



MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION Senate
 FROM Stephen Spector
 Chair, Senate Calendar Committee
 RE: Academic Dates Fall 2023

DATE December 8, 2022

The Calendar committee reviewed the Fall 2023 academic calendar at a meeting held December 6, 2022. Because of changes to statutory holidays, there will be only 10 Monday instructional days, although there are 13 instructional days for classes held Tuesdays to Fridays. The committee considered options to allow for additional instructional Mondays during the term.

Background and Rationale

The principles that the Calendar Committee follows when establishing the academic dates are:

1. Each term has 60-63 teaching days (per Senate paper [S.21-19](#)).
2. Exams may be scheduled on Sunday if required (per Senate paper [S.05-127](#)).
3. Exams should be avoided on the Saturday and Sunday of the Easter weekend. (per Senate paper [S.14-102a](#)).
4. There is a weeklong reading break in February of each year to correspond with the Family Day holiday. (per Senate paper [S.08-70](#)).
5. All instructors submit grades on-line by the deadline date to allow for quicker end-of term evaluations (related to the end of term processing – grade deadline is 96 hours/4 days following the last day of exams, noted in the [examination policy](#) in the Calendar).
6. Orientation for new students is a vital component for student retention, development and creating a positive university experience (Welcome Day was approved as a pilot, currently being evaluated as a permanent scheduled event after Labour Day).

Options Considered:

	Option	Issue	Complications
1.	Do nothing	Using Fall 2022 as a proxy, there are 113 3-hour courses and 107 2-hour or more courses scheduled on Mondays.	Courses that are taught only on Mondays would be reduced to 30 instructional hours compared to the “standard” 39.
2.	Move Welcome Day to the week before the start of the term.	There would still be only 10 Mondays, but December 5 th could be deemed a Monday. Exams would then start as scheduled on December 6 th .	Welcome Day (Fall Orientation) is scheduled for the day after Labour Day (Tuesday) in the Fall 2023 term through Summer 2024. There is strong evidence in support of the pilot, with student participation doubling with the return to the in-person event in 2022. Further, having two “Mondays” in a row may impact how instructors deliver their courses.

3.	Remove Wednesday, December 6 th , 2023, the first day of exams, from the exam period and convert it to a deemed “Monday”	When there is no gap day between the end of classes and the start of exams, a 13 th exam day is usually required to ensure there is at least a one-day break between lectures and exams.	Final exam scheduling is best accomplished with a 13-day exam period. Removing one day would likely result in a less than desirable schedule (i.e., additional evening & weekend exams; increased potential for exam scheduling conflicts for students). Further, processing of results could be compressed which may impact students’ course selection for Spring 2024. Extensive collaboration would be required to ensure classes that need more marking time happen earlier in the schedule. The Scheduling team confirms that a 12-day exam schedule is viable but if it is to work, exam information be received from Departments in a timely fashion.
4.	Replace missing Mondays on Saturday(s).	Students who work would be disadvantaged. Instructors may not be available on weekends either.	Short gap between classes (2 days) would impact pedagogy. Moreover, which Saturday(s) would be chosen?
5.	Repurpose October 10 th as a Monday.	If enacted in conjunction with option #3, there would be 12 “Mondays” as well as 12 Tuesdays. The remaining 3 days would have 13 instructional days.	This option will require extensive communication to ensure that students and instructors are prepared for this switch.

The committee is of the view that option #1 is untenable, as students in Monday-only classes would be attending only 77% of a 13-week semester but paying full tuition. Option #2 is not available as Senate has set the pilot to run until Summer 2024. Option #4 is not a viable alternative for the reasons stated. The committee agreed that option #3, removing one day from the examination period and converting it to a deemed Monday teaching day was the most reasonable option, giving rise to the following motion:

MOTION 1:

“That Senate approve the revised schedule of academic dates for the Fall 2023 term, adding Wednesday, December 6th, 2023, as a “Monday”. The examination period would begin Thursday December 7th, 2023 and end as currently scheduled.”

However, the committee also felt that repurposing another day to increase the number of instructional days was worth consideration. Given that there are currently 13 Tuesday teaching days, and given the way scheduling patterns are arranged at SFU, it was suggested that a Tuesday would be the best choice, giving rise to option #5 and the following motion, assuming Motion #1 is approved:

MOTION 2:

“That Senate approve the revised schedule of academic dates for the Fall 2023 term, repurposing Tuesday, October 10th 2023 as a “Monday” for scheduling purposes. Classes that would otherwise be held on Tuesday, October 10th, 2023, would be cancelled.”