SUBJECT: Academic Calendar

Background

The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) began a study of calendar issues in February 2004 because of the difficulties that staff encountered in completing responsibilities during the 10 business days between Fall 2003 and Spring 2004 terms. University staff provided an analysis of the processes that must be completed and suggested that 15 days were needed between Fall and Spring terms. The BOR staff prepared an analysis of the academic calendars through 2011, and AAC and the Business Affairs Council discussed the impact of changing the Spring term start and end dates during a joint meeting in March 2004. Information Technology staff conducted an initial survey of universities in surrounding states that indicated the Regental system 10 day time frame was the shortest period and most were 15 days. During the May 2004 BOR meeting, the Student Federation suggested that the Reading Day prior to Fall 2004 finals be eliminated. They also requested consideration of dropping the class day on Monday so that Fall 2004 Final Examinations could be scheduled December 13-17. The Regents requested that a recommendation related to the Fall 2004 calendar be brought to their June 2004 meeting.

Dr. Turchen requested further input from universities and BOR staff related to changing the Fall 2004 calendar. The following issues were identified:

- Need to maintain the required number of weeks and instructional days per term
- Workload associated with changing start and end dates in the student information system
- Impact on academic/administrative dates, pre-registrations, financial aid calculations, billing, and, room and meal assignments
- Changing dates already published in many materials

Regent Hansen, Regent Venhuizen, and Dr. Turchen met June 16 and, after much discussion and review of opinions received from campuses, arrived at the recommendation outlined below. Dr. Perry concurred and Dr. Shekleton confirmed that the recommendation meets legal requirements related to financial aid.

RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Approve the recommended Fall 2004 calendar
Recommendation for Fall 2004 Calendar

- The end date of Fall 2004, December 21, and all academic/administrative dates within the term will remain the same.
- There will be no classes held on Monday, December 13.
- There will be no Reading Day on Tuesday, December 14.
- Final examinations will be scheduled Monday, December 13 through Friday, December 17.
- Monday and Tuesday, December 20 and 21, will be scheduled as contingent days for makeup of classes or finals as needed.
- Graduation date will remain December 21.
- Faculty will submit all grades by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, December 22.
- Campus offices will begin end of term responsibilities at 8:00 AM on Thursday, December 23.

This approach for Fall 2004 accomplishes the following:
- Provides 2 additional days for offices to complete responsibilities between Fall and Spring terms.
- Maintains the minimum number of weeks and instructional days needed in a term.
- Eliminates the need to change any academic/administrative dates in the student information system or in financial aid calculations.
- Responds to the Student Federation Request to eliminate the Reading Day and schedule Final Examinations within one week.

Continued Review of Calendars

The next step is to develop system academic and administrative calendars that address the issues raised by our universities. We need a university staff analysis of the number of business days needed between Fall/Spring terms, Spring/Summer terms, and Summer/Fall terms. We already have the academic analysis of class days and holidays for Fall and Spring terms. We will analyze the Summer term when we know the number of business days between terms needed by university staff. Changes in the summer term that affect the number of credit hours that can be generated also will need to be analyzed in terms of financial impact.

AAC will take the lead in developing the new calendars. A transition plan may be needed for 2005-06, but the revised 10-year calendars must be in place for implementation 2006-07.