

Minutes of the Calendar Committee - Friday, September 8, 2006

Charlie Hurt	Pam Katzman	Jerry Waller
Miriam Huffman	Katrina Larsen	
Douglas Johnson	Karl Peterson	
Rich Kathan	Nate Splett	

- * Absent
- ** No member identified
- () Substitute

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 4:35pm.

Seating of Substitutes: None

Guests: Wes Chapin
Dan Vande Yacht

Approval of the Minutes for the February 10, 2006, meeting:

R. Kathan moved and K. Larsen seconded to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 7, 2006. The motion passes unanimously.

Chair's Report and/or others:

1. K. Peterson distributed copies of the membership and charge of the Calendar Committee as revised last year, including a list of specific tasks given to the Committee by the Executive Committee.
2. K. Peterson distributed copies of calendaring guidelines, which included references to the academic calendar from State statutes, Board of Regents policies and UW-RF Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook.
3. K. Peterson stated that the 2007-08 Academic Calendar that was approved by the Committee on April 7, 2006, and was forwarded to the Senate. The Senate approved the calendar but chose to send it forward without the cover memo indicating the rationale of the Committee in proposing a fall 2007 commencement date of Sunday, December 16. The calendar was not approved by the Chancellor, indicating his preference for a Saturday, December 15, fall commencement date.

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. 2007-08 Academic Calendar. K. Larsen moved and R. Kathan seconded to approve the revised 2007-08 Academic Calendar. K. Peterson stated that the revision in this proposed calendar is for a Saturday, December 15, fall commencement date.

There was general discontent as to the reason why the calendar had been sent back to the Committee. D. Johnson asked if the Chancellor had received the Committee's rationale for the Sunday commencement date. K. Peterson indicated that there had been no direct communication with the Chancellor on the issue. M. Huffman asked if the Chancellor had given any indication as to his preferences for a Saturday commencement. K. Peterson stated that the communication from the Chancellor's Office was simply a note indicating Saturday, December 15. No further

justification was provided. N. Splett asked if there was a policy related to a study versus commencement day conflict. K. Peterson responded that there is a specific requirement for a study day between the end of classes and the beginning of final exams and that the study day not be a Sunday. M. Huffman reminded the Committee that it is our current practice to not indicate a 'Study Day' in the academic calendar unless it falls on a weekday.

K. Peterson stated that the Committee would need to decide if we would prefer to act now on the 2007-08 calendar and pursue the fall commencement issue as a separate problem, or if we would delay action on the calendar until a conversation with the Chancellor can be arranged. C. Hurt stated that he would bring the issue to the Chancellor's attention, but that he did not want to be the official conduit between the Committee and the Chancellor.

W. Chapin stated he has been asked to move the approval of the 2007-08 academic calendar along as efficiently as possible. He also indicated that he has received two requests for accommodation in the academic calendar for colleagues on religious grounds. He further indicated that a majority of Faculty Senators were in favor of sending the proposed calendar forward without the supporting cover memo.

D. Vande Yacht indicated that the Registrar's Office has already been receiving calls regarding the 2007-08 academic year.

C. Hurt recommended that the Committee approve the calendar and sort out the fall commencement issue with the Chancellor later. K. Peterson concurred with this view and suggested that the Committee pursue the Sunday commencement issue separately.

The motion passed: 7 yes votes, 2 no votes.

K. Peterson indicated that he would arrange for an informal conversation with the Chancellor to express the Committee's views on Sunday commencement.

2. Report on the Feasibility of a Fall Break. D. Johnson moved and P. Katzman seconded to approve the report on the feasibility of a fall break. D. Johnson asked if any other schools had a fall break. K. Peterson responded that no schools within the UW-System have fall breaks beyond the Thanksgiving holiday. D. Johnson also asked if there is any research on the impact that breaks have on student learning. No one was aware of research on this topic. M. Huffman said that she would look to see if she could find any information on the topic. The question of when do we approach the state with our concerns over calendar restrictions was raised.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Additional items: K. Peterson stated that the Committee has been asked to perform an analysis of the similarities and differences between the UW-RF and the UW-Madison academic calendars, perform an assessment of the balanced calendar and propose a 2009-10 academic calendar. W. Chapin was asked to comment on the tasks given to the Committee by the Executive Committee.

W. Chapin stated that he has been working with the Administration to sort out the status of the Calendar Committee. The Committee is currently listed as an administrative committee, but has been operating as a Faculty Senate committee. Conversation with the Chancellor is ongoing.

W. Chapin also reiterated the efforts by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to make faculty governance as transparent as possible by having committee meeting minutes posted on the Faculty Senate web-page and by having committee chairs report to the Senate on a regular basis.

M. Huffman asked why the calendar comparison with Madison? W. Chapin stated that the comparison is meant to look at the requirements for teaching classes at the two institutions; consider the hours/minutes of instructional time and what they indicate about faculty and student workload. Madison is the flagship of the UW-System and could represent a 'best practices' model for an academic calendar. W. Chapin also stated that, from his conversations with the Chancellor, every aspect of the academic calendar should be considered as being on the table and that we should be creative in thinking about the calendar as we continue to move forward.

M. Huffman asked why there was an April 1, 2006, deadline for the 2009-10 academic calendar. K. Peterson indicated that the date was picked somewhat arbitrarily to give ample time to finish our other charges within the targeted deadlines and still leave enough time to get the calendar through the process before the end of the spring term. He hopes that we will be finished with the calendar long before the deadline.

K. Larsen moved and M. Huffman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 5:23pm. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl P. Peterson