in the view of these individuals, the proposed shift might well have the practical effect of making the fall semester seem even longer than it seems now. It is, of course, a fact that the Thanksgiving break already occurs late in the semester; and in the event that some such change as we have discussed were to be introduced, there would only be one week of classes after that break (this in turn prompted a further concern, given our need for the end-of-semester review week, that our students could feel the pressure of the end of semester so acutely as to prejudice their ability to actually make use of a Thanksgiving break.

It might well be the case that the GSD would entertain moving the beginning of the fall semester even earlier than Labor Day, if doing so permitted the introduction of a fall mid-semester break similar to the current spring semester one.

4: The GSD does not now have a January term, but members of the community with which I talked were attracted to its academic possibilities.

5: The basis of my comments is discussion with the members of the GSD's Dean's Council. It is a group of some 15 senior faculty of the school, and all its most senior administrators.

I trust these comments are of assistance.

HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (HGSE)

Daniel Koretz (Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education)

To obtain the information in this memo, I solicited opinions from a substantial number of GSE faculty. I did not attempt to survey them all or to obtain a representative sample. Instead, I approached primarily people who are responsible for decisions that might be influenced by a possible change to a 4-1-4 schedule, including departmental chairs, the chairs of the major committees that currently guide many of the decisions in the school, the Dean, the Academic Dean, program directors, and some key administrative staff.

In no particular order, here are the most important comments I received.

- Virtually all of the comments about synchronization *per se* were favorable. A single faculty member voiced a personal preference for the FAS schedule but did not identify any programmatic or practical difficulties that the 4-1-4 calendar might produce.
- Because we are a professional school, internships and practica for our students, many of which are in the public schools, are very important. Many of these placements must be arranged before the start of classes. I raised this issue specifically in requesting comments. Three of the faculty members responsible these programs replied that the earlier start date required by 4-1-4 would make it considerably easier to arrange these placements.
- The director of one of our programs noted what he sees as another advantage to 4-1-4: a shorter gap between recommended summer study preceding the first semester and the start of regular classes.
- Students alerted me to the importance of synchronizing major breaks, in particular the spring recess, which is often used for job search activities, some of which are organized by the schools. For example, some HGSE master's students who want to cross-register for an HBS class this spring are concerned that HBS is in session during HGSE's spring recess, when the students expect to participate in career activities sponsored by the school.
- No one objected to the possibility of an earlier commencement, and some raised issues (such as a concern that we not shorten the period available for students to work) that suggest the linking the earlier fall start date to an earlier commencement. However, one person noted that we compete with other schools for needed facilities, hotel space, etc., and that some of the facilities are booked as much as 4 or even 5 years out. Therefore, it might be necessary to delay a change of the commencement date for several years after other aspects of a synchronized calendar are put into place.
- Several faculty members questioned the necessity of maintaining a 10-12 day reading period. One suggested that this is more important to undergraduates than to graduate and professional students. This led to an unanswered question: if starting dates, exam dates, and the dates of major breaks are consistent, is there any reason why all schools would need to allocate the same number of days to a reading period?
- Responses to prospect of a short winter term were mostly positive. People responded that the term would provide us, as one person put it, "exciting possibilities" and appeared comfortable with later discussions within our faculty about the uses for this time, as part of our ongoing reviews of programs and the curriculum. A few expressed concern about students who would otherwise work during the winter break. Several respondents pointed out a variety of policies and administrative issues that would need to be addressed to implement a winter term, but all of these were issues that HGSE would need to address and that are outside the purview of our Committee.
- A concern was expressed that the new schedule would need to conform to federal financial aid guidelines. I cannot vouch for these guidelines, but they were relayed to me as follows: "A semester must be a minimum of 15 weeks long in order for the programs to be eligible for federal aid. Weeks are loosely defined as 'within a consecutive 7-day period and institution provides at least 1 day of regularly scheduled instruction or examinations or after the last scheduled day of classes for a term or payment period at least one day of study for final examinations. It does not include vacation periods, homework, or periods of orientation or counseling.'

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL (HBS)

Carl Kester (Mizuho Financial Group Professor of Finance, Senior Associate Dean, Chairman of the MBA Program, Harvard Business School)

1) Are there any practical issues/impediments raised by this proposed change?

