

## BACKGROUND PAPER ON SYSTEMWIDE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

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- I. **Introduction** - Within the University of California, there have been multiple discussions about the potential benefits of a single systemwide academic calendar. Proponents maintain that a common calendar would support cross-campus collaboration, such as multi-campus academic programs, student access to courses and faculty beyond their home campus, improved opportunities for students to access internships or education abroad programs, smoother transfer processes, and improved course articulation between Master Plan segments (California State University (CSU) and California Community College (CCC)). Increasing research productivity throughout the calendar year is an important potential outcome of semester transition. This paper provides background information to continue that discussion, including recent campus calendar conversion efforts and factors involved in converting to a single systemwide semester calendar.
- II. **UC History: Calendars and Instructional Days** - Of UC's campuses, Berkeley and Merced employ a semester calendar; the remaining seven undergraduate campuses and UCSF are on the quarter system. There are internal exceptions: some professional schools have elected to maintain a semester calendar, e.g., UC Davis Law School, UCLA Law School, UCLA School of Medicine.

Until 1966, the entire UC system was on a semester calendar. At that point, all UC campuses converted to a quarter calendar in order to offer year-round operations that would maximize the use of facilities to meet enrollment demand, i.e., four quarters: fall, winter, spring, and summer. However, only Berkeley and UCLA ever offered a summer quarter after the conversion and only until 1969. No UC campus on the quarter system currently operates a summer quarter although all campuses offer summer sessions.<sup>1</sup> Berkeley converted back to a semester calendar in 1983 and Merced opened in 2005 with a semester calendar. Berkeley's return to the semester calendar was motivated in part by interest in (1) aligning with K-12 school calendars in order to facilitate academic preparation activities and (2) improving faculty-based advising and counseling, reinstatement of "meaningful mid-term assessment," and having "more time to diagnose student difficulties and to provide assistance with the objective of increasing student persistence."<sup>2</sup>

Discussions of conversion to a single systemwide calendar have taken place at UC for years; the proposal is regularly explored during difficult financial times as a savings measure. In 1994, the UCOP Planning & Analysis department prepared a report, *Systemwide Conversion to the Semester*

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<sup>1</sup> Summer session differs from summer quarter - it has fewer instructional days, can be attended by both UC and non-UC students, has a different fee structure, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the Regents Educational Policy Committee, June 18, 1981.

*System, A Status Report*, in which staff detailed pro and cons of conversion to a common calendar and concluded “absent compelling financial or pedagogical reasons to convert, the University’s campuses will be unlikely, in the near future, to consider seriously any change to the academic calendar.”<sup>3</sup> . In 2009-10, developing a single systemwide academic calendar was considered by the Education and Curriculum workgroup of the UC Commission on the Future, but no recommendation for change emerged from the group.

Some UC quarter campuses have examined converting to a semester calendar. UCLA explored a return to the semester calendar in 1971, 1975, 1985, 1990, 1994, and 2003. The 2003 effort was an in-depth study. A vote of the Graduate Student Association indicated a preference for switching to a semester calendar because additional time would support the completion of assignments and workload as graduate student instructors. But faculty voted in favor of retaining the quarter calendar saying it best serves the tripartite mission of teaching, research, and public service. In 2019, Chancellor Block reiterated support to shift to a semester calendar.<sup>4</sup>

In 2019-20, UC Irvine also explored the topic of converting to the semester system. Irvine’s joint administrative-Senate Academic Planning Group (APG) set up a task group that was charged with conducting an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the campus transitioning from a quarter to semester system. Their work was cut short by the pandemic, but they completed a survey of various campus groups and accumulated some understanding of perceived advantages and disadvantages. Overall, the committee felt if starting from scratch, they would recommend semesters and if other UC campuses were to shift to semesters, it would be put additional pressure on UC Irvine to do so. Members were concerned with the amount of time and costs associated with such a move and faculty were concerned semesters could negatively impact scholarly productivity because it would be difficult to put together contiguous periods of research time (e.g., a spring or fall quarter with summer).

These studies rarely focused on the authority the university enjoys to define the duration and pace of a semester structure. They took the existing organization of instruction as a given, rather than consider the ways in which improvements could be made to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. We recognize now that **how** semesters unfold has a significant impact on ability of the university to improve on its performance in all three domains of faculty responsibility: teaching, research and service; as well as the student experience of learning, working, engagement in research and volunteer activities.

All nine undergraduate campuses have 146 instructional days. In 2002, UC Berkeley requested a reduction in instructional days to 140 so the fall semester could begin in September. The campus felt that timing was more comparable to public and private peers (synchronizing the calendar with other institutions) and incoming students would have better opportunities to enroll in summer programs. The Provost at the time denied this request.

In Spring 2009, UC Berkeley’s Joint Task Force on Exams, after extensive consultation with several Academic Senate committees as well as with student and other groups, recommended that a formal review period be created by converting a combination of formal days of class instruction and “dead” days to RRR (Reading, Recitation, and Review) days. These are days set aside for

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<sup>3</sup> “Systemwide Conversion to the Semester System: A Status Report,” UCOP Planning Group, August 1994.

<sup>4</sup> <https://dailybruin.com/2019/04/02/chancellor-gene-block-supports-switching-ucla-to-semester-system>

intensive study that follow the end of classes and precede the start of exams so students could work on final papers and projects and participate in review sessions and meetings with instructors. RRR week<sup>5</sup> was based on the pedagogical principle that students benefit from time devoted to synthesizing the course material learned over the course of the semester. This change formalized a longstanding Academic Senate guideline that no new material be introduced during the last week of instruction. RRR days are counted as days of instruction, even though formal classes do not meet during this period. The Berkeley campus presented this alternate proposal that of the 146 instructional days, 10 would be RRR days. The Provost approved this RRR week proposal.

