

CATALOG CYCLE START RECOMMENDATION

to the MJC and Columbia College Curriculum Committees

Prepared by the Catalog Cycle “Start-End” Subcommittee

March 19, 2021

Background

In Fall of 2020, the **Catalog Cycle Start-End Subcommittee** convened to explore whether a “fall-start” catalog cycle would be beneficial to YCCD students. Both colleges currently observe a summer-start for their catalogs.

The group was intentionally designed as a cross-functional committee subcommittee, representative of the Columbia College curriculum committee, the MJC curriculum committee, student service and instructional administrators, YCCD administration, and YCCD IT leadership. The group met four times between October 2020 and March 2021.

The cross-district effort was required to ensure perspectives and needs of both colleges as well as the district were taken under consideration. The subcommittee discussed many facets including; MIS reporting cycles, scheduling timelines, articulation processes, outreach schedules, curriculum development and catalog production timelines, as well as positive or negative impacts on existing workloads and workflows.

Findings/Commentary

- Most CCCs and all CSU and UC campuses observe a “fall start” academic year.
- GE breadth approvals for CSU and UC take effect in fall
- Many in the YCCD community presume a fall start for the new academic year.
- Because summer start catalogs are not common practice, some duplicative clerical work is required to implement summer start curriculum for articulation, leaving room for error/omission
- “Catalog” in Colleague is a rather independent variable that is used to digitally assign catalog rights to students and is not used in the district’s MIS reporting. It does not tie into other essential functions like scheduling, fiscal, state reporting, or facilities
- Some YCCD catalogs have been released late due to external GE decision timelines, which are more optimally calibrated for fall start catalog timelines.
- Earlier publication timelines sometimes require publishing addenda, which are not as accessible to students
- Critical regulatory updates on transfer/articulation topics are reported to the articulation community in mid-March, leaving little time to incorporate in the next publication
- K12 outreach for the next academic begins in the October prior to the catalog taking effect (Fall 2020 for Summer 2021)

Discoveries

- A change to a fall start **would not extend or shorten current faculty curriculum development deadlines**
- Catalog publication dates are driven registration timelines for the first term of the academic year. A fall start would **catalog production timelines by approximately 6 weeks** since fall registration starts in mid-June, and not the end of March (current release practice)
- Faculty would need to know that new or modified curriculum would take effect **one term later**, in fall instead of summer
- Workloads of curriculum personnel are currently high due to technology migrations for curriculum management and catalog production as well significant regulatory changes across the curriculum, so while input was positive about moving to a fall start, there were concerns about doing it “too soon”
- Should the colleges change to Fall start, the catalog year **prior to implementation** would need to be **lengthened** to a Summer>Summer catalog to accommodate the shift.

Assumptions

Both colleges’ Curriculum Committees and Academic Senates would need to support the proposed recommendation in order for it to be implemented.

Conclusions

There was no perceived advantage to retaining a summer start catalog, but there appear to be some clear technical and “soft” advantages to a fall start, largely popular “perception,” alignment with curricular timelines for partner institutions, and streamlined data management.

Recommendation

The subcommittee recommends that both colleges move to a fall-start catalog due to clear benefits to students and timelines. It also recommends an implementation year of FA 2023-SU 2024 academic year, requiring the 2022-2023 catalog cycle to span from SU 2022 through SU 2023