MBA Fall Term:

The HBS MBA Program currently uses a model that has the fall term beginning immediately after Labor Day and ending in December, so this is not a dramatic change for us. Ordinarily, however, we are able to schedule our final exams such that all students will complete the Fall term by December 19th or 20th at the latest (and often sooner if Labor Day is not too late). We would prefer to avoid extending our own Fall Term exams as late as December 22nd out of consideration of those students endeavoring to make travel plans prior to Christmas.

MBA Spring Term:

Our MBA Spring Term currently begins in mid-January. If the new calendar's Spring Term starts on February 1st, that would seriously compress our Spring Term. We could respond by pushing the end of the Spring Term back by approximately two weeks, but this would come at the expense of our Academic Performance Review process, which is a comprehensive review of student performance for purposes of awarding the MBA degree with honors or, in a number of cases, to determine if the students in question have truly met our degree requirements. To accomplish this work, we generally require about 3 weeks between the end of our exam period and the voting of degrees and honors by the full faculty, which takes place the Thursday prior to graduation. We might be able to compress this somewhat, but most likely not more than about half a week. Among other implications, this means that it would be very helpful to us to *keep* Commencement where it usually falls in June rather than moving it forward. Also, it would help us if the Spring Term were actually to begin in, say, the last week of January rather than on or after February 1st. Other responses available to us would be to reduce the number of open days given to students throughout the Spring Term for job recruiting purposes, and to delay the awarding of degrees to those students whose performance is in question as of the end of the Spring Term, both of which are undesirable from our point of view.

HBS Doctoral Program

The HBS doctoral program follows a calendar model used by FAS, so they anticipate no special concerns with the new plan so long as FAS moves to the proposed 4-1-4 calendar along with everyone else.

2) What would be the advantages or disadvantages to having this model implemented within your School?

The advantage is that these plans aren't profoundly different from our current MBA fall model, and would facilitate cross-registration and other cross-university activities in both terms.

The disadvantages are as follows:

- * Very late Fall Term end during years when Labor Day is late
- * Starting later in Spring means a change in our academic review process, perhaps even delaying the graduation date for students reviewed in the Spring term and/or reducing days available for job recruiting.

3) Are there other concerns that you have about this shift?

None other than those mentioned.

4) If you currently have a January term, please describe how the term is used in your School.

We don't currently have a special January term. Our MBA Spring Term begins in mid-January and ends in the first third of May.

5) What is the basis of your comments?

These comments are based on discussions with senior MBA administrators and with the MBA Registrar.

HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL (HDS)

Harvey Cox (Hollis Professor of Divinity, Harvard Divinity School)

I have polled our faculty and staff by email, and spoken with representatives of the Student Association.

The sentiment is largely in favor of 4-1-4, with some occasional reservations, such as:

1. Faculty members said they hoped the deans would not find ways to "pile on even more work during the January open month."
2. Some folks were concerned about having classes during the term on days we have had for holidays IF the staff is not present, ESPECIALLY CHILD CARE staff people, of which I was not aware we had any.
3. A few faculty were uncomfortable about starting VERY early in Sept, even in August on years with an early Labor Day.
4. Some asked if this means College Freshman orientation would begin in August
5. Only one faculty member opposed moving Commencement earlier, and that strictly for reasons of tradition. On the other hand, all, ALL students without exception were happy with the prospect of reading period and exams being over by Xmas break, but one faculty member who had worked at a 4-1-4 school said that the idea that this creates a stress-free vacation is illusory.

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL (HLS)

Harry S. Martin III (Terry) (Henry N. Ess III Librarian & Professor of Law, Harvard Law School)

Are there any practical issues/impediments raised by this proposed change? If you are in a School that has recently moved from a semester system to a 4-1-4 system, please highlight issues that your School encountered in the transition and how they were addressed.

First-year law students operate on a semester calendar which starts earlier in the fall than the College but about the same time in the spring. The fall term is prescribed and only one elective course is permitted in the spring. Under the current or the proposed calendar there are no issues for 1Ls.

All other law students operate on a calendar essentially identical to the proposed 4-1-4 system and have done for so many decades nobody can now remember the transition.

What would be the advantages or disadvantages to having this model implemented within your School?

