



FACULTY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ON SEMESTER CONVERSION

Background

1. Why is the campus moving forward with quarter to semester conversion at this time?

In his fall 2014 convocation address, President Leroy Morishita identified the conversion of CSUEB from a quarter to a semester academic calendar as a “critical strategic priority” for the University. As President Morishita noted in his address, 109 of the 112 California Community Colleges (CCC) use a semester calendar. Of the more than 70% of our students who transfer, the vast majority does so from the CCCs. Most of our feeder community colleges are on semesters, and moving to semesters will help us recruit students and simplify many of our administrative processes. The trend right now is for all of the CSU campuses to move from quarter to semester. Thus semester conversion will align our academic calendar with the other CSU campuses, our CCCs, and more than 90% of colleges and universities nationwide.

An obvious benefit of semester conversion, then, would be to smooth the transition for students, enabling them to transfer course credits more easily and apply them towards degree completion. Moreover, Chancellor Timothy White has agreed to pay a substantial proportion of the funding for quarter to semester conversion. Please also see President Morishita’s recent comments, which are available on the Semester Conversion website.

2. What other CSU campuses are on the quarter system? Are there other CSU quarter-based campuses that are considering a conversion to a semester system?

A total of four campuses are on a quarter calendar: Cal Poly Pomona, CSU San Bernardino, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and CSUEB. The Bakersfield and LA campuses converted from quarter to semester calendars in fall 2016. Cal Poly Pomona is on the same conversion schedule as our campus, fall 2018. CSU San Bernardino plans to convert to semesters by fall 2020.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL

1. What is the timeline for conversion?

CSU East Bay will offer a semester-based term in fall 2018. Work to transition the campus from quarters to semesters began in fall 2014. The majority of the work needed to convert the curriculum to semesters occurred in 2015-16, and this new curriculum will be reviewed and

approved in 2016-17. A semester-based University curriculum will be available in 2017, allowing a complete year for academic advising based on the new curriculum. A detailed Semester Conversion Curriculum Schedule is available [here](#).

2. What will be the costs to the campus to convert?

The current estimated cost of conversion activities is \$12.1 million. [updated 10/7/16]

3. How will conversion be paid for?

The Chancellor's Office has provided \$8.2M in funding for the initiative. The University will support the remaining cost of conversion out of reserve funds. [updated 10/7/16]

4. Will existing systems be able to handle semesters? (e.g., PeopleSoft, Blackboard, etc.)

Yes, the current student administration system, PeopleSoft, is capable of handling the semester calendar. In fact, this system is used by most of the CSU campuses that are on a semester calendar. There is, however, one caveat to this. As in any conversion process, technology resources will be devoted to developing applications or modifying existing applications to support the change. Significant changes will have to be made in the three modules of PeopleSoft: the Human Resources Information System (HR), the Financial Information System (Finance), and the Student Administration System (SA).

Other systems that CSU East Bay and numerous semester-based campuses use, such as Blackboard, can handle a semester calendar.

5. What assistance will divisions, colleges, departments, and faculty receive? (Resources, release time, etc.)

In spring quarter 2015, departments received budget allocations to cover the cost of converting or transforming academic programs and courses to semesters. Department budgets provide faculty with assigned time, overload pay, summer stipends and departmental retreats to convert or transform the curriculum. Prior to receiving their budgets, departments developed implementation plans that described their expected expenditures. In addition to funding departments and programs, faculty serving on committees that required significant work for semester conversion received either assigned time or supplemental compensation. [updated 10/7/16]

6. If a department has more than one degree program did that warrant extra funding?

Departments will be were funded based on the number and complexity of their degree programs, as well as on the number of GE and service courses they offer.

7. How was the budget distributed within the department and college?

The funds were used for specific tasks and deliverables, as decided by the department with approval by the dean and Office of Semester Conversion. Faculty did not necessarily have equal responsibilities and, consequently, did not necessarily receive an equal portion of the department allocation. Department implementation plans should have been discussed at department meetings that included both full-time and part-time instructors.

SHARED GOVERNANCE

1. Which segments of the campus will be responsible for policy decisions? Will shared governance be honored?

Responsibility for matters that fall within the purview of the Academic Senate are determined by the Senate according to [The Constitution and By Laws of the University Faculty](#) and in consultation with the administration (i.e. policies are enacted upon the signature of the President). The Semester Conversion co-directors and Steering Committee are committed to shared governance in this process. In fact, the [Steering Committee](#) includes faculty representation from key Senate standing committees.

