

Discussion Points for 2012-13 Academic Calendar

- The 2012-13 calendar was finalized and posted online in fall 2010 after approval by the Provost's Office upon the recommendation of the 11-member Ad Hoc Committee on the Academic Calendar.
- The calendar committee was formed as an ad hoc committee to the Academic Council to deal with the issue of commencement occurring three days before Christmas in fall 2012 if all state requirements were met and traditional scheduling was continued.
- To avoid significant grade processing problems caused by the close proximity of commencement to Christmas, the ad hoc committee felt no viable alternative existed except moving commencement one week earlier to December 14-15. To do this, the committee had to find a way to make up the loss of five class days (to meet state requirements for contact hours) and still start classes no earlier than August 27 as mandated by THECB Common Calendar for state colleges and universities.
- The committee was able to make up three class days by moving the first day of class from Thursday to Monday (August 27). To make up the remaining two class days, the committee had two choices: (1) discontinue two days of fall break or (2) discontinue one day of fall break and 1 day of Thanksgiving break. The committee informally polled students and found that keeping a three-day Thanksgiving break was more important to students than keeping fall break. The two SGA officers who met with the committee concurred. Thus the committee recommended to the Provost that classes start on Monday, August 27 and fall break be discontinued in 2012.
- Establishing a new academic calendar that deviated from traditional scheduling created a problem in regard to fall exams overlapping with Carol of Lights. Because the same scheduling problems will occur in academic years 2013-14 and 2014-15, a possible solution may be adopted as a permanent solution. The calendar committee suggests four options:
 - **Option One** — Final exams continue as they are. Provost approval would be required for an extracurricular activity on a full day of exams. The School of Music will not participate in Carol of Lights if exams continue for a full day. Campus lights cannot be turned off during Carol of Lights because exams will be in progress.
 - **Option Two** — Reduce finals to 120 minutes for 4 days (Friday, Monday – Wednesday). This would leave Saturday open for Carol of Lights and would allow participation by the School of Music. Eight universities in the Big 12 have finals of 120 minutes or less.
 - **Option Three** — Discontinue individual study day. Have 150-minute exams for 5 days (Thursday, Friday, Monday – Wednesday). Six schools in the Big 12 have no individual study days.
 - **Option Four** — Reduce the individual study day (Thursday) to one-half day and start 150-minute final exams in the afternoon. In addition, limit exams to only one-half day on Saturday. This would allow the equivalent of 5 days of exams from Thursday afternoon through the next Wednesday.
- After these options were presented to the new SGA officers last May, the SGA president wrote a letter to the Provost expressing support for Option Two.
- After the Faculty Senate makes its final exam recommendation to the Provost, the issue will be brought before the Academic Council. The council will make its recommendation to the Provost prior to a final decision by the Provost.
- The new calendars for the next 10 years follow start days mandated by THECB Common Calendar. In general, most academic years will have a four-week break between fall and spring semesters. Eight of the next 10 years will have spring start dates after MLK Day on the third Monday of January.