

# *A Brief History of UC's and UCLA's Academic Calendar: 1966 to 2001*

## *UC History*

### **Before 1966, all UC campuses were on the semester calendar.**

### **1966: UC System changes to the quarter system calendar.**

All campuses in the UC system changed from the semester to the quarter system in 1966-67 on the recommendation of the State Coordinating Council for Higher Education (the predecessor to the current State Postsecondary Education Commission) which believed that the quarter system was the best system for achieving year-round operations (four quarters: fall, winter, spring, summer). A summer quarter was operated in both 1968 and 1969.

### **1969: Summer quarter dropped from UC quarter system.**

In response to Governor Reagan's substantial reduction in State funding for the University and lower-than-expected enrollment in Summer Quarters 1968 and 1969, The Regents cancelled the summer quarter, effective summer 1970, and returned the summer instructional calendar to the self-supporting "summer session" structure.

### **1976: Berkeley's faculty votes to return to the semester calendar.**

In that same year (1976), the Berkeley faculty voted overwhelmingly to return to the semester system. But UC President David Saxon delayed approving Berkeley's return because he wanted all campuses on the same calendar.

### **1978: UCLA School of Law returns to the semester calendar.**

### **1983: Berkeley changes to back to a semester calendar.**

President Saxon changed his mind at the urging of the Chancellors, and in the spring of 1981, a majority (67%) of the Berkeley faculty voted to return to the semester system. Berkeley's change was accomplished in two years, and in the fall of 1983, Berkeley returned to the semester system.

### **1987: UCLA School of Medicine returns to the semester calendar.**

### **2002: Berkeley submits revised semester calendar proposal to Office of the President (See TAB 8).**

The Berkeley campus requests approval from the Office of the President to reduce the number of instructional days per academic year to 140 and to modify its semester calendar to increase the number of instructional days that could be scheduled in the summer.

### **2004: UC Merced to begin operations using semester calendar.**

## *The Debate at UCLA – Five Times Before*

*(in reverse chronological order)*

### **1994: Academic Senate leaders request UCLA administration calculation of cost-savings associated with discuss the semester system.**

The idea of returning to the semester system resurfaced as a potential cost-savings measure. Academic Senate requests Vice Chancellor Andrea Rich to undertake administrative analysis in March, 1994. Conclusions end in June 1994 when administrative reports that are prepared are inconclusive about the extent of cost-savings.

**1990: UCLA conducts informal survey within each academic unit.**

Vice Chancellor Murray Schwartz requests each dean in October 1990 to conduct an informal poll of her/his faculty to ascertain interest in returning to the academic calendar. Academic Senate Executive Board unanimously votes in November 1990 to oppose a establishing a campuswide dialogue focused on returning to semester calendar but supports flexibility for individual professional schools to adopt semester calendar.

**1985: UCLA reconsiders academic calendar; faculty votes to keep quarter system.**

The subject of the academic calendar and a possible return to the semester system is subject of a panel discussion at the annual Chancellor's Leadership Retreat at Lake Arrowhead in February, 1981. Vice Chancellor William Schaefer issues to the campus community a 25-page report "Quarters or Semesters" in February, 1985. Community Forum is held at Ackerman Union. Academic Senate conducts mail ballot in April, 1985: Retain Quarter System—691 (59%); Adopt Early Semester Calendar—485 (41%).

**1975-1977: UCLA discusses academic calendar in response to University-wide Review.**

In November, 1974, UC-wide Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) asks each Division of the Senate to ascertain the position of the faculty of each campus with respect to the academic calendar. Vice Chancellor William Gerberding does not initiate the campus discussion; instead, the discussion is led by Academic Senate Chair Raymond Orbach. The UCLA Academic Senate conducts a three-step process: (a) informal poll; (b) departmental meetings; (c) formal mail ballot. In May, 1976, UCLA CEP conducts informal mail ballot on following question: "In your judgment, will the effectiveness and quality of teaching be enhanced by returning to a two-semester rather than a three-quarter academic year?" A total of 1,194 responses were received (out of 3,300 ballots mailed). Results were Yes--60%; No—40%.

In October, 1976, a student referendum was conducted on the quarter-vs-semester question. Results of that referendum were Quarter calendar—5,294; Semester calendar—1,823.

Senate conducts Town Hall meeting in November, 1976. Departmental meetings are completed in early 1977. Mail ballot issued by the Academic Senate in spring 1977. Results: Quarter calendar—54%; Semester calendar—46%.

**1971: UCLA considers returning to semester calendar.**

In the aftermath of the abandonment of the concept of the four-quarter calendar, Vice Chancellor David Saxon appointed a group of three distinguished academic leaders – John Galbraith, Franklin Rolfe and Foster Sherwood -- to determine how UCLA might return to the semester system as soon as possible. They submit a report in June, 1971. The Academic Senate takes up this issue during 1971-72. A preferential mail ballot was distributed in February, 1972. A total of 765 replies were received with a 61% preference for the semester calendar and 39% for the quarter calendar. Of the 61% preferring semesters, 23% preferred the early semester structure and 38% preferred the late semester calendar. The vote results are complicated by the fact that 119 of those indicating a particular type of semester structure would prefer the quarter calendar over the alternative semester structure.

Vice Chancellor Saxon indicated later that the discussions about the academic calendar were ended as a result of the divided faculty vote and opposition from student leaders.

**And Now.....**

**2001: The academic calendar is discussed at the Leadership Retreat (September)**

This discussion was focused on education issues and the quality of teaching and learning. In his closing remarks, Vice Chancellor Rory Hume recommended the appointment of a joint Senate/Administrative Committee to study the issue and make recommendations to the Chancellor and Academic Senate. Committee is appointed January 2002, with Co-chairs Raymond Knapp (Senate) and Judith Smith (Administration).