The advantage, of course, is that the Law School would have to make no major adjustments to its current calendar. HLS does have one extra week in the fall with no classes to accommodate job searches. 2Ls who register in other faculties might have to seek accommodation from instructors or curtail their job searches.

Are there other concerns that you have about this shift?

The primary concern, which is mild at the moment, is whether the "balance of trade," now perceived as fairly even, will shift significantly. The Law School administration does recognize that other factors could also affect the balance of cross-registration.

HLS enrolls 1890 students. This year we also accepted 107 visiting scholars and fellows, but only seven of these audit any courses.

75 law students are pursuing concurrent or joint degrees. 315 law students take courses outside HLS; half take only one course; 10 take more than two. 85% of these courses are in FAR, JFK, or HBS. Of the 138 registrations into FAS, 94, almost 2/3, are for language courses.

The Law School averages between 200-300 non-HLS students annually. 90% are Harvard students. One-third of these are from the Kennedy School, with significant numbers also from FAS, Education, Business and Divinity. Occasionally students from Design, Dental or Public Health take the odd course.

A common calendar could see more students from FAS taking Law School courses. The Law School Registrar is somewhat worried that cutbacks at the Kennedy School are already producing a greater influx of KSG students.

If you currently have a January term, please describe how the term is used in your School, what requirements are placed on students with regard to the January term, and what requirements are placed on faculty (and how faculty teaching time in January is credited). Please provide specific examples of how the term is used.

Winter Term at the Law School is a regular term. Students are normally required to be in residence and registered for some sort of academic work. Winter Term courses count toward faculty teaching loads on the same credit-hour basis as Fall or Spring Terms.

That said, Winter Term courses have some variety. Some regular courses taught by HLS faculty are simply intensive and condensed; students have time for little else but these subjects, which meet daily. Examples would be:

- Commercial Law: The Payment System (Scott)
- Commercial Law: Secured Transactions C (E. Warren)
- Evidence C (Nesson)

Some traditional courses are taught or co-taught by visitors who are unable to be at HLS for extended periods. They might be American legal practitioners, American academics, or foreign academics. Specialist subjects can be offered in the Winter Term that could not be offered otherwise. Examples would be:

- Comparative Constitutionalism in the Chinese World (Alford/Yeh)
- Criminal Procedure Advanced: Race and Poverty (Bright)
- Food and Drug Law (Hutt)
- Federal Indian Law (Williams)
- International Law: The Challenge of War to International Humanitarian Law (Bruderlein)
- International Law: European Union Law (Da. Kennedy/Verstrynge)
- Regionalism, Regional Integration and Human Rights in Africa (Odinkalu)

Some Winter Term courses contain a large amount of role-playing, group discussion, or practical training that works well in an intensive time-frame. Examples would include:

- Appellate Courts and Advocacy Workshop (Brian Wolfman)
- Business Planning: The Lawyers Role in Deal-Making for Modest-Sized Enterprises (Herwitz)
- Trial Advocacy Workshop C (Murray/Ball/Crattsley/Hamilton/Styles-Anderson)

Some courses that include theory with heavy doses of practice are extensions of Fall or Spring Term courses that concentrate the practical training in the Winter, such as:

Fall/Winter Terms

- Introduction to Advocacy (ITA): Civil--The Lawyering Process A (Grossman)
- Introduction to Advocacy (ITA): Criminal Justice (Ogletree)
- Introduction to Advocacy (ITA): Criminal Prosecution Perspectives (Corrigan)

Winter/Spring Terms

- Complex Litigation and Mass Tort (Rosenberg)
- Negotiation Workshop C (Subramanian/Heen/Knebel/Lempereur/Netsch/Stone)

A few students are allowed to pursue non-resident programs during the Winter Term, usually characterized as independent clinical work. "Out-of-residence winter term Independent Clinical Work is open only to students who (1) will have completed a clinical course and placement prior to the start of winter term, and (2) have no existing Law School or clinical obligations for the winter term."

There is also a Winter Term Writing Program:

Participants in the program will devote the Winter Term primarily or exclusively to written work instead of (or in addition to one credit of) classwork. Participating J.D. students will be chosen by a committee which includes faculty members and the Dean of Students. LL.M. students will be selected by the Graduate Committee.