**III. Other University Calendars and Instructional Days** - In 2000-01, the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) conducted a survey of academic calendars. Of 4,150 responding institutions, an aggregate of 77% were on a semester calendar, 15% were on the quarter system, and the remaining institutions used either a trimester calendar, 4-1-4 calendar (four-month, one month, and four-month instructional sessions), or continuous academic terms. Trade schools used the quarter system more frequently than any other type of post-secondary school.

Of the member institutions of the Association of American Universities (AAU) located in the U.S., 54 of 68 (79%) are on a semester calendar. Of the 14 quarter campuses, seven are within the University of California and 11 (including UC) are on the west coast (see Appendix 1).

The number of instructional days at UC (146) is higher than the comparison eight institutions, seen in the following table. CSU campuses also average 146 instructional days. Public AAU institutions on semesters and quarters and private AAU institutions on quarters have a higher number of instructional days on average – 142, 146, and 145 respectively – compared to private AAUs on semesters that average 136 days (see Appendix 1).

Institution	Instructional Days	Institution	Instructional Days
University of Illinois	144	Harvard	124
University of Michigan	136	MIT	131
SUNY Buffalo	140	Stanford	144
University of Virginia	139	Yale	128

Among our California segment partners, all but three of the 116 California Community Colleges (CCC) are on the semester system - Foothill, De Anza, and Lake Tahoe community colleges are on the quarter system. The California State University (CSU) system began the process of converting its remaining six quarter campuses to semesters in 2016. CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo – the last CSU quarter campus – expects to complete the semester transition by 2026-27.

**IV. Comparison of Semesters and Quarters**

There are pros and cons for semester and quarter calendars – a list of advantages to either system can be found in Appendix 2. Some of the strongest reasons for UC quarter campuses to convert to semesters include:

**Calendar alignment.** A single systemwide academic calendar could support coordination within the UC system. For example, it could aid cross-campus enrollment by students at one campus in courses

<sup>5</sup> [Reading, Review, and Recitation \(RRR\) Week Guidelines](#)

offered at another campus. Students could have access to a much more extensive catalog of courses and to faculty across the system. This also presents cost-savings as highly specialized (and usually advanced) courses that typically have low enrollments could be offered to more students in a shared format across campuses.

A semester calendar harmonizes with most AAUs, could support expanded partnerships for researchers across institutions on the same calendar, and better align with the meeting and conference schedules of scholarly and professional organizations.

***Articulation with Master Plan partners.*** A single systemwide semester calendar would ease the articulation of courses between UC, CCC, and CSU as almost all California community colleges and soon to be all California State University campuses are or will be on the semester calendar.

***Expanded summer opportunities for students.*** The Vice Chancellors of Student Affairs have expressed support for semester conversion because of the expanded opportunities that students currently on quarters would gain. It would reduce the disadvantage students seeking summer jobs and internships face now, as students from colleges on a semester calendar (who are free to begin these assignments in early May) have first pick of choice positions. It could also make it easier to include a full-term in the summer, which in effect could support year-round instruction.

***Fewer administrative cycles.*** Semester campuses have fewer administrative cycles per year (from three quarter terms to two semester terms) of various university operations and activities (e.g., course registration, degree processing, grading, schedule changes, fee assessment and payment, financial aid disbursements, TA training). While universities noted some transactional-based or individual-based savings and a decrease in routine workload, these changes did not result in major savings or a reduction of staff. What they did achieve was improvements in the quality of administrative functions and reducing stress on employees by having more time between each cycle. Some institutions reported better use of existing staff to review processes, improve customer service, and analyze student need to improve use of available funds (e.g., analyzing housing budgets to award different housing allowances).

## V. Recent University Calendar Conversions

The past twenty-five years has seen a trend among colleges and universities nationwide to convert from quarter to semester calendars. Fifty schools converted from quarter to semester calendars in 2001, more than two times the rate for 1998, and four times the rate for 1991. In the past twenty-five years, the following schools and systems have changed to semesters (in calendar order):

Alabama system (1998)	Principia College, IL (2011)
University System of Georgia (1998)	Ohio University (2011)
Utah State System (1998)	The Ohio State University (2012)
University of Minnesota system (1999)	Wright State University, OH (2012)
Auburn University, AL (2000)	University of Cincinnati (2012)
Michigan Tech (2000)	CSU Bakersfield (2016)
Youngstown State, OH (2000)	CSU Los Angeles (2016)
Northeastern University, MA (2003)	CSU East Bay (2018)
Shawnee State University, OH (2007)	CSU Pomona (2018)
Northwood University, MI (2010)	CSU San Bernardino (2020)

The most recent semester conversion efforts for which we have documentation was with the University of Cincinnati and the CSU system which had three successive waves of implementation at two campuses, two campuses, and then one. There was a long pause for CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo<sup>6</sup> which is actively preparing for a fall 2026 implementation of its semester calendar. Below is additional detail on each of their processes.

