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EP.16.26
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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Committee on Educational Policy
(Final; Action)

EP.16.26 Revisions to the 2015-2016 Academic Calendar

Background:

Renovation of the Assembly Hall (now State Farm Center) will not be completed by the end of Spring semester 2016. Thus, the commencement ceremonies cannot be held in the State Farm Center. The only venue large enough for campus-wide commencement ceremonies is Memorial Stadium. With the need to move the venue, the Committee on Commencement's recommendation is to hold the campus-wide ceremony on Saturday, rather than Sunday because of practical considerations. 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.09.42, which states that the 2016 Commencement occurs on Sunday, May 15, 2016. EP.09.42 is the currently approved 2015-2016 Academic Calendar.

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 to the Spring 2016 term.

Additional impacts occur with respect to the other events of Commencement weekend, notably the unit convocations, many of which need to be rescheduled, and some of which need to be moved to a different venue. It must be stressed that some of these changes are independent of the occurrence of a campus-wide Commencement ceremony on Saturday, since several unit convocations have been held in the State Farm Center, which will not be available. Thus, considerable shifting of times and venues is inevitable.

[Hyperlink to FAQs](#)

Recommendation:

The Senate Committee on Educational Policy recommends revising the 2015-2016 Academic Calendar by moving the date of commencement from Sunday, May 15, 2016 to Saturday, May 14, 2016. The Committee also recommends holding a single campus-wide commencement ceremony on the morning of Saturday, May 14, 2016 in Memorial Stadium with the college ceremonies following. Altering the date of commencement to Saturday, May 14, 2016 also changes the degree conferral date to Saturday, May 14, 2016.

Finally, the Committee also recommends that the Chancellor’s Office and the Committee on Commencement evaluate the success of the campus-wide Commencement ceremony immediately after the 2016 Commencement to determine whether this format should be maintained for the remaining years of construction at the State Farm Center and report the findings to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy and others by various communications.

The revised calendar for Spring 2016 would appear as follows:

Spring Semester 2016

M. L. King Day	Monday, January 18 (no classes)
Instruction Begins	Tuesday, January 19
Spring Vacation Begins	Saturday, March 19, 1 p.m.
Instruction Resumes	Monday, March 28, 7 a.m.
Instruction Ends	Wednesday, May 4
Reading Day	Thursday, May 5
Final Examinations Begin	Friday, May 6
End	Friday, May 13
Commencement	Saturday, May 14

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

Senate Committee on Educational Policy

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