

**University Senate**

**Recommendation regarding Consideration of Changes to the Academic Calendar and/or Course Grid**

As Approved, 8 May 2024

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The University Senate recommends that, prior to a final decision to implement significant changes to the academic calendar and/or the weekly course grid (AKA course block or matrix), the following steps be taken as part of the deliberation and analysis:

1. determination of whether, and how, the totality of course sections offered in recent terms would fit into the proposed scheme;
2. comprehensive survey of the time and scheduling needs for laboratory, studio, performance and other class meetings that require non-standard time periods;
3. determination of the number and type of sections that would be 'off-grid' due to the specific needs of the related courses, as well as the likely effects of such courses on the ability of students to register for other courses in the same term;
4. development and dissemination of any significant changes to policies and procedures related to implementation of a new scheme (e.g., assignment of courses that meet three times per week).
5. systematic estimation of the times and quantity of maximum entrance/exit, traffic and the capacity of the relevant campus to accommodate such;
6. the maximum expected demand for parking, for students and employees, in relation to parking capacity on the relevant campus;
7. identification of additional impacts on adjunct-faculty instructors (e.g., irregularities in the schedule and/or schedule alignment with other local institutions), especially those that might affect the ability of the University to recruit and retain adjunct faculty, as well as possibilities for mitigation of such impacts;
8. effects on other operations of the University that depend on periods of reduced occupancy or operational intensity, including facilities maintenance and administrative work, as well as inter-term support, advising, and orientation for students.

In the event that the University Administration does not have the capacity to address any of the above considerations, the Senate recommends that outside expert consultation be retained.

Moreover, the Senate recommends that study results regarding the above considerations, as well as other related matters considered as part of the preparation and deliberation process be shared to the fullest extent possible with the broader University Community.

## **Rationale**

The conduct of courses according to the academic calendar and weekly scheduling grid are essential to the core education mission of the University. Therefore, the impact of any significant change on these merits due diligence regarding both the intended and unintended consequences of any proposed changes.

Because Montclair State University is an institution of considerable size and complexity, not least in regard to the array of course offerings and the diverse needs of students in successful completion of their academic programs, such due diligence requires systematic study of the consequences of substantive changes, as well as consideration of possible means to mitigate undesirable spillover effects.