



A special meeting of the Senate of the University of Victoria is scheduled for Monday, August 23, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom.

AGENDA as reviewed by the Senate Committee on Agenda and Governance.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA ACTION

2. PROPOSALS AND REPORTS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES

a. Senate Committee on Agenda and Governance – Dr. Kevin Hall, Chair

- i. Proposal to Revise the 2021 Fall Course and Exam Schedule **ACTION**
(SEN-AUG 23/21-1)

Motion: That Senate approve the revisions to the 10-Year Sessional Calendar for the Fall 2021 term to observe the September 30, 2021, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

3. ADJOURNMENT



Date: August 19, 2021
To: Senate
From: Senate Committee on Agenda and Governance
Re: **Proposal to Revise the 2021 Fall Course and Exam Schedule**

On June 3, 2021, the federal government announced that [Bill C-5](#), *An Act to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, the Interpretation Act, and the Canada Labour Code (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)*, had received Royal Assent and that the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation will be observed by federal government employees and by federally regulated workplaces every year, starting on September 30, 2021.

The British Columbia provincial government, in recognition of the importance of honouring a day for Truth and Reconciliation, has advised all provincial public sector employers that they should recognize the [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#) on September 30 for this year for all employees who are normally entitled to provincial and federal holidays. The recognition for this year is an interim measure while the Province begins to engage with Indigenous partners and the business and labour communities to determine the most appropriate way to commemorate this day going forward. This direction is meant to ensure consistency across B.C.'s public sector, given that there are various collective agreements with provisions respecting federally recognized holidays.

Given that instructors are currently planning their fall term class schedules, a special meeting of Senate has been called as outlined in section 15.00-17.00 of the [Senate Rules and Procedures](#). This meeting is to consider the proposal to amend the 10-Year calendar for the Fall 2021 term to accommodate the loss of one instructional day.

It is proposed to extend the Fall 2021 term by one day to Monday, December 6, which will be considered a Thursday to accommodate the class and lab times lost due to the September 30 holiday. The start of exams will be pushed back by two days with a one-day shorter exam period.

Recommended Motion:

That Senate approve the revision to the 10-Year Sessional Calendar for the Fall 2021 term to observe the September 30, 2021, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Consultation

In recognition that the university will be closed on Thursday, September 30, 2021, a review began to determine how to academically incorporate the new observed National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Clear limitations were noted regarding the way in which the Fall 2021 term could take the loss of an instructional day on a Thursday. The start of each term must lie within the confines of a 365-day calendar of statutory holidays and weekends and adhere to the Senate-approved operational requirements of 59-62 instructional days per term. The Fall 2021 term is already scheduled at 59 days, the lowest number of instructional days allowable.

The Chair of the Senate Committee on Academic Standards was consulted to consider if it would be feasible to move to 58-instructional days for the Fall 2021 term. It was concluded that curriculum planning would already be fully underway by a majority of instructors and that the move to 58 days, even temporarily, was not a solution if there were other avenues to consider.

Previous discussion in Senate to consider extending the current 3-day fall term Reading Break has shown that a move to take Wednesday, November 10 as a substitute for the loss of Thursday, September 30 is not the preferred solution to this current consideration for the Fall 2021 term. Consequently, that option is not contemplated in this proposal.

Contemplation regarding scheduling an earlier start to the Fall 2021 term was met with challenges regarding the University's already scheduled student orientation programming, residence move-in arrangements, labour requirements to ensure staff availability, and the established plans made by faculty, staff, and students regarding the upcoming September start of classes.

Also under consideration was the University Secretary's Principles for the [10-Year Sessional Calendar](#), which determined the process to assign the university's term dates. Consultations with the Office of the Registrar (OREG) were conducted with a specific focus on the exam timetable and room bookings. Feedback was sought from Faculty Deans to ensure the variety of scholarship across campus was taken into account as much as possible.

Extension of the last day of classes

According to the 10-Year Sessional Calendar and as stated in the [Academic Important Dates](#), the last day of courses for the Fall 2021 term is currently set for Friday, December 3, 2021. According to the Principles of the 10-Year Sessional Calendar, two clear full days are set aside (December 4 and 5) before the start of exams on Monday, December 6, 2021. Moving the last day of courses to Monday, December 6, 2021, would require the two clear full days to be revised to December 7 and 8, with the final exam period to begin on Thursday, December 9, 2021.

