

# Calendar Questions

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## **Budget Questions in Regards to “Trimester Model – Two Year Cost Savings and Enhanced Revenue Projection” (See next page: BOTP – 8/15/12 p. 102)**

1. Are you seriously considering eliminating Winter Inter-Session and radically changing our current academic calendar for @ \$392,500 i.e. less than ½ of 1% of our \$111.4 Million budget for 2012-13?
2. What is the basis for arguing that Classified staff would be more productive by preparing for three starts rather than four? (Item 5)
3. What are the underlying calculations for the expected savings? (Item 5)
  - a. \$250,000 Productivity
  - b. \$50,000 Admissions and Records and Counseling
  - c. \$10,000 Division Offices
4. How would shared governance proceed more efficiently and effectively? (Item 5) Especially when the proposed Trimester Calendar would leave an 8 week gap in July and August - the most critical time of year for shared governance committees –
  - a. When dealing with the end of the fiscal year and passing of the new state budget and
  - b. Planning for the following fiscal/academic year
5. Why is our current academic calendar referred to as “anomalous” in the districts rationale for eliminating Winter Intersession when they know that 20 other CC in the area also offer Winter Intersessions including: Glendale, Citrus, Mt. Sac., and Santa Monica which is our biggest competitor for international students. (Item 6)
6. The Administration states that the new “AIS will be far less expensive to implement if it does not need to work around the current anomalous academic calendar.” Are you really worried that our new \$11 Million Dollar AIS system can’t handle a six-week Winter Intersession? (Item 6)
7. Are you really considering permanently eliminating Winter Intersession for a one-time possible need to create more down-time for implementation and staff training on our new AIS system? (Item 6)
8. Do you really consider a cost savings of \$20,000 on an \$11 Million dollar AIS project “far less expensive”? (Item 6)
9. The Administration’s recent flyer and web site state that the second summer session will end on August 2 – the same date summer would end under the current calendar so... there will not be a longer summer break between classes! (See Items 7 – 9)

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- a. How will “utilities costs decline because there would be less demand during the hottest summer months...” saving PCC \$50,000 in utilities when classes go to the same date? (See Item 7)
- b. How will “facilities staff be scheduled more efficiently...during a longer summer” saving PCC \$250,000 when the summer break is actually no longer? (See Item 8)
- c. The Administration claims, “With a longer summer, more employees could schedule a greater amount of vacation in the summer supposedly saving PCC \$150,000. How is this possible when the summer break is no longer than under the current calendar?

**d. NOTE: These three supposed savings alone, all based on a “longer summer”, constitute \$450,000 of \$785,000 (@ 60%) of total savings claimed by the Administration**

10. What is the District’s basis for arguing that the elimination of Winter Intersession will provide a more “normative academic calendar” and that it would be a better sell internationally? We have been told by the Administration that our biggest competitor for international students is Santa Monica and they have the same “anomalous” calendar with a 5 week Winter Inter-Session very similar to ours. (See Item 10)

11. How does the Administration know that a change to the proposed trimester calendar will result in a 10% (\$800,000) increase in non-resident tuition? (See Item 10)

**a. NOTE: This supposed additional revenue increase accounts for over 50% of the “Total Cash to bottom line over 2012/13 and 2013/14.**

12. Why hasn’t the administration considered raising our Out-Of-State tuition 10% (from \$218/unit to \$240/unit) still 15% cheaper than Santa Monica College our main competitor for international students? This would increase our Out-Of-State Tuition revenues by @ \$800,000/Yr. currently and continue to increase our revenues as # International Students increases. (See Item 10)

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## **Trimester Model - Two Year Cost Savings and Enhanced Revenue Projection – 8/15/12**

### 2012/13 and 2013/14 Fiscals - Savings and Revenue Enhancement

- Total Savings - \$785,000
- Additional Revenue - \$800,000
  - Total Cash to Bottom Line over Fiscals 2012/13 and 2013/14 - \$1,550,000

### Cash Related Items

Item 5 - Managers and classified staff would be more productive by preparing for three starts as opposed to four. Shared Governance for faculty, staff, and managers would proceed more efficiently and effectively.

- Admissions and Records and Counseling -- \$50,000
- Division Offices -- \$10,000
- Promotional Materials - \$5,000
- Productivity - \$250,000 (reassigned staff, professional learning opportunity time, non-fill vacant positions when appropriate)

Item 6 - The new Banner Ellucian administrative information system will be far less expensive to implement if it does not need to work around the current anomalous academic calendar. There also will be more uninterrupted downtime for implementation and staff training.

- Ellucian consultant programmer time is valued at \$180 to \$220/hour.
- Estimated Cost Savings - \$20,000

Item 7 - Utilities costs would decline because there would be less demand during the hottest summer months assuming the majority of these sections would be 8-week in length and based on the earlier start.