**Calendar conversion leadership approach/structure.** The University of Cincinnati President charged a Semester-Conversion Taskforce to develop a plan for the university to transition from a quarter to semester calendar. The plan needed to include:

- Timeline for transition
- Design principles for, a model of, the semester-system academic calendar
- Development of a semester-based course-numbering system
- Creation of communication strategies
- Examination of academic policy implications
- Identification of essential/critical modifications to the University's IT systems
- Creation of policies for students enrolled during the transition from quarters to semesters
- Identification of transition costs and design of an appropriate budget

To inform this work, the University of Cincinnati Semester Conversion Taskforce created subcommittees to focus on advising; calendar; communication; curriculum, pedagogy, and course; information technology; infrastructure; and policies and procedures. The resulting University of Cincinnati Plan for Converting to a Semester-Calendar System<sup>7</sup> included a detailed plan on the semester conversion process, including a recommendation that a Transition Director (appointed at the rank of Vice Provost and reporting to the Provost) lead a Semester-*Transition* Taskforce (STT) to implement the plan (see Appendix 3 for STT membership).

For CSU, the systemwide Chancellor's Office (CO) contracted with a consulting firm – ERP Analysts – that had experience with semester conversion projects at other universities. CSU CO established an executive committee led by a retired Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (who was also a former campus provost) and included other systemwide and campus leadership (e.g., President, Provost, CIO, CFO). The executive committee met biweekly and eventually quarterly to review and approve changes to budget and scope and to refer to higher level authorities, those issues that could not be resolved within units.

The CSU CO project management team supported campus teams that included a conversion director and the leadership to support the technical and non-technical work, along with a team of subject matter experts in affected areas (e.g., admissions, advising, financial aid, student financials, student records). A high-level organization structure for the Chancellor's Office and CSU Bakersfield and Los Angeles (the first two CSU to convert) can be found in Appendix 3.

**Calendar conversion costs.** The University of Cincinnati estimated one-time semester conversion costs would total around \$14 million. These costs covered administration and communications (e.g., Transition Director, communication professional and interns, administration assistant); curriculum, course, and pedagogical development; systems repopulation and procedure revisions; advising; and information technology.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://semesters.calpoly.edu/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.csub.edu/q2s/files/add\\_sites/Plan\\_for\\_Converting.pdf](https://www.csub.edu/q2s/files/add_sites/Plan_for_Converting.pdf)

As detailed in the table below, CSU spent over \$50 million for the first five semester calendar conversion projects that covered technical and non-technical costs. CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo is currently completing a semester calendar conversion which is expected to cost \$20 million. Non-technical costs included curriculum conversion for faculty and committee work (i.e., academic senate review), along with the project management office including a director and communication staff. Divisional staff support for administrative offices (e.g., financial aid) to reform processes and inform the necessary IT changes and then transition advising for current and new students.

***Calendar conversion timelines.*** After the University of Cincinnati Semester Conversion planning process, the Taskforce recommended a three-year transition period to “re-vision” pedagogy, have IT partner with affected units to update relevant systems, and to expand support for academic advising.

As seen in the campus conversion cost table, CSU’s timeline for campus conversions has ranged from three to five years, with an example for CSU Bakersfield three-year conversion process and CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo’s five-year conversion process found in Appendix 4.

## **VI. Major Requirements for a Calendar Conversion Processes**

Below are decisions that need to be made to facilitate a successful calendar conversion process.

***Calendar and instructional days.*** As noted, semester campuses can vary in semester length, start dates, holidays, and study breaks as seen with the 2024-25 academic calendars for UC Berkeley, The Ohio State, Princeton, and University of Michigan (see Appendix 5). The first decision point would be to determine the preferred semester calendar, including the number of instructional days. If the decision is to use the existing UC semester calendar (e.g., UC Berkeley with RRR week or UC Merced without the RRR week), it would limit the focus to the seven quarter campuses. If a semester calendar with a different number RRR days was selected, all UC general campuses would be included to some extent in the calendar conversion process. It would be of great interest, for example, to hear the committee’s thought on whether there should be a week of RRR immediately prior to mid-terms, and another just before finals, to promote deep learning, quality improvement in written work/labs, etc. The lead up to exams is typically stressful and provides less-than-optimal time to complete all of the necessary work or facilitate individual consultations between students and faculty. We could imagine this kind of calendar leading to improved learning outcomes and reduced stress/mental health problems. Because RRR weeks are deemed instructional, this would have no impact on credit hours or any other budget-related metrics.

***Policy and procedures.*** UC academic calendar policies and guidelines<sup>8</sup> include general campuses being required to have common start dates for all quarters and semesters, 146 instructional days per academic year, and to avoid calendaring residence hall move-in dates on fall religious holidays. Depending on decisions about the calendar and instructional days, the University will need to update those policies and guidelines. It could require updates to the academic personnel manual and guidance from other groups, like Academic Personnel and Program and Labor Relations. In some instances, campuses have established principles agreed upon by the senate and president to guide the semester conversion process – an example for CSU Bakersfield is included in Appendix 6.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/content-analysis/academic-planning/academic-calendar-policies.html>



**Course, curriculum, and major program conversion.** Conversion from a quarter calendar to a semester calendar will require extensive curricular revision which would primarily be undertaken by faculty. It would include faculty review of academic programs and courses needed to achieve the desired learning outcomes and accreditation standards. In addition to converting or redesigning courses needed for major programs, it could involve gateway or general education courses that may require coordination across units and provide the opportunity to identify non-active courses to remove from the catalog.

Multiple campuses, including UCLA, noted that one should not waste this opportunity to rethink the curriculum and look for ways to redesign programs and courses to expand educational opportunities (e.g., service learning, internships), leverage technology, ease transfer hurdles, and integrate effective pedagogical practice that could improve student. Some campuses examined the curriculum at other semester campuses to inform this work.