Thursday Schedule

As September 30, 2021 falls on a Thursday, it was recognized that adding a Monday to the final day of classes will not address the lost scheduled day of Thursday course instruction. As a result, it is proposed that December 6, 2021 be utilized per the Thursday course block schedule. The Office of the Registrar's room booking unit will ensure that classrooms are available per the Thursday schedule of classes, and bookings outside the academic timetable are moved/cancelled accordingly. It is recognized that this change does not aid those faculties who conduct labs in week blocks, but there was no solution to ensure an entire week could be retained.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

It was noted that the day of remembrance of the École Polytechnique massacre officially falls on December 6. According to the Principles of the 10-Year Sessional Calendar, the University observes the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6 if there are classes scheduled on that day. If classes are scheduled to end before December 6, the University will observe this day on the last day of classes. This year the current schedule was to hold this remembrance on Friday, December 3, 2021 as this was the last scheduled day of classes. The proposed change to the academic schedule would place the University's observance on December 6, 2021. This would now affect the proposed Thursday course scheduled for the recuperated day.

Regardless of the current or proposed schedule, the Fall 2021 term remains at 59 instructional days. The observance of the anniversary will be held from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. during class time and does not affect the count of instructional days.

Exam Timetable

To minimize the effect the movement of the final examination period may have on individuals who may have already made arrangements for the currently published end of the exam period on December 20, 2021, we are proposing holding exams on one of the two Sundays reserved during the final examination period. This will retain one last Sunday for any unexpected event that may occur during the term. The Office of the Registrar, who is responsible for setting the final exam timetable, has noted that a reduction of the examination period will still allow enough of a date range to allow for a conflict-free final examination period, ensuring no student has two exams at the same time, and moving the current 13-day range from December 6 – December 20, 2021 to an 11-day range from December 9 – December 20, 2021.

It is important to note that this compression of the examination period by two full days will result in a less student-friendly exam period with increased instances where students have two exams on the same day (9 a.m. & 2 p.m. or 2 p.m. & 7 p.m.), two exams back-to-back (7 p.m. & 9 a.m. on the following day), or three exams within 24 hours. As an example, the 13-day December 2020 exam period led to 850 occurrences of students writing two examinations in a row. The 12-day December 2013 examination period led to 1260 occurrences of students writing two examinations in a row.

Temporary Measure

This revision to the timetable is not a permanent change. Deliberations regarding the revisions to the academic course schedules to include the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation showed that a more robust consideration of both the Principles for the 10-Year Sessional Calendar and the schedule of the final examination period should commence for further Senate consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

2021/2022 Senate Committee on Agenda and Governance

Kevin Hall (Chair), President and Vice-Chancellor

Saul Klein (Vice-Chair), Dean, Peter B. Gustavson School of Business

Carrie Andersen, University Secretary

Carolyn Russell, Convocation Senator

Aaron Devor, Faculty of Social Sciences

Mauricio Garcia-Barrera, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Helen Kurki, Faculty of Social Sciences

Valerie Kuehne, Vice-President Academic and Provost

Mark Gillen, Faculty of Law

Lara Wilson, Libraries

Kyle Risby, Student Senator

Ada Saab (Secretary), Associate University Secretary

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA SESSIONAL CALENDARS

2020-2030

Attached is the ten-year calendar for the period 2020- 2030. The annual calendars are subject to approval by Senate each year.

The dates for the Faculty of Law may differ because they are approved each year.

Secretary of Senate
Office of the University Secretary
University of Victoria

Adopted by Senate 2 December 1987

Revised 1 February; 5 April 1989; 6 May 1992; 6 January 1993; 5 May 1993; 1 December 1993; 6 April 1994; 3 May 1995; 7 May 1997; 7 October 1998; 5 May 1999; 4 October 2000; 11 Oct 2000; 5 December 2001; 10 January 2003; 5 March 2004; 4 February 2005; 3 February 2006; 7 February 2007; 1 February 2008; 6 February 2009; 9 April 2010; 4 February 2011; 4 March 2011; 7 October 2011; 3 February 2012; 4 May 2012; 5 October 2012; 1 February 2013; 7 February 2014; 6 February 2015; 5 February 2016; 3 February 2017; 2 February 2018, 1 February 2019, 7 February 2020, 5 February 2021.