- Savings \$50,000

Item 8 - Facilities staff could be scheduled more efficiently so that scheduled maintenance and renovations could be accomplished by existing staff during a longer summer. This also reduces the need to run small renovation contracts year-around.

- Savings \$250,000

Item 9 - With a longer summer, more employees could schedule a greater amount of vacation in the summer, reducing vacation accrual and the resultant booked liability and exit payout.

- Savings \$150,000

Item 10 - Revenue - Every 1,000 international students increases college revenue by \$5 million and increases seats and sections for domestic resident students. A normative academic calendar is a better sell in the international market place.

- Additional Revenue - \$800,000 - 10% increase over current non-resident tuition



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In regards to the research presented to the Board of Trustees in support of eliminating the Winter Inter-Session – “The Effects of Scheduled Academic Breaks on Academic Achievement” (See next page: BOTP 8/15/12 p. 106)..

1. Does the first sentence read, “To date there have not been any comprehensive studies of the effects of summer and winter intersessions breaks on academic achievement at 2-year and 4-year colleges.”?
2. Is the research presented based on “summer vacation” at the K-12 level?
3. After describing the two studies cited does it not read, “...neither study concludes a causal relationship between loss of academic achievement and the academic break...”
4. But even if the research indicated the problem is a large break, how is the new calendar going to solve this when, under our current calendar we have two 10 week “breaks” (Winter Intersession and Summer Session) but under the new calendar there would be a 16 week break (from the end Spring – May 4 to the beginning of Fall August 26)– 6 weeks longer than our current calendar? How is this any better?
5. Doesn’t your own research, that was presented to the Board on August 15<sup>th</sup> state that compared with Summer Session, “The Winter Intersession boasts the largest contingency of “continuing students (students who were enrolled the immediately preceding fall semester)...”? So adding more classes or a second Summer Session instead of a Winter Intersession would not benefit PCC students as much because we have more non-PCC students picking up classes in the summer – right?



July 2012

## The Effects of Scheduled Academic Breaks on Academic Achievement

To date there have not been any comprehensive studies of the effects of summer and winter intercession breaks on academic achievement at 2-year and 4-year colleges. However, research on "summer vacation" at the K-12 level does suggest that there could be a pronounced effect on specific areas of academic achievement particularly among groups community colleges traditionally serve.

A meta-analysis done by Cooper, Ney, Charlton, Lindsey and Greathouse (1996) provides an overview of the impact that summer vacation has on academic achievement. Their conclusions drawn from over 39 separate studies indicate that math computational skills and language spelling skills suffer the greatest negative loss during scheduled academic breaks. Furthermore they conclude that socioeconomic status plays a role in this loss due to the differential levels of opportunity to exercise such skills. Specifically students from a lower-socio economic background show a greater loss than middle or upper income students. Patall, Cooper, and Allen (2010) also suggest in their meta-analysis study that *"extended school time might be particularly beneficial for students who are most at risk of failing."* Their research further supports that socio-economic disadvantaged students are *"more susceptible to summer learning loss compared to their more advantaged counterparts"* which they associate with the opportunities for continued learning and practice of learning outside of the academic structure. They also suggest that students who "are at risk of failing" would benefit from "extended" academic time. Although neither study concludes a causal relationship between loss of academic achievement and the academic break, the evidence presented in both meta-analysis inquiries does provide a strong correlation between the two, especially for mathematical computational skills, spelling, and reading.

Again it should be noted that a direct causal link to the loss of achievement at the college level and intercession breaks should not be concluded from these two meta-analysis studies; but there is room to make some plausible connections. First it should be noted that as the current academic calendar is constructed at PCC, there are two 10-week breaks built into the calendar (i.e. summer and winter intercession). These 10-week breaks are the equivalent of 2 ½ months, which is just 2-weeks short of the traditional summer vacation calendar of the K-12 system. Thus the college has built in two opportunities for loss of academic achievement. During each of these 10-week breaks the college does provide class sessions but on a far more limited basis than the fall and spring semesters. The winter intercession boasts the largest contingency of "continuing students" (students who were enrolled the immediately preceding fall semester) but at far lower numbers of enrollment that a full fall and spring semester. That being said the minimal course offerings in Winter and Summer do not provide enough opportunities for all students to survive the loss of academic achievement likely to occur from a 10-week hiatus. Based on the previous two studies cited above and another meta-analysis study by Lauer, Akiba, Wilkerson, Apthorp, Snow, and Martin-Glen (2006) the need to minimize the "academic downtime" of students is critical for math, spelling, and reading skills.