Selection of Students

Participation in the program will be limited to not more than 100 J.D. students, to be selected by the Committee. The number of LL.M. participants will be determined by the Graduate Committee.

A strong proposal will have the following characteristics:

- a. It will include an arrangement for adequate supervision and assurance that the work will be done while the student is resident in Cambridge. Such an arrangement would entail formal meetings and informal contact between student and advisor. In special circumstances, when a project has been approved which would require research that cannot be done in Cambridge, requirement with respect to residence may be modified by the Committee.
- b. It will contain a clear definition of a feasible topic and evidence of sufficient advance planning and preparation to make it realistic to expect completion of a full draft of the paper by the end of the winter term. This would not foreclose subsequent modification of the paper, but the draft submitted at the end of the winter term should be sufficient to earn the credit or credits anticipated

by the proposal (although the actual grading of the paper could be deferred). No further credit would be given upon formal submission of the paper.

What is the basis of your comments (personal observation, discussion with registrar, summary of informal discussions, etc.)?

My comments are based on discussion with the registrar and the Associate Dean, on discussion with some faculty members, and on 22 years of personal observation.

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL (HMS)

Malcolm Cox (Dean for Medical Education, Harvard Medical School)

The complexities involved dictate that these comments be viewed as preliminary. They are provided in the spirit of ongoing discussion and debate, and should not be considered the final view of the HMS on this subject.

I. Practical issues; concerns

Harvard Medical School has 3 primary instructional programs: the New Pathway (NP), the Health Sciences and Technology Program (HST), and the MD-PhD Program. The Division of Medical Sciences (DMS) administers the PhD programs on the Medical School Campus. The proposed changes to the University Calendar minimally impact HST and DMS as explained below. The New Pathway, however, has some unique aspects. The scheduling of clinical clerkships for HST and NP may be unique as well.

A. HST

1. HST is a joint program with MIT.
2. The HST MD academic schedule (Years I & II) is already a 4-1-4 system patterned after MIT's.
3. Currently HST does not use a reading period before their finals; however, the courses meet up to the week before final exams begin.
4. The HST January period is a mini-term, and 4 for-credit courses are offered. The January period is often referred to as Independent Activities Period (IAP), borrowing from MIT nomenclature, and HST students may conduct research or engage in extracurricular offerings.
5. Year III & IV HST and NP students have common clinical schedules (see below).

B. MD-PhD/DMS

1. Joint degree students may earn their MD degree in either the NP or the HST programs.
2. Joint degree students may earn their PhD at MIT or more commonly at FAS (GSAS). Those in the 4-1-4 system at MIT would be minimally affected by the Harvard calendar proposal.
3. DMS follows the FAS calendar. Thus, the issues explored by the Calendar Committee using FAS as a model would encompass DMS.

C. New Pathway

1. Year I courses begin the Tuesday after Labor Day
2. Year II courses begin the Monday before Labor Day
3. Year I and II courses are on a Block configuration rather than a Semester system. Year I and II both have Block courses that begin in December and end in January or February. Adequate instructional time for these Blocks could be negatively affected by a 4-1-4 calendar that would expect the final exam to occur before Christmas break.
4. In general, the Block style courses in the New Pathway do not easily adjust to the 4-1-4 proposed calendar.

D. Clinical Clerkship Courses

1. Year III & IV courses are clinical rotations that have a monthly schedule with start and end dates that vary from year to year. When the rotation month ends before Christmas, it would be in synch with the proposed calendar plan.
2. In 2003-04, the rotation month ends December 14 followed by a holiday recess. The January 2004 rotation from Jan. 5 to Feb. 1 would nicely match the proposed calendar plan.

E. Social Medicine Courses

1. HMS offers semester-based courses to meet its Social Medicine requirement.
2. Social Medicine courses are open to cross-registrants from other Harvard Faculties.
3. Courses typically meet one afternoon per week.
4. Course schedules could be adjusted to accommodate the calendar proposal.

F. Date of Graduation

1. Accreditation requirements relating to the length of instruction may limit earlier graduation (in May). Creative curriculum rearrangements may allow the HMS (and HSDM) to accommodate this, but further research will be necessary to fully understand all the external regulatory issues involved.

