

# Report of the CFT on January Terms

Chair: Marco Fatuzzo

Members: Tom Barlow  
Mee-Shew Cheung  
Shannon Byrne-Cueva  
Kim Diehl  
David Hyland  
Lori Lambert  
Susan Lipnickey  
Susan Kenford  
Thomas Knestrict  
Henry Saas  
Andrea Wawrzusin

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## INTRODUCTION

As part of the process of revising the University Undergraduate Core, the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) considered whether a January term could provide unique opportunities for student learning that would align with the goals of the revised Core Curriculum. Given the timeframe under which the CCC was operating, it was simply not feasible to perform the in-depth analysis required to assess the interest in and feasibility of a January term at Xavier University. As such, the CCC asked the faculty to vote either in favor of or against further study of January Terms, as articulated in the document “Overview of Option A and Option B (and Components) for New Undergraduate Core Curriculum” presented to the Faculty on March 31, 2014 (Appendix A).

As authorized by the April, 2014 Faculty Assembly vote, the Core Curriculum Committee assembled a January-Term Cross-Functional Team and charged it to:

1. Identify and assess the potential advantages and disadvantages of a January term at Xavier, considering the impact on pedagogy, students, majors, faculty, staff/administration, housing, meal plans, tuition, athletics etc.
2. Examine J terms at other universities, comparing and contrasting models.
3. Produce a report and recommendations to the university community by Aug. 2015.

Consistent with the language put forth for faculty vote, our CFT viewed the primary function of the proposed “J” term as a means of providing students with “course choices not available during the regular semester” that would enhance the Core Curriculum experience and better align it with the mission of the University. Viewed through this lens, the “J” term envisioned throughout this document would serve as an integral part of the academic experience that most (if not all) Xavier students would participate in.

## PART ONE: Calendar Options

While there are numerous ways in which a “J” term can be incorporated into an academic calendar, each must operate under the constraints that lecture based courses maintain the standard 750 minutes per credit hour of formalized instruction (including final exam time), and that students are afforded twice that amount of time for out-of-class assignments. In the traditional MWF and TR week schedule, this constraint seemingly leaves two options for adding a “J” term – extending the current academic year by several weeks, or lengthening the contact hours per class meeting during the fall and/or spring semesters.

Given the current financial landscape in higher-education, and in particular, at Xavier University, extending the academic calendar by any significant amount of time seems untenable for the following reasons: i) it would place students at a significant disadvantage when seeking summer employment, internships, and other meaningful experiences; ii) it would significantly reduce the number of days students could work over the summer, thereby lowering their earning power; iii) it would seemingly increase the cost of room and board; iv) it would require a change to the summer calendar, which in turn would likely negatively impact revenues from summer course offerings.

The analysis presented hereafter will therefore focus exclusively on scenarios that adopt a standard 60/90 minute block schedule<sup>1</sup>, and as such, do not significantly alter the duration of the academic year. As a starting point, we include the relevant dates of the 2014-2015 academic calendar below, and indicate the number of meetings for each day, as well as the number of sessions and total class minutes for the MWF and TR courses (not counting final exam times):

<b>Fall Semester 2014</b>	<b>Spring Semester 2015</b>
August 25 – classes begin	January 12 – classes begin
September 1 – Labor Day Holiday	January 19 – MLK holiday
October 9 & 10 – Fall Holiday	March 2 to 6 – Spring Break
Nov. 26, 27, 28 – Thanksgiving Holiday	April 2 to 6 – Easter Holiday
December 12 – Last Day class	May 1 – Last day of class
December 15 – Reading Day	May 8 – Last day of semester
December 19 – Last Day of the semester	
M – 15; T – 16; W – 15; R – 14; F – 14;	M – 13; T – 15; W – 15; R – 14; F – 14;
44 MWF sessions: 2200 minutes	42 MWF sessions: 2100 minutes
30 TR sessions: 2250 minutes	29 TR sessions: 2165 minutes
29 WF sessions: 2165 minutes	29 WF sessions: 2165 minutes

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B for an example of a 60/90 minute block schedule that aligns with the current teaching hours.

Since 2160 minutes of formalized instruction can be achieved with 36 MWF (60 minute) sessions and 24 TR (90 minute) sessions, the addition of a “J” term need not increase the length of the current academic year. Possible calendar structures include:

A. Three-week “J” Term

- a. **December block** that is part of the Fall semester. The standard fall semester would adopt a 60/90 minute course calendar with a 12 block schedule (see Appendix B). Fall courses would begin a week earlier than they currently do, and Finals would be given on the Thursday, Friday, Monday and Tuesday prior to the Thanksgiving Break. The December block would take place over the three weeks following the Thanksgiving Break, and would be viewed as the 13<sup>th</sup> block for the Fall term. The Spring Semester would remain as is.
- b. **January block** that is part of the Spring semester. The standard spring semester would adopt a 60/90 minute course calendar with a 12 block schedule. The Spring term would begin a week earlier than it currently does, and start with a three week January block that would serve as the 13<sup>th</sup> block in the schedule. The remaining 12-block spring schedule would then immediately follow, and Finals Week would be during the same week as the present calendar. The Fall Semester would remain as is.
- c. **Fall – January – Spring** calendar that treats the January term as separate. Both fall and spring semesters would use a 60/90 minute course calendar with a 12 block schedule. The fall semester would begin a week later and conclude a week earlier than it presently does. The Spring calendar would be the same as described in the **January block** section. Student credit hours would be assigned to the semester of the student’s choice.

B. Four-week January Term

- a. **Fall – January – Spring** calendar that treats the January term as separate. Both fall and spring semesters would use a 60/90 minute course calendar with a 12 block schedule. The fall semester would begin a week later and conclude a week earlier than it presently does. Student credit hours would be assigned to the semester of the student’s choice. The January term would begin a week earlier than our Spring semester currently does. The Spring semester would then immediately follow, and Finals Week would be occur one week later than the present calendar.

## PART TWO: The J-term Landscape

There are just over 100 colleges and Universities in the US that have academic calendars with a “J” term, several of which are comparable in size and program offerings as Xavier. Interestingly, of the 28 Jesuit Colleges and Universities in the United States, only the University of Scranton appears to have a January term that, at least in spirit, provides the sort of unique academic experience as envisioned by the Core Curriculum Committee<sup>2</sup>. Likewise, of our competitor schools, only the Miami University offers a January term experience to their students – this being the inaugural year of that program.

Insight into four schools with J-terms was obtained from school websites and through conversations with faculty and staff at those institutions. A summary for each appears below:

- A. University of Scranton – 4000 undergraduate students, 2000 postgraduate students.

The University of Scranton offers a four-week J-term. For the 2014-15 academic year, the J-term ran from January 5<sup>th</sup> to January 30<sup>th</sup>. Final Exams for the spring term ended on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Students are allowed to take one or two courses during the J term, but only around 10% of students do so. In addition, although there was an administrative push a few years ago to get faculty to offer a greater number of unique courses, the initiative does not appear to have taken hold, with most course offerings also available during the regular semester.