2. Is the Senate involved in the decisions about the academic calendar?

The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) developed prototypes for semester calendars and vetted these widely with the campus community. FAC recommended one of these prototypes, which was subsequently amended on the floor of the academic senate. After being accepted by the academic senate, the final semester calendar was approved by President Morishita. A transitional [calendar](#) that includes both quarter and semester details was developed.[updated 10/7/16]

CURRICULUM

1. What does course conversion look like? Did all 4-unit courses become 3-unit courses?

Faculty needed to consider several factors when converting their programs into a semester model. Some of those factors are:

- One 4-unit quarter course converts to a 2.67 unit semester course. Stated another way, a 3-unit semester class has about 12.5% more total class time than a 4-unit quarter class.
- A 180-quarter unit degree contains 45 4-unit courses. A 120-semester unit degree contains 40 3-unit courses. The 4-unit per course quarter program therefore has 12.5% more classes than the 3-unit per course semester program.
- The above trends become much more extreme when converting from 4-unit quarters to 4-unit semesters. 4-unit semester classes have 50% more class time than 4-unit quarter

classes. A 4-unit per course quarter program has 50% more classes than the 4-unit per course semester program.

- Including a large number of 4-unit semester courses in a semester program will significantly reduce the number of courses students take to complete the program.
- At most universities under the semester system, 3-unit courses are much more common than 4-unit courses.
- The majority of our students transfer from other CSU campuses and community colleges, virtually all of which are on the semester system, and those students request to articulate mostly 3-unit semester courses.

Given all of these factors, it is likely that programs in the semester system will consist of fewer courses than are currently offered and that most of the courses will be 3-unit courses. The final structure of the programs were decided by the faculty in the departments that offer the programs.

2. How are quarter units converted to semester units?

Typically, when converting from quarter units to semester units, quarter units are divided by 1.5 to calculate semester values. Each quarter unit is equivalent to two-thirds of a semester unit. It will be up to each department to determine how the units will be assigned to particular courses in their new curriculum plan. [Quarter to Semester Unit Conversion Tool](#).

3. What was the process for approving and reviewing a new semester curriculum for all academic programs?

The Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC) developed [curricular review processes](#) for semester conversion that were passed by the academic senate and approved by President Morishita. All curricular changes to programs and classes are reviewed at the department and college levels, and then forwarded to Academic Programs and Graduate Studies (APGS). For programs that ~~are~~ simply converted their curriculum the review process ended there if there were no objections from other departments. Transformed programs were reviewed by the appropriate subcommittee of CIC, and if the proposal received the support of $\frac{2}{3}$ of committee members present, were forwarded to the senate as an information item. Programs receiving a majority of votes, but less than $\frac{3}{4}$, proceeded through the normal senate review process.

An online guide called [Curriculum Design and Assessment to Support Semester Conversion: A Guide for Faculty](#) was developed by APGS to assist in the conceptualization and formulation of semester programs.

The University implemented a new software called Curriculog that ~~will~~ enabled faculty to submit and track all curricular proposals online. Training on use of the new software began in in fall 2015. [updated 10-7-16]

4. How did we handle programs with requirements outside of the department?

Early and frequent conversation was required between departments offering service courses and the departments requiring these courses. Service courses were submitted to the college curriculum committee for review in the fall of 2015. [updated 10-7-16]

5. How does semester conversion affect Graduate Programs?

All graduate programs also will be converted from quarter to semester programs. The implementation plans that departments submitted in spring 2015 outlined their plans for either converting or transforming curriculum in their graduate programs. Throughout the conversion process, faculty working on graduate programs should be aware that the typical (and minimum) unit requirement for a master's degree is 30 semester units (45 quarter units) and that a graduate student must be enrolled in at least 8 units a semester to be considered full-time for financial aid. The Graduate Programs subcommittee of CIC has developed additional [guidelines](#) about the conversion of graduate programs. [updated 8-21-15]

6. How do classes get approved for GE and/or other graduation requirements?

Faculty may propose courses for approval for all GE areas and graduation requirements (GE/GR) by completing the "General Education and Graduation Requirement" proposal in [Curriculog](#). If the course has already been proposed as part of a major program or as a service course, only the top portion of the form must be completed. If this is a new semester course, all information on the form must be completed. In addition to the Curriculog proposal, faculty must then complete the appropriate template for the GE/GR area that is being requested and attach it to the Curriculog proposal. These templates may be found on General Education [website](#), which also provides links to the Academic Senate documents with the approved learning outcomes for each of the GE/GR areas. [added 10-7-16]

GENERAL EDUCATION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. How will the General Education (GE) curriculum be affected?

[Chancellor's Office Executive Order 1100](#) requires a minimum of 72-quarter units or equivalently 48-semester units of GE. CSU East Bay currently requires 72-quarter units of GE with an additional 12-16 quarter units of graduation requirements. A [Model for General Education and other Baccalaureate degree requirements under semesters](#), has been approved by the Academic Senate and by President Morishita. Outcomes for each GE requirement have been approved by the Academic Senate and President Morishita and can be found [here](#)[updated 10-7-16].

