

Date: March 5, 2009
To: Administrative Council
From: Grady Hendricks – Faculty Council President
Subject: Addition of “Dead Day”

At its January, 2008 meeting, the Faculty Council discussed the addition of a “dead day” to the academic calendar. The Council appointed a committee to study this issue, and that committee passed along its recommendations at the January, 2009 meeting of the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council voted unanimously to propose the addition of a dead day *in concept* to the Administrative Council.

In many courses, grading of final exams is a very time-consuming undertaking. With the current schedule, faculty teaching some such courses are forced – if they are to be sure to have enough time to grade the final exams – to schedule their exams on the first day of finals. This means, in some cases, that students have their final exam the day after the last class day.

The Faculty Council feels that this practice is not in the best interests of students’ education. We think that the addition of a dead day between the last day of classes and the first day of final exams would be of great benefit to our students. In fact, many of us have had students who have asked specifically for a dead day to give them more time to prepare for finals.

Attached are some thoughts on how the dead day might be accommodated in our already crowded academic calendar. These are meant only as a possible starting point for discussion. One problem with the proposed changes shown in the attachment is that on the May calendar, it can be difficult to accommodate both a dead day and a grading day between the last day of finals and the day grades are due. We feel strongly that the grading day should be maintained, even at the expense of the dead day.

Proposal on Addition of Dead Day to Academic Calendar

Submitted by the Faculty Council of Blinn College
March, 2009

Our semester typically begins on the same day as TAMU. It would not be wise to try to start classes before TAMU does since so many of our students attend both. Therefore, we propose to add a day at the end of the semester.

We are also constrained by the starting date of the minimesters in both December and May. Grades from the long semester must be turned in before the start of the minimester.

The calendar for May has to also consider the dates for graduation. Inserting a dead day into a May calendar will probably mean that grades for our students graduating that semester will need to be turned in early. This should not be a problem since the system is already in place for the many students we have graduating from other schools.

Proposed December Schedule

A typical December under the current system has classes ending on a Thursday and finals beginning on a Friday as shown below.

| December | | | | | | |
|----------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | Last day of classes | Finals | |
| | Finals | Finals | Finals | | Grades due @ 5:00 pm | |
| | | Minimester begins | | | | |

Proposed change:

| December | | | | | | |
|----------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | Last day of classes | Dead Day | |
| | Finals | Finals | Finals | Finals | | |
| | Grades due @ 8:00 am | Minimester begins | | | | |

Proposed May Schedule

The schedules in May vary depending on when the May Fest holiday falls in our calendar. In both cases, classes typically end on a Wednesday and finals begin on a Thursday

A typical May calendar with May Fest falling after the semester has ended is shown below.

| May | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | Last day of classes | Finals | Finals | |
| | Finals | Finals | Grades due @ 5:00 pm | Graduation | Holiday | |
| | Minimester begins | | | | | |

Proposed change:

| May | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | Last day of classes | Dead Day | Finals | |
| | Finals | Finals | Finals | Grades due @ 5:00 pm Graduation | Holiday | |
| | Minimester begins | | | | | |

A typical May calendar with May Fest falling during finals is shown below:

| May | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | Last day of classes | Finals | Holiday | |
| | Finals | Finals | | Grades due @ 5:00 pm | Graduation Minimester begins | |

Proposed change:

| May | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | Last day of classes | Dead day | Holiday | |
| | Finals | Finals | Finals | ** Grades due @ 5:00 pm | Graduation Minimester begins | |

** If the beginning of the minimester could be delayed a day, grades could again be due on the same day as graduation.