While not many positive aspects to the J term were identified, it was noted that students were at a disadvantage for internships and summer jobs as a result of the late end date to the semester. In addition, it was noted that snow days pose significant problems to course schedules given the compressed nature of the term.

- B. Elon University – 5600 undergraduate students, 700 postgraduate students.

Elon University offers a four-week J-term. For the 2014-15 academic year, the J-term ran from January 5<sup>th</sup> to January 29<sup>th</sup>. Final Exams for the spring term ended on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> A few schools do offer January intersessions that are similar to our May term intersession, but their purpose is to allow students to take standard courses also offered during the fall and/or spring semesters in order to catch up or get ahead in their academic progress.

According to their website, Elon University “strives to provide students with an education preparing them to be global citizens and informed leaders motivated by concern for the common good. The university seeks to foster respect for human differences, passion for a life of learning, personal integrity, and an ethic of work and service.”

Toward that end, Elon University offers diversity-related classes during the J term that explore topics like media, music, culture, relationships, business, athletics, religion, childhood development, science, language, comedy, identity, poverty, immigration, globalization, art, history and education. The J term began primarily as an on-campus experience, but has since added a robust study-abroad component with endowed/institutional scholarships available to help pay for the experience.

Participation is strongly encouraged, and 90% of students do so. The J-term tuition is built into one of the two semester bills, and allows students to take up to 22 credits that include 4 hours in the J-Term. Housing and meal costs are folded into the fall semester bill, and students who study off campus are refunded the corresponding portion of their board.

C. Earlham College – 1200 undergraduate students.

Earlham College offers an intensive May term experience that can be taken both on and off campus. Although the program took 3 – 5 years to really take hold, it now offers several signature courses that represent all parts of the College's curriculum

Completing a May Term course is not required, but students who do so enjoy a concentrated exploration of a specific subject and benefit from working closely with faculty members for these three- or four-week experiences. Students can take up to 18 credits, split between Spring and May term. Yearly enrollment averages about 75 students for on-campus courses and 100 students for study abroad courses held in several international locations.

D. Miami University – 14800 undergraduate students (Oxford campus), 1600 graduate students.

Starting in the 2014-15 academic year, Miami University now offers a three-week J-term. For the 2015-16 academic year, the J-term will run from January 2<sup>nd</sup> to January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Final Exams for the spring term will end on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

According to their website, “Miami has added an optional Winter Term to provide additional and flexible academic opportunities. Students may not have time for study abroad, research, or additional class opportunities during the fall and spring semesters, as well as during Summer Term since many students need to work over the break. The Winter Term will enable more participation in these types of options that enhance the academic experience.”

Although students are not required to take classes during the Winter Term, those who do will have numerous academic options that include on campus, online, and hybrid courses, study abroad programs, and research experiences.

### **PART THREE: Faculty Surveys**

As a way of gauging faculty interest in a “J” term and identifying advantages and disadvantages, especially as they pertain to specific programs offered at Xavier, our CFT sent out a questionnaire to all department chairs. The questionnaire and responses are presented in Appendix C. A summary by College is provided below:

#### **A. College of Arts and Sciences**

CAS faculty expressed mixed feelings about adding a J term at Xavier, with no clear mandate emerging either in support of or in opposition to pursuing such a course of action. Two commonly expressed sentiments voiced in support of a J term were: 1) the ability to teach innovative and experiential courses that simply cannot be taught in the traditional semester block schedule, and 2) the option of using the J term for focused scholarly work (for a faculty member not teaching in the J term). A commonly voiced concern was that a shortened semester would almost certainly reduce the amount of material that could be covered in courses that meet only once a week (e.g., labs).

#### **B. Williams College of Business**

WCB faculty seemed receptive to the idea of a J term, but also expressed mixed feelings and concerns. Of particular note were concerns raised regarding spring semester internships and how a reduced semester would impact evening courses. Concerns were also raised as to how a J term calendar could be integrated into graduate course offerings.

### C. College of Social Sciences, Health, and Education

CSSHE faculty were clearly opposed to the addition of a J term, primarily because a J term calendar does not appear feasible given the external constraints imposed by the state and accreditation agencies under which many programs operate (although Miami University likely had to overcome similar issues). In addition, a J term calendar would present significant challenges for current internship programs and for graduate programs in this college.

## **PART FOUR: Specific Considerations**

### A. Financial Aid

Student financial aid is set-up one school year at a time, with a “year” currently defined as summer, fall, and spring semesters. The annual aid eligibility has limits that are enforced, especially for any federal or state aid (e.g. grants and loans).

The typical full-time undergraduate student has aid set-up for the 2 main semesters – i.e. half for fall and half for spring. Xavier scholarships and awards are designated to help cover the costs of full-time enrollment in the main 2 semesters, and as such, do not cover summer courses. As such, Xavier scholarships are only set-up for full-time enrollment in the 2 main semesters.

The summer semester is separate, with its variety of sessions and lower, per credit hour tuition charges; and typically, the student does not enroll for a full-time load of classes in the summer. There is some miscellaneous summer-specific aid, but the costs are lower and the available aid is much lower. However, if a student enrolls for sufficient summer class credit hours, then the federal and state aid would not increase, rather, it would be divided into 3 portions (instead of 2), if the student requests having aid used in the summer.

If the J Term were included as a “session” within our existing 3 semesters (either required or not), then there would seem to be very little impact on how aid would be set-up, verified, and utilized. There already exists 8-week sessions in fall and spring semesters (and maybe other sessions), and of course, the summer semester has numerous short sessions for holding classes.

As our current calendar exists, a 3-week May Term would be defined as a “session” within the summer semester, and it would be subject to the summer semester rules for aid and such. It may be possible to secure special



designated aid to support students in a May Term, especially for off-campus expenses.

However, if the J Term becomes a required part of the academic calendar, then Financial Aid will need to be completely re-evaluated. There are several types of Xavier students to consider – e.g. full time vs. part time enrolled and undergrad vs. grad programs – that would be impacted by a significant academic calendar change from 3 semesters to something else.

#### B. Faculty Loads

As stated explicitly in Section 18 of the CCC document “**Overview of Option A and Option B(and Components) for New Undergraduate Core Curriculum**”, January Term courses must be taught by principal faculty, not adjuncts (except in special cases where a particular expertise is desirable and available). Principal faculty involved in January Terms typically would teach 2-1-3 or 3-1-2 loads, while remaining faculty would be expected to use their extended break from teaching for other professional goals, including course preparation, research, conference travel, or service (and thus typically carry a 3-0-3 load).

