

MODESTO JUNIOR COLLEGE
ACADEMIC SENATE
RESOLUTION SP01-A: SIXTEEN-WEEK COMPRESSED CALENDAR
FEBRUARY 15, 2001

Proposed By: Brian Sanders

WHEREAS: The Legislative Analyst's Office report specifically recommends *year-round operation* with the same level of educational services in the summer as in the rest of the year but does not mandate equal-length trimesters, and

WHEREAS: Several other community college districts have responded to this report by adopting 16-week calendars, while none have adopted three 15-week trimesters, and

WHEREAS: The academic calendars for UC Berkeley (the only UC campus on the semester plan), the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the University of Arizona, and most other semester schools, consist of 15 weeks of instruction plus a full-fledged final examinations week, and those of all other UC campuses consist of 30 weeks of instruction across three quarters, all with full final exam weeks, and

WHEREAS: Many content-intensive disciplines still follow the time-honored pedagogically sound, university-standard practice of offering comprehensive and cumulative final examinations that cannot be effectively administered without an extended exam period, and

WHEREAS: In the spirit of the YCCD Beyond Tolerance Initiative, those disciplines needing a true final exam period should be supported to the same extent as those offering alternative final assessments, and

WHEREAS: Science laboratory courses will be adversely affected by any reduction in the number of weeks in the semester, but significantly less so by a 16-week calendar than a 15-week calendar, and

WHEREAS: Students in content-intensive courses consistently complain that they are asked to digest too much information per week, and the greater the compression of the calendar, the more they will be asked to learn each week, and

WHEREAS: Excessive compression of the schedule works contrary to the Student Success/Partnership for Excellence goal of increased success in basic skills instruction, since students naturally "fade out" after a certain amount of classroom time in any one sitting, and since those students needing the *most remediation* will be attempting to master *more* material based on *more* classroom time with *more* associated homework each week, and

WHEREAS: Fifteen weeks of *instruction* easily breaks into three five-week instructional modules, and a ten-week summer session is easily obtained from fifteen weeks of instruction by simply covering half-again as much material in each necessarily-extended class period, and

WHEREAS: Instructors currently teaching two eighteen-week semesters and a six-week summer session spend 42 weeks in the classroom, and those same instructors would likely teach two 16-week semesters and a ten-week summer session for the same 42-week total, while those not teaching summers would have four additional weeks off, and

WHEREAS: The YCCD does not plan to implement a *full* summer semester for several years under any proposed scenario, and

WHEREAS: Adopting a 16-week calendar is a fair and effective compromise between those desiring a 15-week compressed calendar and those desiring to maintain our current 18-week semester,

THEREFORE: BE IT RESOLVED that the Yosemite Community College District adopt an academic calendar consisting of Fall and Spring semesters of 16 weeks each, with the last week being a dedicated final examinations week, and a Summer semester of 10 weeks, with the last class session serving as the final examination period.

First Reading: March 8, 2001

Final Action: March 22, 2001

Disposition: Carried

Presented to District Council for consideration on May 26, 2001