Any changes to academic programs and courses will also need to go through the relevant Academic Senate committees and part of the investment in curricular review is providing support to these committees to take on this expanded workload. The table below provides estimated number of regular and independent study courses, along with the number of undergraduate and graduate majors as one way to illustrate the workload. CSU CO used this kind of information to distribute resource allocations to advance curriculum overhaul.

### Unique Course and Major Counts

CAMPUS	2023-24			2020-21 to 2022-23		
	Regular courses	Independent Study courses	Total	UG majors	Graduate majors	Total
Berkeley	4,692	19	4,711	125	203	328
Davis	4,186	16	4,202	115	171	286
Irvine	5,667	29	5,696	94	188	282
Los Angeles	6,254	20	6,274	142	220	362
Merced	754	2	756	28	34	62
Riverside	2,749	9	2,758	93	104	197
San Diego	4,047	46	4,093	155	204	359
San Francisco	1,040	10	1,050		45	45
Santa Barbara	3,828	10	3,838	85	94	179
Santa Cruz	2,421	28	2,449	71	87	158
Grand Total	35,638	189	35,827	908	1,350	2,258

**Advising.** Academic advising is critical to support a smooth transition process for students. Universities that transitioned from quarter to semester terms have often experienced a temporary drop in student workload as students, who were accustomed to taking three or four courses per quarter, transitioned slowly to four or five courses per semester. This trend can affect student time to degree and state funding because it is allocated based on student FTE, though it is likely to be short-term – other institutions saw a rebound in student workload within a few years of converting to a semester calendar.

Universities identified three critical areas of focus for advising:

- Having as many students as possible graduate before the conversion to semesters

- Creating a cross walk for students who transfer from quarters to semesters (e.g., cross walk between quarter and semester courses and units)
- Helping new students who enter adapt to the semester calendar

***Student outcomes.*** UC 2030 goals focus on improving timely graduation and eliminating disparities and achieving parity between the overall timely graduation rates and rates for first-generation students, low-income (Pell-eligible) students, and students from underrepresented minority groups (Black, Latinx, and Native American). These goals advance State interests and have been included in the Compact with the Governor. They also advance the University's commitment to becoming a minority serving, student serving institution. Efforts must be made to continue progress in achieving these goals and prevent the slide in timely graduation rates that some institutions experienced after the shift to semesters.<sup>9</sup>

As part of its semester conversion process, the University of Cincinnati issued a pledge to students that guaranteed no loss of academic progress, no delay in time to degree/graduation, and no increase in the total tuition and fees. The University created Individual Advising Plans for students who would move from quarters to semesters and added 33 advisors to support this additional workload. CSU Cal Poly Pomona's version included within its pledge to students a list of the University's commitments, along with the students' commitments illustrating the partnership and joint responsibilities between the university and students (see Appendix 7). A similar pledge for UC could highlight ways the University would focus on educational equity through a shift to semester calendars, including considering inclusive pedagogy and access to experiential learning as part of curricular changes or investing in advising.

***Information systems modification.*** Multiple campus processes and related systems will need to change when converting from quarters to semesters. These IT systems can include administrative information systems (e.g., student records, admissions, financial aid, course scheduling, financial aid) and advising systems and often require a partnership between IT and affected academic and administrative units to ensure successful modification and testing.

In addition, some IT units enhanced or created new systems to support semester conversion, such as:

- Creation of an online curriculum management system or web application for faculty to submit new course descriptions, course numbers, and major maps as faculty revise the curriculum
- Advising tools that could secure storage of individual advising plans for students affected by the conversion to semesters (i.e., those starting on quarters)

***Communications.*** Creation of a communication plan is critical to ensure the overall success of the semester conversion process. It is very common that Semester Transition Directors work directly with communications staff throughout the process, including the creation and updates to semester conversion website. CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo semester conversion website<sup>10</sup> includes information on conversion materials (e.g., program and curricular guidance/templates, unit converter, academic senate resolutions), task force and academic senate committees, campus communications and presentations, and frequently asked questions.

Some campuses created guides to support the semester conversion process, such as CSU Bakersfield's discussion paper<sup>11</sup> and quarter to semester conversion packet<sup>12</sup> and Cal Poly Pomona's quarter to

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.aeaweb.org/research/college-semesters-quarters-graduation>

<sup>10</sup> <https://semesters.calpoly.edu/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.csub.edu/q2s/ files/discussion\\_paper.pdf](https://www.csub.edu/q2s/ files/discussion_paper.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.csub.edu/q2s/ files/templates/Q2S\\_Packet.pdf](https://www.csub.edu/q2s/ files/templates/Q2S_Packet.pdf)



semester conversion handbook.<sup>13</sup> Other communications support can include press information, email campaigns, events publicity, and eventually changes to create new course catalogs and update other aspects of university websites.

**Financial support.** In contemplating the possibility of a conversion process, the President and Chancellors, in consultation with the budget office have concluded that these investments are worthwhile for the academic and student life benefits the result will sustain. Particularly when financed as a kind of infrastructure project, the yearly costs are quite manageable.