2. How will the semester conversion affect the freshmen learning communities (aka clusters)?

The Academic Senate and President Morishita have approved the continuation of a freshman learning community model (now called "clusters") with student cohorts, linked courses, and block registration. Details can be found [here](#). [updated 7-22-16]

3. In the semester system, will courses count for both GE and major requirements?

The model for GE and graduation requirements allows the opportunity to “double count” up to 9 units as follows:

- 3 units in the lower division major department (prefix) may satisfy both the major and GE requirements for all students.
- 3 units of code may satisfy both Code and GE requirements.
- 3 units of Writing II/WID in the major (prefix) may satisfy both major and graduation requirements. These courses may also be approved for GE areas A3, B1-B4, C1-C3, or D1-D3 [updated 7-22-16]

4. Will we continue to offer a second writing course as a graduation requirement?

The model for GE and graduation requirements requires two writing courses. The first course will be comparable to English 1001. While a semester version of English 1002 is likely to be offered that will satisfy the second writing course requirement, programs may also develop disciplinary based writing courses that satisfy this requirement as well as a major requirement. The approved learning outcomes for this second writing course are in the Senate document found [here](#). In addition, these courses can also be certified for GE credit as A3, B1-B4, C1-C3, or D1-D3. [updated 10-7-16]

5. Will we continue to have a cultural groups and women's requirement?

To enhance our general education/graduation requirements, to demonstrate our commitment to our diverse students, and to develop curriculum tied to our institutional learning outcomes, the Academic Senate and President Morishita have approved 3 overlays in the areas of diversity, Social Justice, and Sustainability. These requirements are described [here](#). The recommended overlay requirements can be fulfilled in any approved course (upper or lower division, major, GE, etc.). The learning outcomes for each overlay can be found [here](#). [updated 10-7-16]

6. Why is the lower-division science requirement reduced by one course? Will the science lab still be required?

Each 4-unit quarter class carries slightly less weight than a 3-unit semester class. Therefore, an equivalent GE curriculum on quarters will be composed of more classes than the same curriculum on semesters. Without expanding the GE curriculum, some quarter courses must be removed in the conversion to semesters. The approved model for GE and graduation requirements does not include the lower-division science elective that existed in the quarter-based curriculum. The science lab is required by EO 1100 and is retained in the new program. [updated 8-21-15]

CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

1. What are the differences in term length, and start and end dates between quarter and semester systems?

The following are some of the differences and similarities between quarter and semester systems that conform to definitions provided by the CSU Chancellor's Office:

- Quarters: three terms per year of 10-11 weeks each typically beginning in September or October and ending in June, plus an optional summer term.
- Semesters: two terms of 15 instructional weeks typically beginning in August and typically ending in May, with an optional summer term that is often shorter in length.
- Similarities: Both the quarter and semester models require identical numbers of instructional days. A typical Academic Year (AY) is 147 instructional days, give or take one or two per year, or the equivalent in effort. A variety of other qualifying faculty workdays, such as a few examination and evaluation days per term, are added to the number of instructional days to arrive at the total number of Academic Work Days per AY. The required number of Academic Work Days per AY for each academic year employee in both quarter and semester models is a minimum of 170, according to the CSU Chancellor's Office, and a maximum of 180, pursuant to the CFA Collective Bargaining Agreement, Provision 20.4 ("Work Year").

2. What is the status of our new academic semester calendar?

FAC has done a thorough analysis of the constraints and possibilities, and the Academic Senate and President approved the amended the transitional [ten year calendar](#). [updated 10-7-16]

3. How will a semester calendar affect summer course offerings?

Converting to semesters means that we can no longer offer a 15-week summer session. The semester calendar that was approved by the Academic Senate includes include 8-week summer sessions. Like most CSU campuses that are on semesters, we may be able to offer several different (but concurrent) summer sessions.

4. Will the new calendar accommodate a winter intersession?

Many CSU semester campuses have special "intersession" classes in January, held between the Fall and Spring semesters, that meet for two or three weeks of intensive study. These classes allow for field trips or activities that are otherwise hard to fit into the typical course modules. The approved calendar includes a two-week winter intersession.

5. What will the time modules for class scheduling under semesters look like?

A Time Module Task Force (TMTF) of the Executive Committee worked on the issue of time modules for class scheduling under semesters during the 2015-2016 AY. Their [recommendations](#) were forwarded to Executive Committee and then to the Academic Senate.