#### C. Study Abroad

Although a J term would provide additional opportunities for study abroad experiences, these would likely come at the expense of their summer counterparts. In addition, many favorite study abroad destinations are in the Northern Hemisphere, and would likely not be as attractive to students during the winter months.

#### D. Housing

Adding a week of classes in January would likely increase costs to the University since, although buildings are still heated, they are maintained at a lower temperature while classes are not in session.

Presently, upper class students are allowed to remain in housing options that have a kitchen (Commons, Village, University, Manor House and 1019 Dana) and the cost is already included in their housing charges. Students living in “dorms” are required to leave and return at assigned times and are charged extra if they have a valid reason (pep band, cheerleading, etc.) to stay. Any cost additions (e.g., water, heat, electricity) due to a change to the existing calendar would need to be passed on to students living in traditional residence halls and apartments, and appropriate rates would need to be determined. This could impact the number of rising juniors and seniors who

want to live on-campus – as they are already paying more than students at University Station and in off-campus houses.

#### E. Student athletes

There are several issues pertaining to student athletes. As noted above, a J term could add residence hall and meal plan costs. A calendar change could lead to lower student attendance at games. In addition, a J term schedule may not be compatible with in-season practice and game schedules, thereby freezing student-athletes from J term courses. Finally, a shortened regular semester with a 60/90 minute class schedule would increase the amount of class time that would be missed by a student-athlete (or any student) participating in required off-campus activities.

#### F. Retention

Concern was expressed that a long break between fall and spring semesters for student not taking a J-term class could have a negative impact on retention. While this certainly seems plausible, our CFT was not able to find any studies related to this issue.

#### G. Snow Days

As noted in our summary of the J term at the University of Scranton, snow days during a J term pose significant issues given the amount of material covered on any given day. Contingency plans would need to be made in the event that severe weather forced the University to cancel classes for several days during the J term.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

While the addition of a “J” term at Xavier University could provide a structure for innovative and unique core courses, it does not appear that a majority of faculty at present are eager to pursue such a course of action. Furthermore, it appears doubtful that any non-traditional calendar could accommodate the myriad constraints and pedagogical nuances of the numerous graduate and undergraduate programs offered at Xavier, especially those in the College of Social Sciences, Health and Education. Is it also worth noting that both the new First Year Seminar and First Year Journey Program (Goa) will require significant attention from faculty and administration over the coming years. As such, it is the recommendation of this Cross-Function Team that the addition of a J term at Xavier University should not be pursued at this time.

## APPENDIX A

### Excerpt from “Overview of Option A and Option B (and Components) for New Undergraduate Core Curriculum”

Core Curriculum Committee  
Xavier University  
March 31, 2014

#### 18. JANUARY TERM

January Term courses are 3 or 4-week terms during which students take only one intensive course. The purpose of creating a January Term is to give students course choices not available during the regular semester; regularly offered courses would not be taught during the January Term. January Term courses might involve in-depth research and study of a specific topic, local immersion experiences, study abroad trips, multidisciplinary seminars, issue-based courses, etc.

January Term courses must be taught by principal faculty, not adjuncts (except in special cases where a particular expertise is desirable and available). Principal faculty involved in January Terms typically would teach 2-1-3 or 3-1-2 loads, while remaining faculty would use January for other professional goals, including course preparation, research, conference travel, or service (and thus typically carry a 3-0-3 load).

The January Term would require significant support and research from administration. Xavier Faculty would have to decide between a 3-week January Term with a slightly extended academic year (as Miami University recently has done) or a 4-week term with shorter semesters but longer class meeting periods (as many other schools have done). The administrative consequences of these choices are under study.

Since the study of the feasibility and structure required for including January Terms in the core curriculum has not yet been completed, at this time Faculty are only being asked to vote in favor of or against further study of January Terms.

## APPENDIX B

The present block schedule and a suggested block schedule for the 60/90 class time structure.

Present Block Schedule	60/95 minute schedule (allows for 5 minute break in 95 minute block)
1) MWF 8:00 – 8:50	1) MWF 8:00 – 9:00
2) MWF 9:00 – 9:50	2) MWF 9:10 – 10:10
3) MWF 10:00 – 10:50	3) MWF 10:20 – 11:20
4) MWF 11:00 – 11:50	4) MWF 11:30 – 12:30
5) MWF 12:00 – 12:50	5) MWF 12:40 – 1:40
6) MWF 1:00 – 1:50	6) MWF 1:50 – 2:50
7) MWF 2:00 – 2:50	8) TR 8:00 – 9:35
8) TR 8:30 – 9:45	9) TR 9:45 – 11:20
9) TR 10:00 – 11:15	10) TR 11:30 – 1:05
10) TR 11:30 – 12:45	11) TR 1:15 – 2:50
11) TR 1:00 – 2:15	12) TWRF 3:00 – 3:45
12) TR 2:30 – 3:45	CB) M 3:00 – 3:50
13) WF 3:00 – 3:50	
CB) M 3:00 – 3:50	

CB – Common Block

**Appendix C**  
**J Term Questionnaire sent to Department Chairs**

Dear Department Chairs,

As you know, the faculty at Xavier University voted to set up a cross-functional team (CFT) charged with identifying and assessing the advantages and disadvantages of a January / May term at Xavier (which we have dubbed the “J” term). The addition of a “J” term in which students take only one course does provide many interesting opportunities for study abroad and service programs, as well as for courses that would simply not be feasible on a traditional semester schedule. And with a proper emphasis, a “J” term could provide unique experiences to our students that align with our mission and our Jesuit identity. Having said that, many challenges must be addressed to ensure a financially responsible and coherent academic experience that all students could participate in.

As our CFT begins its task, we would greatly appreciate your input regarding the feasibility of adding a “J” term to our curricular calendar. To be certain, there are many other issues that would need to be resolved before we can seriously consider such an endeavor, but we would like to focus the conversation at this time on the following items.

- 1) Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?
- 2) A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.
- 3) Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing “J” term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

We thank you for your time and prompt feedback to these questions. And please feel free to provide any additional feedback at this time.

## RESPONSES

### COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

#### Biology

Not a bad idea. Especially for a student who has to get one more course to graduate. Chuck

Let me start with this: I am not opposed to the J term. However, we would definitely lose content in Human Physiology lab. We can't cover the amount of material we do now by simply adding a few minutes to each lab period over a smaller number of weeks. Just the first thought that popped into my head... Lisa

Shortening the semester would affect the content offered - the frequency of tests - and would close to establishing the old "quarter" system that used to operate at U.C. If the proposal could be implemented without the reduction? Howard

I think the value of a J term will override the inconveniences.

lecture - For those of us who teach "a topic a day" as in Gen Bio I, this strategy would be problematic. But not impossible; I can imagine shifting my Gen Bio to more of a unit format (= several lecture meetings) instead of chapter by chapter. After almost 25 years, it would be work for me to reinvent the transition points, but maybe the mental activity will stave off Alzheimers for a while longer.

