

UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Senator Collier and seconded by Senator Messner

Date: 5/14/07

ESTABLISHMENT OF A “WINTER SESSION”

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the University establish a “Winter Session” as a formal academic term.
2. That the Undergraduate Academic Council, the Graduate Academic Council, and the University Life Council consider where the wording of existing legislation needs to be modified and whether new legislation needs to be proposed to support this new academic term and report back to the University Senate no later than the October 2007 Senate meeting.
3. That this proposal be forwarded to the President for approval.
4. That this take effect upon the President's approval to begin in the winter of 2007-2008.

Rationale:

While courses have been offered by the University overlapping the period between the fall and spring semesters, these have been treated as part of a semester. Many other campuses, including SUNY campuses, have a “Winter Session” distinct from other terms. The UPC and the University Senate recognize the potential benefit to students and the University of having this addition to the Albany calendar and believe it is feasible to initiate the session at the end of the fall 2007 semester.

However, this is new territory for the University. At a minimum, existing legislation concerning deadline dates for program adjustment changes, opted S/U grading, refund dates, and dropping the course with a “W” are stated for semesters with a note that they shall be prorated for “quarter” (8week1 and 8week2) and “Summer Sessions” courses.

There is also the academic concern on what limit should be placed on enrollment in the Winter Session. One three- or four-credit course would match common practice. Should the limit be higher than 4 credits? If so, should there be a mechanism to authorize an exception to that limit (as exists for the 19-credit limit on fall and spring semesters)?

Since it is possible a student enrolled in a Winter Session course would be sent notice of Academic Dismissal based on the student's grades at the end of the preceding fall semester but would not learn of this until the Winter Session course had already begun, and since it is also possible that the course is being offered abroad, what provision needs to be established for this contingency?

In addition to the academic concerns, rules and regulations that are the purview of UAC and GAC, it seems prudent for ULC to consider whether there are any special implications regarding financial aid or lack thereof; the availability of normally expected services, conveniences and security; and the availability of recreation programs for students who may be housed over the winter break.

As the UAC, GAC and ULC consider the issues raise above and other concerns or needs they discern as arising from the newly created term, the Senate believes that those who have proposed the creation of the Winter Session will be able to provide sufficient assistance to enable any necessary new and revised legislation to reach the Senate by its October meeting.

| As for the title of the new term, "Winter Session" appears to be ~~far~~ the most common title used by other campuses and parallels our "Summer Sessions." Since the University has referred to the period in question when *no* classes were in session as "Interession", coining "Wintersession" seems confusing and, since identified as a possible error by spell-checkers, undesirable.