Briefly, the TMTF approved and forwarded 3 different models to be considered by the Academic Senate. Two of the time modules have a T, TH University Hour and a third module does not have a University Hour. The Academic Senate will vote and approve one of the modules during fall 2016. A major decision to make is whether to have a time module that includes a University Hour. The results of the University-wide [survey](#) for students, faculty, staff and administrators on time modules favored a University Hour in the semester class schedule. [added 10-7-16]

SUPPORT FOR CONVERSION

1. What support will there be for faculty to transform their classes?

Departments have received an [allocation](#) based on the number of programs, complexity of programs, and conversion vs. transformation of courses. The Semester Conversion Steering has also created a Faculty Development subcommittee for semester conversion with the mission to collaborate with all areas of faculty support to assist faculty as they develop innovative pedagogy and transform curriculum. [updated 8-21-15]

2. What kind of funding will departments receive to include lecturers and students in the process of semester conversion?

Departments have received an allocation based on a formula developed by the Semester Steering Committee. Departments provided the Office of Semester Conversion with an implementation plan for how they will spend the money at the department level. Departments were able to include lecturers and students in these implementation plans. [updated 8-21-15]

3. Will funds be available to support faculty in AY18-19, when they begin to teach their transformed curriculum?

The Provost has promised to set aside funds to support faculty as they begin to teach their transformed curriculum in AY18-19.

WORKLOAD

1. How will conversion from the quarter to the semester system impact class contact hours?

The annual contact hours will be the same. Currently, under our quarter system, an instructor teaches approximately 12 units (three 4-unit classes) which is equivalent to approximately 12 contact (face-to-face classroom) hours over 10 weeks three times a year. This is a total of 360 contact hours. Under the semester system, an instructor will also teach approximately 12 units (four 3-unit classes), again equivalent to 12 contact hours, but over 15 weeks twice a year. This again is a total of 360 contact hours. For additional information see: AA-2011-14, [CSU Definition of Credit Hour](#).

2. What is considered a full-time lecturer assignment (1.0 time-base) in the CSUEB semester system?

Full time is 15 units per semester and 30 units per year.

3. How will lecturer assignments be made in the semester curriculum?

Course assignments will continue to be made with the needs of the department or program taking precedence. Lecturers are assigned in accordance to the policies of the CFA contract in section 12.29.

4. How will teaching a mixture of 3 and 4 unit courses impact lecturers?

Departments will be responsible for meeting lecturer entitlements, contingent on the availability of work. A mixture of 3 and 4 unit courses may provide a department with more flexibility in meeting a lecturer entitlement. The current contract also has provisions guaranteeing that a 16th unit is compensated.

5. Faculty members are very concerned about workload. What steps will the administration be taking to ensure faculty will be able to meet their commitments to teaching, scholarship, and service under the semester system?

In Spring quarter, 2016, the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate approved and convened a 'Workload Task Force' to address faculty concerns regarding workload under the semester schedule. The task force consists of administrators, faculty and a lecturer representative. The task force will continue its work during the 2016-17 academic year and has been working on a number of workload issues including:

- Developing a University-wide policy on awarding additional teaching credit for teaching large classes. The tradition within the CSU has been to double units for instructors when class enrollment exceeds 120 students. The new policy under development will give faculty increased credit for large classes under 120 students on a sliding scale and standardize this across the campus.
- A standardized policy on giving faculty-teaching credit for mentoring students on independent study courses.
- A standardized policy to give faculty assigned time for coordinating courses that have a large number of laboratory, activity, studio, or co-requisite sections.
- Requesting the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Committee on Research work jointly to develop a [Teacher-Scholar program](#) to support research active faculty. The program would

provide a reduced teaching load over multiple years for faculty members pursuing a clearly defined program of scholarship, research, or creative activity. [updated 10-7-16]

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. How will semesters affect the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) calendar and process?

No major change to the RTP process is envisioned when changing to semesters, but the RTP calendar will be different. The deadlines for submission of RTP documents, which now are in early October for tenure and promotion, and in November and January for retention, could be moved earlier, providing more time for evaluation. The RTP process, which focuses on instructional and scholarly achievement, and on University and community service, will not be affected, and conversion to semesters will not require changing the RTP criteria. The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) will be charged with reviewing the RTP policies and procedures document, and making appropriate changes to the RTP document.

2. What will be the impact on faculty sabbatical leaves?

Semesters allow faculty sabbaticals with full pay to take place over a semester, typically 16 weeks, rather than an 11-week quarter. Faculty at semester campuses can take 2 semesters at 1/2 full salary. On quarter campuses, faculty can take a 3-quarter sabbatical at 1/2 pay or 2 quarters at 3/4 pay. Converting from quarters to semesters will not necessitate a change in the process of applying for or granting of sabbaticals, and sabbaticals will continue to be awarded as indicated by the campus implementation of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

3. What will be the effect on FERP faculty?

Semesters create a more advantageous situation for FERP faculty on a half time base (0.5 FERP). Such faculty can complete their FERP responsibilities in one semester rather than having to spread them over two quarters.