Genetics is already "chapter spread over multiple days", so for me, the time differential in spring is no problem.

Since we are changing Gen Bio labs to once a week, this represents a further loss of instructional time. We may be able to compensate by using the regular exam period for the last test.

As long as students are out early enough to do SURF programs, this is okay.

I suppose the Costa Rica folks could go for longer and/or have some actual in-class meetings here in addition to the in-country time. Otherwise, I don't have anything specific in mind yet. Well, maybe an intensive lab course like an advanced genetics project or something. Another option might be an intensive remediation course for students who fall apart in Gen Bio I but want to recover and continue. Oh, and obviously BIOL 280 Topics in Biology .

May would be a good time for outdoor ecological activities. January not so much :-).

Anything that's not just listening to lectures for 6 hours a day. == Engle

I see benefits to adding a J term, but am concerned about cutting so much lab content. Losing two weeks from each semester would mean cutting four labs from the courses that have lab twice a week. Of course I'd do it if the academic calendar changed, but

neither botany nor gen micro have four junk labs in the schedule now so I'd have to cut quite a bit of content. Looking at the lab schedules now, I'm not at all sure what would go. I agree with Dottie that if the total contact time in lecture stays the same, it doesn't matter so much how it shakes out, although it won't come out exactly even because exam days will take more time in the new schedule than they used to. ==Kat

My alma mater, Bucknell University, had a J term for a long time, but the university removed it between my freshman and sophomore years. It was great for abroad programs but not always so great for students who stayed at the university. Apparently, having students take only one course led to runaway parties and many alcohol-related problems. The unintended social problems outweighed the educational benefits. I don't know if that would happen here at Xavier, but it should be considered.==Matt

The administration could look at records for the May two-week intersession that we have now. I have not heard any wild anecdotes from students, but Res Life would have indications, I suppose.

If the course is sufficiently challenging so as to require time outside of class, that would minimize the alcohol.==Engle

Maybe it could be used exclusively for only certain courses and not for others? Chuck

## **Chemistry**

At a meeting on Friday, the faculty of the Chemistry Dept discussed the J-term. Regarding adding 5 or 10 minutes to MWF, the faculty were divided as to whether this would work, with some saying that they would use an extra 5 or 10 minutes on giving more examples on what was being discussed that day and not using it to introduce new material which would mean if the semester were shortened not all the material that is covered now could be covered. All found the idea of 90 min classes on T and R to be very undesirable. We basically do not believe that students could handle this without a break which would mean time would be lost. Shortening the semesters would have an impact on our labs the majority of which are already either 3 or 4 hours in length when they meet. We could not make this any longer so we would be losing doing either one or two labs depending on how the semester was shortened. A one week shortening might be able to be handled (do an experiment on the first day of classes which is difficult to do since we have a lot to go over in terms of safety with the students) but a two week shortening would definitely cause problems. Our chemistry major is certified by the American Chemical Society (ACS) which we need to be competitive with other schools. The ACS requires that students have 400 hrs of laboratory experience not counting the General Chemistry course. With a one week shortening of the semester we would still be in compliance with this requirement but we would not with a two week shortening.

In spite of these problems, our faculty would like a J-term. It would be used by some for intense research experience for the faculty member as well as their research students. There are also some courses that we envision could be taught during this time. A course in "Cooking Chemistry" could appeal to non-science majors as well as majors. None of our currently required courses for majors could be offered in this abbreviated time but some special topics could be given that would benefit our majors. We also certainly support this time as being a way for our majors to have a study-abroad experience.

There are no external constraints that we are aware of that would prohibit changes in the second semester schedule. We would suggest keeping the same number of weeks in the semesters as now and perhaps starting one week earlier than now in the first semester so we would end one week earlier. This would mean that the J-term could begin very soon after the first of the year and then have the second semester extend one or two weeks later than now.

### **Communication Arts**

I am guessing that a couple of our faculty would be interested in offering courses of the type you describe; however, such courses are not necessary to our department's mission.

Several of our classes, which often are structured around activities, would be enhanced by being a few minutes longer. Several of our faculty travel over the holidays; we would not be in favor of shortening the semester by reducing the length of the winter break and, for example, starting the spring semester on the Monday after New Years.

We would not, as a department, be affected by adjustments in the start and end dates of the semesters. (Please note that if a long J-term break is added, you should consider making it a requirement for freshmen and sophomores. I believe there are data somewhere on fall-to-spring retention problems created by longer times at home after the holidays.)

Let me offer this, even though your questions do not ask for this information. I am fairly unenthusiastic about Xavier doing this. I enjoyed the J-term as a student at a liberal arts college in the 1970s, but later spent 16 years as a faculty member at an institution that had a J-term. Many of the travel destinations (Europe, for example) have cold weather then. Teaching in J-term taxes the faculty who must start the spring semester on Monday after wrapping up J-term on Friday. Over time, the quality of the courses offered will erode unless the institution invests in compensation and makes this too attractive an opportunity for the best faculty to ignore. Although you don't yet want to talk about load, it's a significant issue. My department will never be able to incorporate J-term courses into load and our faculty will be able to participate only as overload.



Also, you will want to look at the institutions that have abandoned or scaled back the J-term, and why, and at the HLC's recent crackdown on course-credit for non-traditional classes. If Xavier is able to offer just one or two hours' compensation for a J-term course, faculty enthusiasm will cool.

Based on my past experience, I do see one professional benefit of a term in January, but it would depend on my not teaching J-term. As a scholar who needs blocks of time to write, I would be thrilled to have a longer winter break. At my previous institution, everything was wrapped up a week earlier in December to accommodate a winter commencement, then the spring semester started the last Monday in January to accommodate J-term. I was able to write a paper or chapter over the break, even with taking time off for family and preparing for my spring classes. Now, with grades due a few days before Christmas and classes starting early in January, I can't prepare my spring classes and make meaningful progress on scholarship. At my previous institution I avoided teaching J-term in order to advance my scholarship.

I hope these comments are useful. I commend you and your committee for exploring ways to engage our students.

## **English**

The turmoil will extend to both the fall and spring for all faculty, not just those who teach in January, because everyone will have to change all of their courses to fit the new time blocks. In some cases I'm sure this can be easily done, but not in all. I'm not opposed to changes big and small when they lead to substantial teaching improvements. But I'm not yet convinced that J-Term would accomplish that. It sounds more like a convenient way for students with heavy majors to quickly knock out an extra class during the school year, and frankly that convenience is not impetus enough for me to think it justifies the major changes that would be required for us to create that option.

I definitely don't favor making J-Term mandatory for students or for faculty. I know your message didn't mention that, but some schools do take that approach, I suppose out of fear that the program won't have enough initial buy-in if there's not some compulsory participation. So let's definitely stamp that spark out before it ever spreads.