II. Advantages/Disadvantages

- A. Joint degree programs with new integrated courses would be easier to develop with a common calendar.
- B. Redesigning Year I and Year II Blocks to fit the 4-1-4 model without sacrificing instructional time would be challenging, but probably not out of the question.
- C. Redesigning Year II and IV Clerkships to fit all features of the 4-1-4 model would be even more challenging. However, if insurmountable difficulties arise, an exemption from the new schedule requirements for Clinical Clerkships could be granted..

III. Basis for these comments

- A. Input was solicited from key officers in NP, HST, DMS, and MD-PhD administration and from the HMS Registrar.
- B. The HMS has embarked on an curriculum reform effort that may provide creative opportunities for calendar reform.
- C. Expansion of joint degree opportunities (and, more broadly, interdisciplinary learning opportunities) are an important goal of the HMS curriculum reform effort.

Tjo/pmeissue

HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH (HSPH)

Stanley Hudson (Associate Dean for Student Services, Harvard School of Public Health)

Leonard Marcus asked that I respond to your questions regarding the School of Public Health's academic calendar. I have been involved with the change here and I have included comments from the HSPH registrar in the attached response.

HSPH approved the move to the 4-1-4 academic calendar in June, 2000. The new calendar was first in effect for the academic year 2002-03. The School instituted a separate WinterSession for most of January. The 2003-04 calendar, for example, sets WinterSession from January 5 through January 28, leaving a short break (Thursday through Sunday) before the spring term begins on February 2.

The change was developed to accomplish two objectives. First, ending courses before the winter recess eliminated the awkward gap in teaching and learning that occurred when students and instructors returned from a two-week break to resume classes briefly before exams - a major source of student stress. Second, the calendar change provides a four-week period in January when students can participate in elective courses, travel tutorials, field research, non-credit skill-building seminars, and other enrichment activities.

As part of the faculty action, it was agreed that Fall orientation programs would begin on or after September 1 and classes would begin after labor Day. The faculty also agreed that required courses could not be exclusively offered during the WinterSession. The second year of the WinterSession is approaching and you can see the participation expectations by department, the credit and non-credit course offerings, and FAQ's at the following website: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/registrar/WinterSession/index.shtml>

Oversight of the special academic period was assigned to the School's standing Committee on Educational Policy. An administrative committee was formed to oversee the operational details.

Financial issues relating to the change.

Three financial issues presented themselves with the calendar change: compensation for faculty time, availability of funds for new course development, and tuition structure. Faculty compensation has been addressed through a larger change in the budgeting of support for teaching efforts. While there was little funding for the development of new courses for the first WinterSession, a grant program has been established for course development this year. The tuition structure required that WinterSession be attached to one of the regular terms so that full-time tuition paid for that term covers the cost for WinterSession. Part-time students pay on a per-credit basis and are not affected by the change.

In 02-03, the WinterSession was attached to the fall term for registration and full-time tuition purposes. There was a financial aid problem created by this alignment. Students were not able to receive the proceeds of their second term student loans until February. The term association has been changed in 03-04 so that loan proceeds can be released at the beginning of January.

Advantages of the 4-1-4 system at HSPH

- The students like the schedule, especially having exams over before the break.
- The WinterSession offers the opportunity for a different learning environment and alternative course offerings.

Disadvantages

- The fall term is very compacted. It is difficult to accommodate all the needed class hours when Labor Day comes late in the week especially with the number of Monday holidays and the extended Thanksgiving break in the fall.
- Some coursework is not well suited to an intense level of work in a short period of time.
- It is difficult to accommodate the orientation program when Labor Day arrives early in the week.
- Grade submission in the spring must be done very quickly to manage submissions in time for graduation processing.

KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT (KSG)

Fred Schauer (Frank Stanton Professor of the First Amendment, Kennedy School of Government)

The Kennedy School has been on a form of 4-1-4 system for about six years, the first three of which involved January exams for many courses but also had a few January courses, largely in the negotiation area. For the past three years the School has had a truer 4-1-4 system, in which in-class exams (fewer than half of the courses) are in January, and the January term has been expanded to include some intensive leadership courses, one which is taught by a Stanford Business School faculty member who was unable to accept a permanent appointment but wished to retain his connection with the School and its students. There was initially a bit of resistance to moving to December exams, partly from those faculty members who wanted to stay as close as possible to FAS, and partly from some senior administrators who were concerned that the academic year would commence too early, but the transition has taken place relatively smoothly.

