Revision to the Policy Guidelines for Developing Academic Calendars (final examination period)

BACKGROUND
This proposal seeks to revise the Policy Guidelines for Developing Academic Calendars to lower the threshold for the required number of final examination periods and builds in flexibility to allow an increase in final examination periods if, for example, there is a significant increase in enrollment. The lower threshold for fall final examination periods would ensure posting final grades to student records prior to the end of the calendar year and allow additional time for other required end of term processes. (See Appendix A for past total final examinations held each day of the Final Examination period.) This in-turn allows Winter Session to begin earlier. The lower threshold for the spring final examination period allows additional time for the numerous commencement activities.

This proposal also seeks to add Juneteenth National Freedom Day as a holiday to the Policy Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION
The Senate Committee on Educational Policy recommends the Senate approve the following proposed revisions to the Policy Guidelines for Developing Academic Calendars. Struck-through text indicates deletions, and underlined text indicates additions.

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING ACADEMIC CALENDARS

The following Policy Guidelines shall be followed when developing Academic Calendars. However, there may be some academic years when not all guidelines can practicably be followed. In such years, the Academic Calendar proposed to the Senate shall include a brief description of any guidelines that are not satisfied and why the guidelines are unable to be satisfied.
1. General Policies for Fall and Spring Semesters

1.1 There must be no fewer than thirty (30) weeks of instruction during the combined fall and spring semesters. Neither the designated one-week break during each semester nor the final exam period count towards this thirty-week minimum. (Department of Education requirement for Title IV funding eligibility)

1.2 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held during the designated one-week break during of each semester.

1.3 There should be as many unbroken weeks of instruction as possible to ensure a roughly equal number of Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursdays, and Fridays in each semester.

1.4 A Reading Day shall immediately precede the first day of Final Examinations as defined in the Student Code.

1.5 There shall be eighteen (18) at least fifteen (15) three-hour Final Examination periods scheduled, with three periods each day Monday through Friday, and none on Saturday or Sunday.

2. Fall Semester

2.1 Classes shall begin after August 16 (start of the contract year). The Academic Calendar must allow for graduate and teaching assistant training prior to the first day of the fall semester.

2.2 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held on Labor Day.

2.3 Fall break week shall be the week in which the Thanksgiving holiday occurs.

3. Spring Semester

3.1 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

3.2 Spring break week shall be scheduled by taking into consideration partial term courses and associated deadlines.
4. Winter Session

4.1 Winter Session shall be offered between the fall and spring semesters.

4.2 Winter Session shall consist of a minimum of twenty-one (21) calendar days.

4.3 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held on Christmas Day or New Year’s Day.

4.4 Instruction, including Final Examinations, shall end no later than the day prior to the first day of spring instruction.

5. General Policies for Summer Sessions

5.1 Summer Session shall begin after Commencement.

5.2 Summer Sessions 1 and 2 combined shall not be less than twelve (12) weeks.

6. Summer Session 1

6.1 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held on Memorial Day.

6.2 Final Examinations shall be held during the final meeting of the class or on the day immediately following the final class meeting at the scheduled class meeting time.

7. Summer Session 2

7.1 Summer Session 2 shall begin no earlier than the Monday after the completion of Summer Session 1.

7.2 Classes and other mandatory instructional activities shall not be held on Juneteenth National Freedom Day or Independence Day, or the days designated by the University to be observed as Juneteenth National Freedom Day or Independence Day.

7.3 A Reading Day shall immediately precede the first day of Final Examinations.

7.4 There shall be nine (9) 2-hour Final Examinations periods with four periods on the last day.
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Appendix A

Total Final Examinations Per Day

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