I know you suggest tabling the issues of compensation and course load, but to me the program can never be feasible until we know how that would work. I wouldn't want us to spend a whole bunch of time and energy talking about proposals unless we have assurances from Scott how we'll be compensated for this teaching. Will it be like summer teaching pay? Or course-load redistribution? If the latter, this will have

inevitable scheduling ripple effects for the other semesters, so from a chair's perspective this is a crucially important factor.

For instance, I currently have 30 unstaffed sections for Fall 2015. So that's a minimum of 15 adjuncts I'll need to hire. As I understand it, only full-timers would be eligible to teach in J-Term. That seemingly sends the signal that J-Term won't exacerbate our over-dependence on adjunct labor. However, for every full-timer who teaches a class in January, if that means one less class they'll teach in fall or spring, then that's more adjuncts I'll have to hire to make up the difference. One might counter, "well, if you don't have the staff, then don't offer the courses." I would agree, except that the courses we offer are all either Core requirements or courses for the major/minor. If we're requiring students to take these classes, then we're obligated to offer sufficient sections to meet the demand. That's already a challenge to do, and I'm concerned that J-Term would only make it harder.

## History

### 1. Scheduling of the regular semesters

Based on our experience at other institutions, we are skeptical that it would be necessary to extend class time significantly to reach the required number of minutes of class time. We suspect we are already probably teaching longer than necessary. Shortening the semester by two weeks would not adversely affect our classes.

*Assuming that we need to keep the current number of contact hours, here are some numbers on the difference between the 1-week option and the 2-week option: T-Th currently has 29 class meetings in the Spring Semester. Shortening by 1 week, or 150 minutes, and spreading that over 27 class meetings for a T-Th adds only 5-6 minutes per class; shortening by 2 weeks, spreading 300 minutes over 25 classes adds less than 12 minutes. For MWF, they currently meet 42 times in the Spring Semester. Cut off one week, and we may need to add 150 minutes to 39 sessions = less than 4 minutes, and if it's two weeks, add 300 minutes to 36 class sessions = add 8 minutes. Round 5-minutes are desirable, but even then the one-week option is different from the two-week option. **I'd take a week or two shorter semester with slightly longer class times whether or not J term comes into being***

### 2. External constraints

To my knowledge, the only course that would be affected by a shift would be POLI 329 (Public Policy Practice), which is a course for students in the PPP program. They go to Washington DC by mid-March and have a lot of preparation work to do.

### 3. Departmental interest in offering courses

There are a few very interesting ideas about J-Term courses that involve taking students out of state (e.g., Los Angeles; the Caribbean [Jamaica, Barbados, or Guyana]). In order to actually make those a reality, we would probably need additional staff support to work out the logistics. That has been a real obstacle to turning ideas into real programs for our students. (In other words, the J-Term CFT should be aware that off-campus experiences require an inordinate amount of preparation and take into account the additional resources that will be needed to make those courses actually viable.) At present, there are two courses, Bicycling the Bioregion and a study tour of Quebec, that work well in a short session...but certainly not one in January!

There is only modest interest in on-campus courses (public policy practice, film history). A reading-intensive discipline like history does not lend itself well to compressed formats. Thus, I don't foresee the history department offering many on-campus courses during J-Term.

### 4. A further comment

*I'm not okay with a system in which the students who can afford to do the fun things go do them, and then everyone else is stuck on campus. From what I've heard from faculty at schools where the j-term works in this fashion, those on-campus courses are neither meaningful to teach nor to take. I really don't think it accords with our mission to leave the students who can't afford to take advantage of the best opportunities stuck in Cinci in January to take the obviously "lesser" j-term options.*

*I guess I'm ultimately wondering whether it is necessary to institute something as formal as a "j-term" to achieve a period for more study abroad and experiential learning. Can't we just shorten the semesters, make the winter break longer, and encourage more winter "intersession" programs?*

\*\*\*

*The undergraduate institution I attended had a "Jan Term." It was generally disliked and eventually abandoned. Students who were not enrolled in Jan Term courses twiddled their thumbs for much of the month of January. There is not much to do in January: the weather is bad and you can't find a job just for the holidays...it was pretty grim! I trust the committee will not overlook the effect of J-Term on non-participants, and that it will consider fully the experience of schools that have dropped January terms.*

## **Mathematics and Computer Science**

1) Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?

We can do this but we already struggle to cover material and to give students time to absorb. If the J term classes were sufficiently compelling, we'd make the longer classes, shorter term work. Would prefer losing only 1 week as opposed to 2.

2) A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.

Nothing that I know of.

3) Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing “J” term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

I think in computer science, yes. Not so sure about math though maybe a few might be interested.

## **Music and Theatre**

This would not affect music lessons at all. We currently offer either a 1 hour – 1 credit lesson or a 1/2 hour - .5 credit lesson. The proposed times would actually work better for us.

1. My course content and semester schedule will accommodate a one week change just fine. The recent calendar has typically run 16 weeks of instructional time not counting holidays for many semesters in the past eight years or so. So a return to 15 weeks is fine.

2. A January term is not desirable from a student point of view because if the J term were in Jan. then the students lose 4-5 weeks of summer work time and will also be significantly disadvantaged in the summer employment market because they will not enter the work force until June after the summer jobs have been taken. Financial

considerations for the student are very significant in terms of also maintaining our enrollments.

3. I see no problem developing optional May “M” term course options in our department, but they should not be for required courses—I think that would be a significant problem. It would be excellent for any type of applied music/internship/master class courses for majors and for new fine arts courses that are based 80% of the the course content and time spent attending concerts—for example the end of the CSO Season-MayFestival and a Chamber Concert would be an excellent course.

### **Philosophy**

A couple of colleagues said that longer class meetings wouldn't be ideal, but I don't think there is significant opposition, and surely we could work with that new system.

Another colleague commented that J-term courses should not only be unusual or "experiential" courses, but should include text-based courses, including those that count for the core. I agree, although I think we could also develop J-term-specific classes. (Just one possibility: an aesthetic course that involves visits to local museums.)

We also wonder whether, if J-term is instituted, intersession would disappear. This might be fine, but we are curious.

In general, J-term seems to be something that our department could handle and we are open to exploring it further.

### **Physics**

Losing two weeks of labs would be problematic, especially for our labs for majors. Making labs longer would not help in this regard as experiments require individual days to perform. Likewise, all students are required to conduct a senior research project. Cutting the semester by two weeks would likely negatively impact these projects, which are already difficult to complete over a semester. Finally, the first year of our program is quite challenging for many of our majors who take both University Physics and Calculus. The biggest issue they face is the pace of these courses. Since topics in these courses build on each other, a student who falls behind (as many first year students do) has to really work hard to then catch back up. A shortened semester could then pose retention issues for our students.

We do not have any external constraints that would affect our programs.

Yes. I imagine that faculty would be interested in developing courses that integrate the lab experience in a way that leads to more hands-on exploration of ideas by students.