## VII. Approval and Procedural Options

**Official approval process.** The authority for setting the academic calendar was specified in the Standing Orders of the Regents, section 100.4(h):

*The President shall fix the calendar of the University, provided that no session of instruction shall be established or abolished except with the advice from the Academic Senate and then approval of the Board.*

The Regents rescinded this standing order and reserved some authority over calendar in Regents Bylaw 22.2. The authority in the original standing order for the calendar was re-delegated by the President to the Provost back in 1977.<sup>14</sup>

Based on the original intent of the standing order, any major calendar change would require the approval of both the Academic Senate and the Board of Regents, a process that typically takes one or two years (although it could be accelerated). Once a calendar change from the quarter to semester system is approved, the Office of the President and campuses would then need additional time to prepare and implement the calendar conversion process. As described earlier, other universities have taken three to five years to support a calendar change on an individual.

**Policy on instructional days.** The current policy that requires a minimum of 146 instructional days resides in the “Guidelines for establishing the academic and administrative calendar.”<sup>15</sup> The initial origins of the 146 minimum instructional days needs to be researched, but the Presidential delegation to the Provost in 1977 allowed the Provost to make exceptions to the guidelines “when justified.” There have been instances where the Provost has approved exceptions to the 146-day rule, but those have typically been for emergencies such as campus closures for wildfires or other unplanned changes. As discussed above, the Provost approved the UC Berkeley change to count RRR days against the 146-day minimum.

**Procedural options.** With the active collaboration of the Academic Planning Council (APC, a joint Senate and Administration APC Working Group on Semester Calendar Conversion will be convened to develop a proposed calendar policy covering both semester conversion and the issue of minimum instructional days. It will seek input from the Academic Council to ensure additional input from all of the general campuses through the voices of the division chairs. The resulting policy will go out for

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.cpp.edu/semester/for-students/Cal-Poly-Pomona-Quarter-to-Semester-Conversion-Student-Handbook.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/\\_files/delegation-authority-academic-administrative-calendars-1977.pdf](https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/delegation-authority-academic-administrative-calendars-1977.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/\\_files/guidelines-establishing-acad-admin-calendar-1987.pdf](https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/_files/guidelines-establishing-acad-admin-calendar-1987.pdf)

campus and Academic Senate review before being approved by the Provost, the President, and the Regents.

As the same time, UCOP/campus administrative team could develop sample guidance and communication materials, estimate semester conversion costs by campus, and seek the input of the many campus staff constituencies (e.g. the registrars, financial aid, student affairs, housing, advising, etc.) whose work will be affected by a semester structure. UC Operations (e.g., Information Technology Services, Strategy and Program Management Office) and External Relations & Communications will all need to be involved. UCOP will take responsibility for these engagements and be prepared to develop recommendations that would be part of the final report.

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Association of American Universities (AAU) – US Member Institutions and CSU  
Academic Calendars (Appendix 1)

Public Institutions		Private Institutions	
Semester Campuses	Instructional Days	Semester Campuses	Instructional Days
Arizona	149	Tulane	142
Penn State	148	Rochester	141
Iowa	148	USC	141
Indiana	147	Case Western	140
Purdue	146	Emory	140
UC Berkeley	146	New York Univ	140
Colorado	146	Notre Dame	140
Missouri	146	Penn	140
Kansas	145	Vanderbilt	140
Illinois	144	Cornell	139
Maryland	144	Duke	139
Arizona State	143	George Washington	139
Georgia Tech	142	Miami	139
Florida	142	Washington Univ	138
South Florida	141	Brown	135
Utah	141	Columbia	135
Ohio State	140	Rice	135
Stony Brook - SUNY	140	Johns Hopkins	134
Texas A&M	140	Boston Univ	133
Buffalo - SUNY	140	Carnegie Mellon	132
Minnesota	140	MIT	131
North Carolina	140	Tufts	131
Pittsburgh	140	Brandeis	130
Texas - Austin	140	Yale	128
Michigan State	139	Harvard	124
Virginia	139	Princeton	120
Rutgers	138	<b>Average</b>	<b>136</b>
Wisconsin	137		
Michigan	136		
<b>Average</b>	<b>142</b>		
Quarter Campuses	Instructional Days	Quarter Campuses	Instructional Days
Washington	147	Chicago	153
UC Davis	146	Northwestern	148
UC Irvine	146	Stanford	144
UCLA	146	Cal Tech	143
UC Riverside	146	Dartmouth	138
UC San Diego	146	<b>Average</b>	<b>145</b>
UC Santa Barbara	146		
UC Santa Cruz	146		
Oregon	145		
<b>Average</b>	<b>146</b>		

**CSU Campus Instructional Days**

<b>Semester Campuses</b>	<b>Instructional Days</b>
Maritime Academy	148
Fresno	147
San Francisco	147
Sonoma	147
Chico	146
Fullerton	146
Humboldt	146
Monterey Bay	146
Northridge	146
Pomona	146
San Jose	146
Stanislaus	146
Bakersfield	145
East Bay	145
Los Angeles	145
Sacramento	145
San Diego	145
Channel Islands	144
Dominguez Hills	144
Long Beach	144
San Bernardino	144
San Marcos	144

<b>Quarter Campus</b>	<b>Instructional Days</b>
San Luis Obispo	145
<b>Average</b>	<b>146</b>

