

**REPORT FROM EDUCATIONAL
POLICY COMMITTEE ON THE
ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

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- There is an opportunity to adjust the Cornell academic calendar in the future because fall orientation will be shortened by one day. The Faculty Educational Policy Committee (EPC) has initiated a discussion to develop a recommendation that results from this situation and would like the various constituencies to weigh in on the options.
- The EPC recommends that classes start on Wednesday instead of Thursday in the fall. This would add one day to the fall semester, which is shorter than the spring semester.
(Spring has 14 full weeks minus 50% of one Saturday
Fall has 14 full weeks minus 50% of a Saturday
and minus a full Monday, a full Tuesday and 50% of a Wednesday)
- The following options are available if this recommendation is adopted:

- **(A)** Add the Wednesday and take no additional day off.
 - **Pro:** The difference in length between spring and fall semester would be reduced.
 - **Con:** Concerns about Labor Day, Thanksgiving break, school vacations, etc.
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- **(B)** Take Labor Day off.
 - **Pro:** Child care is hard to find on this national holiday. Does not impact the payroll of employees.
 - **Con:** The first full week of instruction is disrupted, e.g. for large lab classes. A long weekend might encourage too much social activity, e.g. drinking. It is hoped that shortening orientation by a day helps to reduce such activities during orientation week.

- **(C)** Take Labor Day off and teach Monday classes on the Friday before.
 - **Pro:** As for (B).
 - **Con:** Some lab setups might not last over the weekend, this calendar might confuse newly arrived students, and the long weekend might encourage too much social activity.
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- **(D)** Take the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off.
 - **Pro:** Students have more time to travel home.
 - **Con:** More students would take Monday and Tuesday off and leave during the weekend before Thanksgiving. It frees up only half a day because the break starts at 1:00 PM Wednesday. Tuesday evening is prelim evening, so it is not easy to give a Tuesday off after 1:00 PM.

- **(E)** Make Fall break longer by one day.
 - **Pro:** Fall break would then coincide better with some school calendars, e.g. Ithaca and Lansing.
 - **Con:** Taking other days off may be more important because child care during this time is easier to find than during Labor day.
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- **(F)** Other alternatives...
 - We would be happy to discuss this issue with you, and we would appreciate it if you could discuss it in your unit and provide an opinion to the EPC. We expect the discussion to proceed for the next several months, and intend to decide on a recommendation to the faculty senate before the end of this academic year.

The responses received are characterized as follows:

	For	Against
No additional day off _____	3	
Labor day off _____ 8 _____	3	
Labor day with Mo classes on Fr _____		2
Wednesday before Thanksgiving off _____	9	
Make fall break one day longer _____	5	1
Cancel fall break and start after Labor Day _____	2	
Larger changes of the calendar needed _____	2	
MLK day should be considered _____	2	
Start to eliminate evening prelims _____ 1 _____		

- **The opinions on the subject of changing one day of the academic calendar are very diverse**
- **No constituency has voiced a uniform strong opinion.**

The EPC therefore

- (1) Encourages all senators to consult with their units and to communicate opinions to the EPC before Monday, March 23.**
- (2) Will meet on 26 March to evaluate all communications about the calendar change and determine whether or not to recommend an additional day off, based on the opinions communicated under (1).**
- (3) Submit the following resolutions to the April 8 meeting of the faculty senate:**
 - (a) Resolve to start instruction in the fall semester on**