It is very challenging for physics majors to participate in Study Abroad programs during the academic semesters, so a J term would provide opportunities for them to do so.

### **Political Science**

1) I think adding 10 minutes to our courses on MWF and 15 minutes to TR courses would, generally, be a good thing. It would allow some time for deeper engagement and, potentially, an intermix of small group work with lecture. I don't see that being a problem in any of our courses, though I can see that 90 minute courses would be a challenge given the length. All in all, I'm in favor of longer classes and shorter semesters if it allows us to do some other things. Again, I'm not speaking for the department here, just my own sense of things.

2) I'd be concerned about anything that pushes back graduation more than one week. I run a program in Columbus that goes from the end of the semester through late June. It's about 7-8 weeks. Pushing back the semester would, I think, cut into that program in a big way, since the early weeks are when the legislature is in session and things kind of peter out as the weeks go on. The balance now is good (more good weeks than bad), but losing a week or two would really hurt.

There is also the issue of the Paris study abroad program and the Ireland study abroad program. I'll check the dates on that to see what impact it would have.

3) At the same time, if there were a J term, there would be potential to shift the Ohio program to January, as well as expand to include internships in Frankfort, KY. It's a short legislative schedule there, and I think that January every other year is actually pretty busy. A J-term would allow us to run a four week internship in the Kentucky legislature that would, I think, be pretty neat. I'm sure there might be other faculty in my department who have ideas too. I'll run it by them.

4) Not for nothing, but I think we ought to consider the potential implications for faculty research. I would love to have all of January off to work on research, even if it were every other year. Likewise, I could see some potential to shift some summer research money into the J-term for faculty who wanted to use the time to develop a new course, travel for research, etc... I think that ought to be factored into the decision as well.

## **Sociology**

1. We offer several of our courses, primarily upper-level sociology electives, but also occasionally a section of Intro to Sociology, in a once/week format, typically on Monday or Wednesday from 4:30-7:00. I'm not sure what the implications would be for insuring that these classes had sufficient contact hours in a shortened semester. This might also be true for evening classes.
2. There are no external constraints that we anticipate were the dates of the spring semester changed. One potential issue, although probably minor, is that increasing numbers of our students are doing international study programs during the summer, and a later end date could possibly bump into some early summer programs.
3. At least two of the three full-time faculty members are interested in developing J-term classes, although as you note, issues of load and compensation would need to be addressed. This is likely to be a problem especially in small departments.

## **COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, HEALTH, AND EDUCATION**

### **Education**

1. Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this "add-on" may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?

Student Teaching would be negatively impacted by a January 'J-Term' and those students would be eliminated from participation. Student teaching begins the first class day for the partnership school after January 1. Cross-listed graduate and undergraduate courses would not be available to undergraduates if the j-term were in place.

Evening classes and enrollment in late afternoon and evening would be decimated because students would not be able to take 2 courses due to the contact hours required if the semesters are shortened. We have also found that most students do not want to take classes that end after 9:30pm either.

2. A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.

Our field placements partnerships would be most negatively impacted. That is, classes that require field placements, clinical experiences, and student teaching.

3. Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing “J” term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

I’m not sure how the J-term would impact faculty loads. However, I know faculty would need to be compensated. The potential to impact negatively all of Xavier’s licensure programs is great unless the J-term were offered as part of the first (May) summer session. If the J-Term extends the calendar into May, it will also negatively impact summer enrollments.

My faculty have not expressed interest in developing a J-term course to date.

### **Education Leadership**

1. Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?

We can’t do evening classes in extended time frames. We would be having classes until 11 pm or midnight. We offer evening classes back to back so students can take 2 classes on one night.

2. A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.

Graduate internships and student teacher experiences are governed by school calendars. Our HRD classes already start January a week earlier when things aren’t even open on campus because of the need to get all the weekend classes in before graduation.



3. Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing “J” term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

No.

4. Also be thinking how calendar changes might affect graduate programs in your area.

All of our programs in the Department of Educational Leadership & HRD (MED, ed admin licensure, MS in HRD, EdD in Leadership Studies) are graduate. Adult working professionals have differing needs for instruction. Our MEd and licensure students are totally influenced by the school calendars, as well as testing dates set by the State and other entities. To extend day classes pushes the evening classes later in the evening, which would greatly affect our graduate enrollment. Teachers and administrators come after school and would not be amenable to coming later, or staying later, or being able to only take one class per night.

### **Childhood Education and Literacy**

1. We have several field placements that would be impacted by the delay in starting the semester. Specifically, our students complete an internship (student teaching) for 15 weeks and begin the week classes start in January. They would not be able to participate in a “J” term opportunity. In addition, many of our courses in CE&L are cross-listed with graduate programs and meet one time per week. The option of extending the hours would prevent them from taking multiple day and evening courses. This would also impact graduate enrollment.
2. External constraints would be on field placements required by our students starting in their freshman year. Most impacted by a “J” term would be the student teaching and methods courses.
3. Faculty did not show an interest in creating a course for the “J” term. If a faculty member wanted to teach during “J” term, they would want and need their teaching loads altered. Changing the faculty load assignments would greatly affect our department as the faculty resources are allocated in ways that strengthen our course offerings. This could be detrimental to our programs and to our students.
4. As indicated in question one, many of our courses, especially in reading and literature are cross-listed with graduate programs. Graduate students would need to be on similar

schedule. The extended time proposed would limit the number of courses students could take during the day and evening, further impacting graduate enrollment.

**Additional comments/questions:**

- How many students would participate in a “J” term?
- Student retention rate for students not participating?
- How would this impact summer course offerings?

**Health Services Administration**

1. Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?

This would mean that evening courses, of which HSA has many, would be impacted. If these remained at 2 ½ hours, there would be less class time. If they were extended to three hours, that is a long class. For the two to three times per week class, this would be a non-issue. This extra time might even help with guest speakers, giving them more presentation time.

Since HSA faculty teach in both the MHSA and BSHSA program, we are concerned about what issues this would bring about with finding slots during the week for everyone to teach. This is already a challenge.

2. A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.

Moving the end dates would potentially cause problems. Since BSHSA students do a 400 hour internship in the summer between junior and senior year, they need lots of weeks to fit in all the hours. If the semester ended later but started in late August for fall, this would be a potential problem. This could impact summer internships generally, as employers are used to students being done in early May. This could also have a negative impact on service learning courses, as the students would have less time to be on-site with their community partners. We have two such classes in BSHSA, and we hope to have more.

3. Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing “J” term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

Maybe. What can be done in one month that is particularly meaningful, in terms of internship or field work? Even at full-time, that is only 4 weeks. In terms of classes, there’s possibility of offering “sprint” classes similar to May-mester but we’re not sure about the possibility of other classes. It might be a good opportunity for study abroad related to healthcare.