If Harvard were to move to a university-wide 4-1-4 system, the changes at the Kennedy School would be small, and there would be general approval of such a university-wide shift. Two concerns have been expressed, however. One is the question of the official close of the Fall semester. Under the School's current system, in-class exams are in December, but many papers and take-home exams are not due until some time in January. There is some sentiment for being able to keep this option, especially without having to use the artificial device of large numbers of incompletes, but some others believe that the current system excessively separates the course itself from the paper, producing more of a distinct exercise and less of a paper emerging out of the themes of the course itself. In any event, it is clear that a new plan should deal with this issue, and specify formal semester end dates, grade deadlines, and the like.

The second concern relates to the start of the Fall term. The Kennedy School now has a moderately lengthy orientation period prior to the first day of fall classes. If classes themselves start on, say, September 3, some senior administrators are concerned that orientation would have to take place prior to Labor Day, potentially inconveniencing students and requiring administrators but not faculty to avoid taking vacations in late August. This could be avoided by allowing individual schools to start somewhat later, and to take "first day of classes" as allowing classes to start later while orientation and related activities started on the first day of classes. But this could produce conflicts for students required to attend orientation activities in School A while they were supposed to be in

class in School B at the same time. Alternatively, the Kennedy School could substantially shorten its orientation period, and spread orientation activities out over the first week, an alternative that would be endorsed by most students and most faculty, but would be a concern to some faculty and many degree program administrators.

Apart from these two issues, a universal 4-1-4 system appears at the moment to be close enough to the existing KSG practice that it would create few problems and would be widely accepted. The foregoing is based on informal consultations with students and faculty, consultation with the registrar, my own experiences as Academic Dean from 1997 to 2002, and a formal session several weeks ago with the Academic Affairs Committee, a committee including students from all degree programs, administrators from all degree programs, and a number of faculty members.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

David Buchwald (MPP at KSG, JD at HLS, Class of 2007)

Before responding to the specific questions that have been posed to the committee membership, I should communicate the one overarching response I received to our unified calendar proposal. People very much wanted to hear how specifically our model would apply to their schools. In too many of these cases I felt that I couldn't answer these questions because our committee discussions have focused on the FAS/GSAS calendar. I think we need to determine more specifically what types of schedules would constitute compliance with our proposal. (Just one example, to illustrate the point: Do schools that currently don't have reading periods in the fall semester now have to have one? If not, then perhaps those schools can start the semester a few days later. Will individual schools ever have to start before Labor Day if they don't have a 10-12 day reading period?)

1. Are there any practical issues/impediments raised by this proposed change? If you are in a School that has recently moved from a semester system to a 4-1-4 system, please highlight issues that your School encountered in the transition and how they were addressed.

When the Kennedy School moved in 2001 to the 4-1-4 model the two greatest concerns were that the compression of the exam schedule would create conflicts and that students would have less preparation time for finals. To address the first issue the school put together a potential class-by-class exam timetable to illustrate that the impact would be minimal. With regards to the lack of a fall reading period, the realization was made that the original January reading period was "rarely used exclusively to prepare for in-class exams – many students use[d] this time to complete final papers and take home exams, or to use the time for personal needs."³⁶ Accordingly, end of term papers typically are still due in January, so as to not conflict with the in-class exam process.

One GSAS student mentioned that they felt "January would have to be quite flexible for every department within GSAS" because of different research schedules.

One other practical issue would be to try to limit the times when students would have to move to Cambridge before September 1 because of housing leases. Still, the current calendar often involves students arriving in town in late September, so they regularly have to waste two-thirds of a month of rent.

2. What would be the advantages or disadvantages to having this model implemented within your School?

Many students confirmed the University's belief that the variety of current school calendars results in significant cross-registration conflicts. Anything that improves this process would be much appreciated.

The idea of having a true winter break had wide appeal. The opportunity for travel also intrigued a number of students.

The idea of graduation being moved up allows for better timing in terms of moving out of housing and allows non-graduating students to participate in celebratory events for their friends in other classes.