**Advantages for Semester and Quarter Calendars (Appendix 2)**

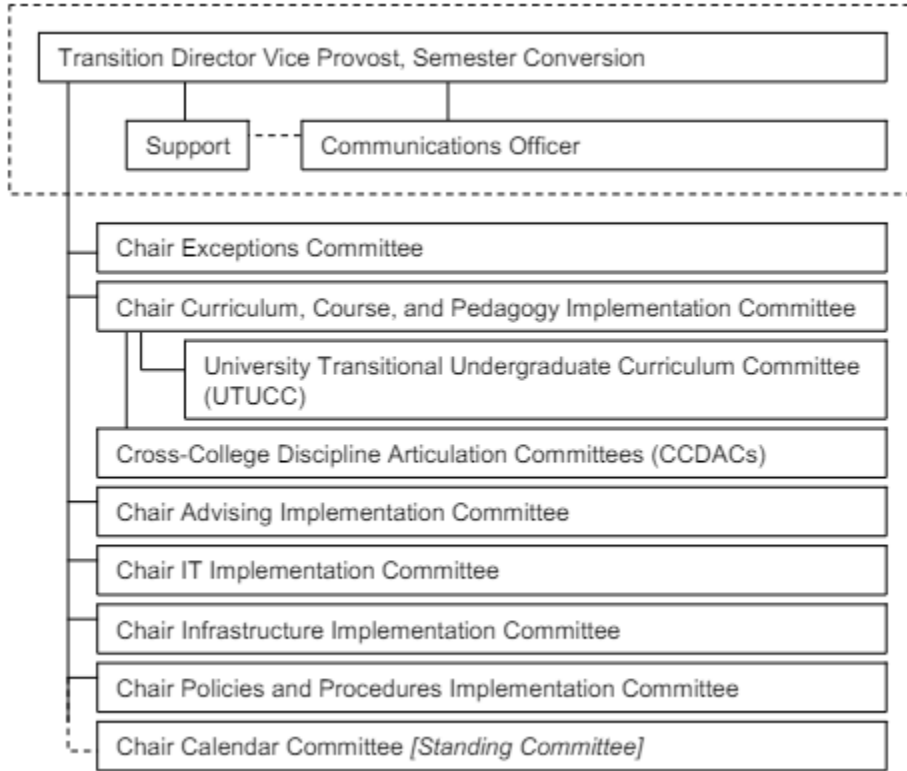
Constituency/ Function	Semester (S)	Quarter (Q)
<u>Students/ Curriculum</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More time for in-depth study</li> <li>2. More time for papers, research, and projects</li> <li>3. More opportunity for extended faculty interaction</li> <li>4. More time for mid-course correction if progress lagging</li> <li>5. Grade reflects research, projects, and exam results</li> <li>6. Less fragmentation of courses</li> <li>7. Less time spent on administration (e.g., registering)</li> <li>8. More time for late registration</li> <li>9. Decreased stress levels due to less hectic pace</li> <li>10. More days for summer session</li> <li>11. Harmonizes with all high schools and most CCCs</li> <li>12. Harmonizes with financial aid schedules, aid does not need to be “stretched” over three quarters.</li> <li>13. Easier transition for students from semester institutions</li> <li>14. Improves student access to summer internships (eliminates disadvantage to of starting later)<sup>16</sup></li> <li>15. Alignment with other summer opportunities such as overseas study or internships</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More instructional days</li> <li>2. More courses, time for wider range of subjects</li> <li>3. Smaller class size</li> <li>4. More flexibility in scheduling</li> <li>5. More motivation, less procrastination</li> <li>6. Exposure to more faculty</li> <li>7. Fewer exams (only one per course)</li> <li>8. Fundamental or introductory courses offered more frequently</li> <li>9. Consequences of not passing a course or completing a term less severe</li> <li>10. Because of condensed term, more focus on priorities</li> <li>11. Better suited for double majors</li> </ol>
<u>Faculty</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. More time to teach topic in depth</li> <li>17. More relaxed schedule, time to explore side issues</li> <li>18. More time for research between terms</li> <li>19. Sabbaticals – longer and less frequent</li> <li>20. More time to develop relationships with students</li> <li>21. Harmonizes with scholarly and professional organizations’ meeting &amp; conference schedules</li> <li>22. Sometimes preferred for faculty in humanities and social sciences that may benefit from sustained reflection and scholarship to absorb material and support research</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Instructional load can be met in two quarter terms, and research conducted in the third term</li> <li>13. Sabbaticals – shorter and more frequent</li> <li>14. Greater opportunity to teach classes about academic specialties</li> <li>15. Sometimes preferred for faculty in the sciences that subdivide units of knowledge in laboratory settings</li> </ol>
<u>Other</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>23. All California high schools and most community colleges are on semesters</li> <li>24. Most AAU universities are on semesters</li> <li>25. Most textbooks are geared to a semester calendar</li> <li>26. Savings from less operational cycles, e.g., admissions, registration, transcripts, financial aid</li> <li>27. Semester calendar fits academic year more efficiently (winter break divides semesters)</li> <li>28. Fewer calendar conflicts with religious holidays</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Greater physical capacity for plant, due to smaller class size</li> <li>17. Greater annual revenue coming from general books or food sales through campus operations</li> </ol>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.chronicle.com/article/For-Students-on-the-Quarter/246030>, “For Students on the Quarter System, Landing a Summer Internship Can Bring Complications,” Terry Nguyen, Chronicle of Higher Education, April 1, 2019.