One thought regarding service learning- Service learning is much like clinical rotations in medicine and nursing. As such, there may be several advantages here: For students, an in-depth "rotation" like the J-term may be a more workable solution than rescheduling our traditional 2 or 3 day a week classes after the semester starts. It may also serve the needs of our community partners to condense student visits and work, if we can commit to the same level of outcomes for them. Finally, rapid cycle process improvement methods actually work well when targeted to quick goals. However, choices would need to be made.

4. Also be thinking how calendar changes might affect graduate programs in your area.

HSA is one of the Xavier departments that has a balance between a graduate program (MHSA) and an undergraduate program (BSHSA). All of our MHSA faculty teach in BSHSA and the MHSA course schedule, being a cohort model, is inflexible when it comes to accommodating any additional evening classes, in particular. MHSA has both full-time and part-time programs, and the part-time students take all their classes in the evenings.

### **Nursing**

1. After looking at what the J term might look like and the benefits a potential Jesuit Term might provide our students and weighing it against the adjustments to schedules for courses and practicum, clinical’s and finally the possible later graduation date nursing would be against this idea. The negatives outweigh the potential benefits.

2. In thinking about the potential gains students might experience during a focused J term experience we cant see any advantages or outcomes that they are not already

getting as part of our program. Service, intensive hands on experience, linking all of this to the Jesuit values. All are part of our existing program.

3. The most problematic part of all of this for us is the reshaping of the schedule, which doesn't make pedagogical sense and is a scheduling and accreditation nightmare. The ODN will not allow us to change our sequence or our length of courses and class time unless we re submit our course descriptions and curriculum plan (nursing courses).

## **Occupational Therapy**

J-term feedback from faculty

1. I agree that shortening the semester and squeezing current classes into a shortened semester will be extremely difficult for current curriculum/classes. If I lost two weeks that would be 14 hours of class time for 605 and 635
2. We could possibly accommodate the changes in our doctoral program as we will have plenty of warning J
3. I can see many potential exciting possibilities for the one month J term:
  - a. Would give a month of uncontested time for GA visit, allows students who might have to work or go home over the summer more ability to participate in it
  - b. We could offer one month special topics like we used to! This was very popular with students, allows more flexibility and choice for students (they get to choose their area of clinical interest) and utilizes our expert clinicians to their best (I think clinicians really enjoyed teaching them, they were short and focused on a specialty area). We could offer advanced UE; advanced hands, dynamic splinting, prosthetics, PAMS, AT, home mods, NICU, driving to name a few.....advanced neuroscience? Advanced UE anatomy? Perhaps we could offer these to community therapists for CEU's/certification to increase revenue?
  - c. Possible opportunity for faculty-student community based experiences and projects (implementation of capstone?)

1. I, too, am concerned about condensing semesters. We won't lose class contact time (i.e. they said they would extend the time classes would meet each week). My concern is student anxiety levels as we would be asking them to complete the same level of work in two week's less time. This would be especially difficult for students in final MOT semester as they complete their research projects. However, as we are transitioning to OTD, we could take this in to consideration as we plan the curriculum, and perhaps shift some course content to a J term.
2. I like the idea of having an optional J term for certain activities – some that have been mentioned are special topics courses or Guatemala or other international experiences.

3. The J term may save some potential MOT students who need to repeat courses to erase Cs or raise GPAs, if the right courses were offered during the J term. However, this may be providing a band aid and false hope for students whose academic records point to struggling to get through the MOT program.
  4. I hope we find out soon if this is going to come to fruition so that if it does we can incorporate a J term into OTD curriculum.
1. Time of classes: The increase of time for my lectures and labs may lead to classes which exceed the learning capacity for time for students. That could be counteracted by offering alternate learning experiences through interactive experiences. I am more concerned about revamping the courses to “squeeze” the number of weeks which would increase the “work” pushing students over the edge.
  2. This would have an impact on our current GA program due to the change in the May term and the time to prepare for GA.
  3. The J term would allow better organization of the transition from HOCS to MOT but this is likely to be eliminated in the future with the OTD. The J term could allow a trip to GA midyear to better bridge the gap between the years but that is a lot more work for the GA coordinator. Anyway, it could provide other alternates for international or focused service opportunities.
  4. If we are moving to an OTD, what is the effect? Unknown but the international focus will likely move from u/g to grad work.

Good points posted by all. I really like the idea of the J-term for special topics courses and service learning trips. However, even though we would not lose class time, we do lose weeks. This could negatively impact student ability to time manage (as there would be less days) and shortens the time for integration of learning. If the J-term is implemented, I would rather do that in the new OTD curriculum.

### **Psychology**

1. Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?

Most of our graduate courses meet once a week. While changing the meeting time from 2 and ½ hours to three hours is feasible, losing one, but especially two weeks of contact significantly shortens the time that we have to spend on individual topics – the

week becomes a unit and we lose one to two units through doing this. That said, we are already frequently shorted a unit if, for instance, the class is taught on a Monday – as there is no provision for the frequency of holidays that fall on Mondays. This does NOT mean we should shorten things further.

A similar problem exists for the undergraduate courses. A class period is a quantum. Reducing the number of weeks reduces quanta. We can't easily squish material across quanta. Of course we do that, but let's call this what it is, a reduction in quanta. I, for one, am not in favor of that.

2. A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.

On the Graduate level, we are already getting complaints from practicum sites that changing the schedule from semester 1 to semester 2 is difficult for the students learning at those sites, where there is not a similar level of flexibility from semester to semester. Students currently miss one semester of, for instance, grand rounds at some settings. Offering three schedules would complicate this issue further. I realize it is not directly addressing the question.

There is not, to my knowledge, a constraint about moving the start and end dates as long as we are able to continue to offer summer courses, which I think would be possible, as they are essential to both graduate programs.

On the undergraduate level, I think the issue has to do with summer employment, etc., but I assume that is relatively fluid.

3. Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing "J" term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)

I think there would be interest in this from particular faculty. I have not polled the faculty nor have we discussed this, but we could certainly do that so that we could provide a data based response (Christian, should we add this to the agenda for Friday?)

4. Also be thinking how calendar changes might affect graduate programs in your area.

See above.

We thank you for your time and prompt feedback to these questions. And please feel free to provide any additional feedback at this time.

### **Sports Management**

Thanks for requesting my input. I've actually given this some thought. My undergraduate institution had a January term. It was 3 weeks long. I enjoyed it as a student. Considering the students currently enrolled in the AT major and the requirements my students must now meet, I see more barriers than benefits.

The athletic training major requires students in the last 3 years to complete a large number of field experience hours. Most of my students are spending more than 20 hours a week working with patients in various settings. With that in mind, here are my thoughts...