3. Are there other concerns that you have about this shift?

³⁶ Kennedy School Academic Affairs Committee. Memorandum to Dean Joseph Nye. "Re: Proposal to Revise the Fall 2001 Academic Calendar." 19 March 2001. <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/KSSG/Proposal_and_Memo.htm> Cited 14 Dec. 2003.

The most frequent concern I heard was that students wouldn't have enough time to study for exams in December. Some students from schools with exams currently in January would like it explicitly mentioned that the move to December should still allow for seminar papers to be due in January.

Otherwise, as I mentioned above, people don't quite understand what we're really recommending for schools if they aren't exactly in line with what the Faculty of Arts and Sciences does. I was unable to explain to people whether (and if so why) the Labor Day scenarios we had gone over applied to schools who didn't have as long a reading period or as long an exam period.

One person wanted clarification of what the grade submission date would be for Teaching Fellows.

The law school has a "fly-out" week for interviews during which classes do not meet. They would like assurances that our proposal does not affect this.

4. If you currently have a January term, please describe how the term is used in your School, what requirements are placed on students with regard to the January term, and what requirements are placed on faculty (and how faculty teaching time in January is credited). Please provide specific examples of how the term is used.

At the Kennedy School I'd estimate that slightly less than half of classes have their final project due in mid-January. Many of these projects are long term papers that could be submitted before winter break, but the January deadline allows the students to have more flexibility. A handful of January term courses are offered, usually intense full-day activities for a week or two. The courses can either be valued at a full credit (equivalent to a semester-long course) or a half-credit. Kennedy School students, however, do not have to take a January course. Many of them use the time to get involved in volunteer activities. This year, for example, there will be a number going up to New Hampshire to work on Presidential campaigns.

At the Law School, second and third year students (the only ones who have a January term) are required to take a course, except for those who use the time to get credit for clinical work off campus or to write their third year required paper. The courses offered are often unique to January, but others are compressed versions of courses available during regular semesters.

5. What is the basis of your comments (personal observation, discussion with registrar, summary of informal discussions, etc.)?

I attended a meeting of the Harvard Graduate Council, with student representatives of all the graduate schools and have communicated with some of them in more detail since then. I also spoke to the Kennedy School Registrar, Judy Kugel. Professor Schauer was kind enough to meet with KSG's Academic Affairs Committee, so I'll leave it to him to report on their perspective.

Caron Lee (HSPH)

1. Practical issues/Impediments: A) Administrators, faculty, and students did not have a clear idea of what was an appropriate way to spend January, probably because last year was the introduction of winter session at HSPH. Thus, winter session activities ranged from taking a one-week course to completing a six-week internship (that was only possible by working during the December break). B) To which semester should winter session units be credited?

2. Advantages: A) Better coordination with other schools for cross registration. The KSG also follows a 4-1-4 model, and registering and coordinating my schedule was significantly easier than taking courses at HBS (which started fall classes a week earlier than both HSPH and KSG). B) We finish the fall semester before winter vacation, which last year, was academically worry-free for me other than planning coursework for the spring.

Disadvantages: A) Based on faculty comments last year, it appears that they had to reduce course content, since they lost some teaching time with the new schedule. (Nevertheless, I'm not sure they would have preferred keeping the former calendar model.) B) Also, I believe the pace of classes increased because of 1-2 fewer teaching days. This is most noticeable in half semester-long courses. (Note, HSPH has continued to observe Columbus Day and Veterans' Day as holidays.) This keeps students diligent and discourages slacking. However, from a student perspective, it's difficult to absorb so much material in such a short amount of time!

3. Other concerns: People who stayed in Boston during winter session last academic year appeared to tire more quickly during the spring semester than students who did not stay in Boston. Taking a class that meets every day

can be more intense than during the semester in that students have to do homework and study every day. (On the other hand, having a winter session at least gives students the opportunity to leave Boston, especially during a tough time in terms of weather).

4. Winter Session at HSPH has allowed me to have wonderful overseas opportunities that I most likely could not have had without a 4-1-4 calendar model. This past January (2003), I went on a three-week field study to Cuba to learn about the health care system there. (This was significantly better than the one-week trip to Cuba that HSPH students made during spring break prior to the calendar reform.) This academic year, I am going to Santiago, Chile, to learn about the health reforms made during the past couple decades, hospital decentralization, and community medicine. Other winter session overseas trips are to Kerala, India and Durham, South Africa.