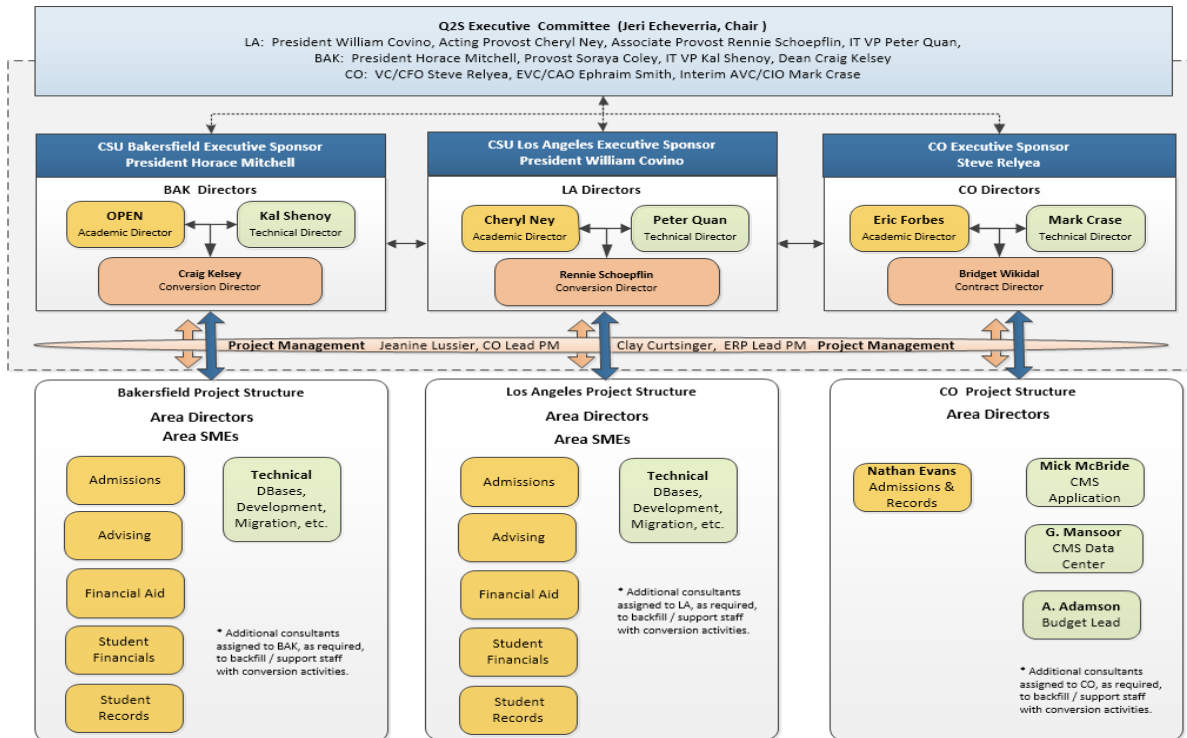


University of Cincinnati and CSU High Level Organization for Semester Calendar Conversion (Appendix 3)

University of Cincinnati Semester-Transition Task Force



CSU High Level Organization for System and First Wave Campuses



**Semester Conversion Timelines for CSU Bakersfield and Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo (Appendix 4)**

Timeline for CSU Bakersfield

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
PS conversions			
Curriculum Revision (AY Efforts and Summer Institute)			
Revising Systems and Procedures (admissions/records, FA, advising, transcript conversion, etc.)			
Additional Communications and Advising			
“Teach-out” of Old Curriculum			
Potential for Decreased FTES			

Timeline for CSU Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

**Part I: Winter 2022 — Winter 2025**

WINTER 2022 — SUMMER 2022	FALL 2022 — FALL 2023	WINTER 2024 — WINTER 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop curriculum planning</li> <li>Establish steering committee</li> <li>Complete projected budget</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop curriculum proposals</li> <li>Convert/Redesign curriculum</li> <li>Prepare for curricular review</li> <li>Begin work on non-academic aspects of conversion</li> </ul>	
		USCP, GEGB, and ASCC to review 2026-2027 catalog proposals

**Part II: Spring 2025 — Fall 2026**

SPRING — SUMMER 2025	FALL 2025	FALL 2025 — SUMMER 2026	SPRING — SUMMER 2026	FALL 2026
Build out 2026-2027 catalog, operational changes, and student transition plans				
	Publish 2026-2027 catalog			
		Revise policies, complete operational and advising plans		
			Begin offering bridge and cap courses	
				First semester

2024-25 Academic Calendar for Sample Semester Campuses (Appendix 5)

**Semester Calendars (2024-25)**

	UC Berkeley	The Ohio State	Princeton
Instructional Days	146	140	120
<b>Fall Term</b>			
Instruction Begins	8/28/2024	8/20/2024	9/3/2024
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>			
Labor Day	9/2/2024	9/2/2024	
Fall Study Break		10/10-11/2024	10/14-18/2024
Veteran's Day	11/11/2024	11/11/2024	
Thanksgiving Break	11/27-29/2024	11/27-29/2024	11/26-29/2024
Formal Classes End	12/6/2024		12/5/2024
RRR Week	12/9-13/2024		12/6-13/2024
Instruction Ends	12/13/2024	12/4/2024	
<b>Spring Term</b>			
Instruction Begins	1/21/2025	1/6/2025	1/27/2025
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>			
MLK Day		1/20/2025	
President's Day	2/17/2025		
Spring Break	3/24-27/2025	3/10-14/2025	3/10-14/2025
Cesar Chavez Day	3/28/2025		
Formal Classes End	5/2/2025		4/25/2025
RRR Week	5/5-9/2025		4/28-5/6/2025
Instruction Ends	5/9/2025	4/21/2025	
<b>Summer Term*</b>			
8-wk Term Begins		5/6/2025	
8-wk Term Ends		6/27/2025	
10-wk Term Begins	5/27/2025		
10-wk Term Ends	8/15/2025		
8-wk Term Begins	6/23/2025	6/2/2025	
8-wk Term Ends	8/15/2025	7/25/2025	