1. Longer class times for my students would translate into less time in the day to work with patients in the field and less time to study. Neither of which would benefit my students.
2. Offering a "J" term that pushes the Spring semester back two weeks, could create issues for my students with regards to their clinical assignments. A "J" term that occurs in May would be less of an issue – although it would still affect my students that work with the baseball team or with high school athletes.
3. Most of the content in the AT major is very technical and doesn't lend itself well to a 2 week intensive class. There might be an opportunity to use this time to review or offer a random elective, but I would need to give this more thought.

\* My biggest concern is the longer class times. If a student is taking 3 classes on Tuesday or Thursday, they would be spending an extra 45 minutes in class. This may not seem like much, but to my students would be a big deal. They typically take 17 credits and work 20-30 hours a week in the clinical setting. Adding 45 minutes of class time would make things more difficult.

\* My second biggest concern is with the classes I teach. There is so much content to cover. I can only expect students to retain and master a certain amount in any particular day before they get overwhelmed. Shortening the semester by 2 weeks, would not make my job easier.

## **WILLIAMS COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

**1. Mindful of not pushing back the end of our Spring semester into late May, it has been proposed that each semester be shortened by one or two weeks. This could be achieved by extending MWF class times from 50 minutes to 1 hour, and TR class times from 75 minutes to 90 minutes. Of course, this “add-on” may not be feasible for some classes that meet only once a week (e.g., labs, music lessons). What impact would shortening the semester by one or two weeks have on your department courses?**

**MIS Dept:** It might, given we use computer labs to teach and they are in limited supply. We always struggle with classrooms and the new schedule might cause overlap problems.

**Accounting/Business Law Dept:** Fewer, longer classes actually work well for accounting. Many of the topics that we discuss are difficult to address in a 50 minute format. We would also benefit from longer testing times. Generally speaking, a shorter semester is not a concern for us. However, we do offer a number of night classes, especially with the new MACC program. How will night classes be affected by a J-term? As for business law, I don't foresee a problem with the fewer, longer classes. However, Business Law offers an EMBA class that is 1½ credit hours. I am concerned that an already abbreviated course might try to be offered in one or two full days or some other odd configuration. When that happens, it is difficult for students to absorb the material. Obviously, this issue can be controlled through careful scheduling.

**Finance Dept:** Not ideal, but no huge impact

**Marketing Dept:** Not much impact

**Management Dept:** Not much impact

**Economics/International Business Dept:** Not much impact

**Question 2 - A January term or May term would clearly impact the dates over which the second semester courses could be offered. Are there any external constraints to programs in your department that would inhibit moving the second semester start and end dates? If so, please elaborate.**

**MIS Dept:** One of our main conferences is in early January. So, at least 1 maybe 2 professors would not be able to teach. Pushing back in May might adversely affect others who have used July 4th as their summer vacation date.

**Accounting/Business Law Dept:** Spring semester is when many accounting majors leave



campus to work on their internships. Generally, the internships begin the first Monday in January and end around April 15<sup>th</sup> or so, which is the end of busy season for accounting firms. Will internships be affected by J-Term, or can they continue to be offered and cover J-term + spring semester? Additionally, the department offers ACCT 312/ACCT 313 Volunteer Income Tax I/II. In this service learning course, students prepare and review around 300 tax returns for local residents. The class is offered at night, with students completing training during January and early February. This course typically ends the week after April 15<sup>th</sup> since that is the deadline for filing individual tax returns. I am not sure if the training can begin after the J-Term and if students are adequately prepared to offer tax preparation with a J-term format.

**Finance Dept:** Just how it impacts the start of summer sessions and making sure we can still get 2 of them

**Marketing Dept:** Not much impact

**Management Dept:** Not much impact

**Economics/International Business Dept:** Not much impact

**Question 3 - Do you think that faculty in your department would be interested in developing "J" term specific courses that would otherwise not be feasible in a traditional calendar, be it for the core or the major, and would such courses significantly enhance our academic mission? (The questions of faculty load and faculty compensation will be addressed at a later time.)**

**MIS Dept:** We met today and discussed. We would consider it, but need more information. Such as: would the class be an overload or could it be taught on-load; if May, is it a summer class; how long would each class be and how often would they meet. Issues such as these would have to be presented before we, as a department, would provide an absolute answer. Several faculty said they would consider the idea, several said no. So, at the moment, we just need more information before committing.

**Accounting/Business Law Dept:** Yes, I think my department would be interested in developing and offering classes for J-Term. I can envision MACC and MBA classes that fit this format, as well as new study abroad opportunities. Because January through March is busy season for many accounting professionals, I can see an opportunity to offer a J-Term class for the MACC that would allow part-time students to complete a class in January and before busy season overwhelms them.

Faculty in accounting and business law also might like the opportunity to develop a course that could satisfy the first year co-curricular requirement. If J-Term can be

designated as on-load, then faculty might be able to teach one of their traditional classes in J-Term (e.g., BLAW 300) and then offer a co-curricular course as an overload in the typical semester, or vice versa. I think this is an important consideration because faculty in the WCB are stretched thin. They would like to participate in the first year co-curricular courses but don't have space in their current teaching load.

**Finance Dept:** Maybe, but I can't see how they would significantly enhance the mission. My bet is that most faculty would just see a J-term as 4 more weeks of Christmas vacation and that would be problematic for University committee meetings.

**Marketing Dept:** 4 faculty members expressed interests to conduct targeted internships and targeted international study abroad programs

**Management Dept:** Only one faculty member expressed interests to conduct targeted internships and targeted international study abroad programs

**Economics/International Business:** No faculty member expressed interests.

**Other Questions raised by respondents:**

1. (From Marketing Dept faculty): What about once a week evening courses? I would be for extending each class to 3 hours and shortening the semester.
2. (From Accounting Dept. Chair): My daughter's high school offers J-Term and students and faculty love it. They use it as an opportunity to refresh and learn about less technical, academic topics. I don't know if that is what Xavier has in mind. If so, it will require faculty to be more creative in proposing classes for J-Term. Otherwise, it runs the risk of becoming an early session of summer school. But, maybe that is also what some faculty and administrators want J-Term to be.
3. (From Accounting Dept. Chair): One question I have is whether all faculty will be expected to participate in J-Term or will it be more like Intersession or summer school where faculty opt in for extra pay? Or, is it possible for J-Term to be an on-load course if faculty choose to designate it as part of their teaching load for the academic year? I know these are future issues that the committee will explore.
4. (From Account Dept. Chair): Another question that comes to mind is what affect, if any, will J-Term have on fall semester? Will classes in fall semester be the same length as spring semester? If so, how does that affect the university calendar? I think faculty and students will want consistent class lengths across the academic year.
5. (From MBA Program Assistant Dean): It would seem to me that if we can have the J-

term and a shortened spring term (classes running longer or something similar) that would be ideal. Getting out later in May puts the UG's at a bit of a disadvantage in terms of internships & summer jobs as the other students who are getting out earlier than us may get the jobs first.