Further, students are able to arrange internship opportunities independent from HSPH (other than seeking approval from their advisors and the registrar). For example, a classmate of mine went to Geneva for six weeks last year to work for the Global Fund. Another friend will return to Cambodia (where she did her summer internship) this coming January to continue her research. Winter session also proves to be an opportune time for students to focus on their thesis.

5. Basis for comments: I am a student in a two-year MS program at HSPH. My first year was the first year that SPH used the 4-1-4 model

Patrick Charbonneau (GSAS, GSC, CCB)

Here are the reactions I got from students (GSC and ad hoc meetings) and the housing services of the GSAS. It was a rather positive reception overall.

Concerns :

- That the graduate students be asked to correct final exams over the break to get the grades back by a possible new January term.
- Who in the FAS is going to be in charge of assigning January? Some students feel that their department should be given the possibility to choose the solutions, not the faculty.
- That graduate students not be paid for the month of May if it is too short.
- As long as the summer break stays the same length, the change has no effect for the residence halls. Otherwise, it can become a problem for summer usage and clean ups.

Advantages :

- Very exciting possibilities for developing January based program
- Possibility for genuine break between semesters
- Simpler move-in in the residence halls since a unanimous calendar would avoid early arrivals.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (COLLEGE)

Thomas Wright (Undergraduate Student)

Attached to this e-mail is a memo outlining the basic Undergraduate perspective upon the proposed calendar as it currently stands in our drafting process. Some of the opinions reflected in the document are drawn from student responses gathered through the Undergraduate Council's website. A statistical analysis of these responses will be prepared by Jennifer and I for the upcoming meeting in January.

- Practical Concerns
 - Given the earlier start of classes, the viability of the *Freshmen Week* and *pre-Freshmen Week* programs (FOP, FAP, FUP etc.) must be considered. Radically changing either of these introductory programs to fit a new academic calendar is fairly strongly opposed by undergraduate leaders.
- Perceived Advantages
 - Taking Fall Semester Exams and effectively ending the Fall Semester *prior to the Winter Holiday* allows for both a longer and less stressful true vacation. One senior passionately advocating this shift in exams writes, "the crazy, crazy madness [of the current calendar] has got to end". A junior also advocating this shift writes "During my Freshman year, I had over 40 days in between my last math

- class meeting and my exam.” Such long periods between instruction and examination are eliminated under this model.
- *Reading Period*, which one senior called “a very valuable part of the Harvard Experience”, is *preserved* under this model.
 - Undergraduates far from home are more likely able to *return home* during the Winter Holiday under this model since the vacation is from year to year longer, an important consideration at an increasingly international institution.
 - Perceived Disadvantages
 - Taking Fall Semester Exams and effectively ending the Fall Semester prior to the Winter Holiday gives undergraduates *less time to prepare for equally rigorous exams*. One senior advocating against the shift writes “I feel that having exams in December would be too rushed and would not leave us enough time to prepare.”
 - UNDERGRADUATE CONCERNS UNADDRESSED BY PROPOSED CALENDAR
 - The length of the *Thanksgiving Vacation*, unaddressed by the proposed calendar, ranks among the top concerns for undergraduates. The utility to students of increasing the holiday’s length is impossible to overestimate. One junior writes “It would be nice to have the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off, to make traveling easier”. Another more explicitly writes, “I think Thanksgiving should be a week off so people can go home.”
 - The proposed calendar leaves unaddressed the month of *January*. Undergraduates advocate the shift in exams outlined in this proposed calendar largely based upon its implications for a longer vacation dividing the two semesters. While the entire month of January is not necessarily expected as holiday, a *Winter Study Program* that began during the current Fall Semester Reading Period would greatly affect undergraduate response to the proposed calendar. How long will the Winter Holiday last under this proposed calendar? Will undergraduates sit exams prior to the vacation only to return at the beginning of January for a newly created month of work?
 - Undergraduate interest in shifting the end of the *spring term and commencement earlier* in the year is also left unaddressed in the proposed calendar that in leaving January’s fate ambiguous draws into question the remainder of the year.
 - All information gathered through discussion with the Student Affairs Committee of the Undergraduate Council, written student response collected through the Undergraduate Council’s website and personal observation.