**Trimester Calendar (2024-25)**

	Univ of Michigan
Instructional Days	136
<b>Fall Term</b>	
Instruction Begins	8/26/2024
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>	
Labor Day	9/2/2024
Fall Study Break	10/14-15/2024
Veteran's Day	
Thanksgiving Break	11/27-29/2024
Formal Classes End	12/9/2024
<b>Winter Term</b>	
Instruction Begins	1/8/2025
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>	
MLK Day	1/20/2025
University Symposia	3/3-7/2025
Formal Classes End	4/22/2025
<b>Summer/Spring Term</b>	
Instruction Begins	5/6/2025
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>	
Memorial Day	5/26/2025
Juneteenth	6/19/2025
Classes end (Spring)	6/24/2025
Instruction Begins	6/26/2025
<u>Holidays/Breaks</u>	
Independence Day	7/4/2025
Classes end (Summer)	8/12/2024

\* only includes longer terms (i.e., 8/10 weeks)

**CSU Bakersfield Principles for Quarter to Semester Conversion Project (Appendix 6)**

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, BAKERSFIELD  
ACADEMIC SENATE

**CSU Bakersfield Principles for Quarter to Semester Conversion Project  
RES 1314035**

EC

1. That faculty, staff, students and administrators work together on all phases of planning for conversion from quarter to semesters.
2. Conversion will not increase time to graduation for students who transition from quarters to semesters.
3. Students who transition from quarters to semesters will receive individualized advisement before conversion to create a clear plan for progress to graduation, and for follow-up advisement as needed.
4. No tenured/tenure track faculty or staff members will lose their employment as a result of the conversion to semesters.
5. No academic programs will be discontinued as a result of conversion to semesters except through ordinary program discontinuation procedures.
6. Reassigned time or stipends will be made available to faculty to perform program and course modification for the conversion.
7. Reassigned time or stipends will be provided to faculty for advisement of students who transition from quarters to semesters.
8. Staff workload will not increase with conversion-related tasks without compensation.
9. The earliest a conversion to semesters would be implemented is Fall 2016.
10. Schools and departments/divisions will have maximum flexibility to manage teaching loads consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement in ways that meet the needs of faculty and students.
11. Conversion to semesters will not diminish the University's commitment to Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity.
12. Sabbatical leaves will continue to be awarded consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
13. Faculty workload will be managed consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
14. Freeze Active Changes. During the freeze period, no new courses, degrees, or certificate programs will be implemented.
15. Staffing Commitment. Provide sufficient staffing resources to ensure project success.
16. Project Management. Establish appropriate work groups representing campus commitment to shared governance. Put project management tools in place for project tracking and reporting.
17. Communications. Use appropriate media to generate clear, timely, and targeted communications for key campus stakeholders.
18. Except for compelling reasons, courses which have not been offered for five years will not be converted. They will be retained in the database and may be reactivated at a later date.

Approved by the Senate on 9/12/13  
Approved by the President on 10/01/13

## CSU Cal Poly Pomona, Semester Conversion Student Pledge (Appendix 7)

### Our Pledge to Students

In Fall 2018, Cal Poly Pomona will convert from a quarter-based academic calendar to a semester-based academic calendar. The continued success of our students is the highest priority during this conversion. The faculty and staff at Cal Poly Pomona commit to a two-way partnership with students to achieve a conversion that does not adversely affect the time to degree or cost of the degree.

### The University's Commitments

- There should be no loss of credits applied to students' degree requirements earned before the semester conversion.
- The time to graduation should be the same as would have been the case had Cal Poly Pomona remained on the quarter system.
- The university will provide timely and focused advising support and assistance to prepare an Individual Academic Plan (IAP) for undergraduate students (a) who wish to graduate prior to the conversion to semesters and (b) whose programs span the quarter-to-semester transition.
- It will provide timely and focused advising support and assistance to prepare a Conversion Master's Contract (CC) for graduate students whose programs span the quarter-to-semester transition.
- Changes in policies and procedures shall be communicated to students in a timely manner.
- Annual student tuition and fees under the semester system should not be greater than they would be under the quarter system. (CSU tuition fees, as well as campus based fees, may be adjusted as deemed necessary and authorized by the Board of Trustees and/or the campus president.)
- Conversion should not adversely affect students' financial aid.
- Tuition and fees payment schedules as well as financial aid and scholarship disbursements will be aligned with the semester calendar in a manner consistent with the schedules that exist under the quarter calendar.

### Students' Commitments

- Undergraduate students should remain until graduation in the major selected by the time they have completed 45 quarter units. Undergraduates who change their majors after completing 45 or more units may extend their time to graduation.
- Graduate students are expected to submit a master's contract no later than the end of the second quarter of attendance.
- All students should:
  - Develop an Individual Academic Plan (or a Conversion Master's Contract if you are a graduate student) if you have the BroncoDirect To Do List item.
  - Follow the IAP/CC timeline and revise as necessary to maintain the expected time to degree.
  - Meet minimum grade requirements.
  - Consult regularly with an advisor and follow advising instructions.
  - Satisfy all other graduation requirements as specified in the catalog.
  - Be flexible with choices of classes and times.
- All students should keep informed about university policies and procedures. Email is the university's official form of communication.

The university shall make a good-faith effort to support students through the conversion process. The university is not be responsible for consequences that occur as a result of students not meeting the above commitments.