

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
Senate Committee on Educational Policy
(Final; Action)**

EP.17.17 Revisions to the 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 Academic Calendars

Background:

For the past three years, the campus-wide Commencement ceremony has been held at Memorial Stadium due to renovation at State Farm Center (formerly Assembly Hall). At the time of this physical move of the event, the ceremony also shifted from Sunday to Saturday. Since the move of Commencement to Saturday at Memorial Stadium, attendance by graduates and their guests has increased. The Committee on Commencement has recommended that the ceremony continue to be held on Saturday, rather than Sunday, because of practical considerations.

Kicking off Commencement weekend with the campus-wide Commencement ceremony on Saturday means that degrees are officially conferred before the convocation ceremonies, which serve as a celebration of graduation rather than a formal degree conferral ceremony.

For both invited guests and the students themselves, the Sunday Commencement ceremony often meant an extra day on campus. To avoid this, many students and their families simply left campus after their unit ceremonies, and did not attend Commencement. This tendency has been compounded by the fact that the Sunday Commencement often coincided with Mother's Day. In 2011, the Commencement speaker (Cokie Roberts) did not speak at the afternoon Commencement because she wished to spend at least a part of Mother's Day with her elderly mother. The Committee on Commencement thinks that holding the ceremony on Saturday may alleviate some of these problems and induce more students (and possibly more faculty) to attend Commencement.

This proposal, if passed, would supersede EP.09.43 which states that the 2017 Commencement occurs on Sunday, May 14, 2017; EP.09.44 which states that the 2018 Commencement occurs on Sunday, May 13, 2018; and EP.09.45 which states that the 2019 Commencement occurs on Sunday, May 12, 2019.

Impact

The conferral date for awarded degrees appears on official student transcripts and diplomas. For this reason, the Office of the Registrar website communicates the conferral date of awarded degrees so that external agencies can confirm the accuracy of Illinois transcripts and diplomas. Also, the conferral date configuration in the Student Information System must be set prior to any student applying for graduation in the Spring term.

The academic calendars for 2020-2024 already reflect Saturday Commencement ceremonies, so the change to the academic calendars in 2017-2019 would bring consistency and show all future Commencements and degree conferral dates on Saturday of Commencement weekend.

Recommendation:

The Committee on Commencement has evaluated the success of holding the campus-wide Commencement ceremony on Saturday each year since the move to Memorial Stadium and has concurred that the ceremony should continue to be held on Saturday. The Senate Committee on Educational Policy also recommends revising the 2016-2017 Academic Calendar by moving the date of Commencement from Sunday, May 14, 2017 to Saturday, May 13, 2017; from Sunday May 13, 2018 to Saturday, May 12, 2018; and from Sunday, May 12, 2019 to Saturday, May 11, 2019.

Altering the date of Commencement also changes the degree conferral dates to Saturday, May 13, 2017; Saturday, May 12, 2018; and Saturday, May 11, 2019.

The revised calendars for 2017, 2018, and 2019 would appear as follows:

Spring Semester 2017

M. L. King Day	Monday, January 16 (no classes)
Instruction Begins	Tuesday, January 17
Spring Vacation Begins	Saturday, March 18, 1 p.m.
Instruction Resumes	Monday, March 27, 7 a.m.
Instruction Ends	Wednesday, May 3
Reading Day	Thursday, May 4
Final Examinations Begin	Friday, May 5
End	Friday, May 12
Commencement	SATURDAY, MAY 13

Spring Semester 2018

M. L. King Day	Monday, January 15 (no classes)
Instruction Begins	Tuesday, January 16
Spring Vacation Begins	Saturday, March 17, 1 p.m.
Instruction Resumes	Monday, March 26, 7 a.m.
Instruction Ends	Wednesday, May 2
Reading Day	Thursday, May 3
Final Examinations Begin	Friday, May 4
End	Friday, May 11
Commencement	SATURDAY, MAY 12

Spring Semester 2019

M. L. King Day	Monday, January 14
Instruction Begins	Monday, January 21 (no classes)
Spring Vacation Begins	Saturday, March 16, 1 p.m.
Instruction Resumes	Monday, March 25, 7 a.m.
Instruction Ends	Wednesday, May 1
Reading Day	Thursday, May 2
Final Examinations Begin	Friday, May 3
End	Friday, May 10
Commencement	SATURDAY, MAY 11

This alteration is formulated in accordance with *Synopsis of Policies Governing the Academic Calendar at UIUC*, adopted by the Senate on December 5, 2005.