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In regards to the “possible benefits” of the proposed imposition of the trimester calendar in the **“Case Statement on the Traditional Trimester Calendar and Move to the Carnegie Hour”** (See Next Page: BOTP 8/15/12 pp. 103-104)

1. It is suggested that there will be “greater continuity of instruction” and that students will “benefit from eliminating the almost two month break between fall and spring in the current calendar. However, the proposed trimester calendar would create a three-and-a-half month break (that is 6 weeks longer) between Spring (May 5) and Fall (August 26). How is this better?
2. How is “less reliance on intersession courses to fulfill transfer requirements” a benefit? It is a logical result if you eliminate the Winter Intersession but how is it a benefit?
3. It is suggested there will be “greater continuity in shared governance activities”. But the proposed calendar will create a three-and-a-half month break (6 weeks longer) for shared governance activity from end of Spring (May 5) to the beginning of Fall (August 26). This is a particularly critical time of year for the state budget and PCC’s budget being finalized, it is an important time for planning and preparing for the coming year etc. So how is this 6 week longer break at a critical time for shared governance better?
4. If a student is taking a full load under the current calendar they can take a maximum of @ 6 classes (Fall) +2 classes (Winter) + 6 Classes (Spring) +2 classes (Summer) for a total of 16 Classes but under the new calendar they can only take a maximum of @ 6 classes (Fall) + 6 Classes (Spring) +2 classes (Summer) for a total of 14 classes, that is 2 less classes than under our current calendar, so how will this be better for students?
5. The Administration stated that the new calendar would allow more "flexibility" in managing our FTES because if summer session starts before June 30 (end of fiscal year) and ends after July 1 (beginning of next fiscal) we can count the FTES towards either fiscal year. That is accurate. However, doesn't our current calendar start summer before June 30 and complete summer after July 1 already for exactly that same purpose – so there is no real advantage in proposed trimester calendar?

Regarding the “Carnegie Hour”...

1. How is the shortening of in-class time for courses a benefit?
2. How is a “slightly longer” semester a benefit?
3. How would offering classes MWF rather than MW be beneficial?
4. How would requiring students to make-up class time missed due to holidays at the end of the semester be beneficial?
5. How would this system “potentially create better, more flexible time for professional development”?

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### Other lingering questions...

1. There was suggestion at the last Board meeting that the summer session might be as long as a regular Fall or Spring semester – 16 weeks. Did you know there aren't even 16 weeks between the proposed start date of summer and the start date of Fall?
2. The college has already stated that if Proposition 30 passes they intend on using the \$6.7 Million on classes (BOTP 7/18/12 p. 54/121). That is about 1,340 classes (using \$5,000 as the average cost for a class). How will PCC offer that many classes before June 30 without a Winter Intersession?
3. Does the administration understand that adding more classes to Spring doesn't help a student who is taking a full load because you can only take so many classes at the same time?
4. On our current calendar we have a 6 week Winter Intersession then a 16 Week Spring Semester and then a 6 Week Summer Session – 6 + 16 + 6. So why are you asking us to “Think of it as 16 + 6 instead of 6 + 16? Why shouldn't we be thinking of it as going from 6 + 16 + 6 to 16 + 6 which eliminates 6 weeks of instruction?
5. How are two back to back 6 week intense Summer Sessions better for students under the proposed calendar than a 6 week intense Winter Intersession separated by 16 week semester before and after under the current calendar?
6. When we had the two 6 week summer sessions years ago didn't we find it was poorly enrolled with poor completion rates because of burnout from the back to back 6 week intense summer sessions?
7. Your flyer headline reads, “Benefit: Classes for every student, not just a few” - So...
  - a. Are you promising every student who wants classes will get classes?
  - b. And according to Dr. Bell about 8,000 students took classes last Winter Inter-Session so do you consider @ 8,000 students “a few”?
8. How much money was raised by outside sources in addition to our standard state funding? Graduation fund – donations from employees, citizens, organizations such as the PCC Foundation, Associated Students? Academic Senate? Other sources?
9. How do we know that these monies were used to fund classes in addition to the standard state funded classes?

These are just a few of the many questions that remain unanswered as was evidenced by the CAPM Forum in Creveling Lounge Tuesday, September 11, 2012 with Dr. Bell and Mr. Miller present in which they were unable to answer many of these same questions. This is what happens when you try to short-circuit the shared governance and negotiations process. This is what happens when you ignore the faculty, students, and staff. This is why we have a shared governance and negotiations process.

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## A Case Statement on the Traditional Trimester Calendar and Move to the Carnegie Hour

Prepared by Jim Arnwine and Dave Douglass  
*In consultation with the Academic Deans*

### Traditional Fall-Spring-Summer Schedule (Trimester)

The traditional Fall-Spring-Summer Schedule currently being sunshined by the district would eliminate the winter intersession, move courses that were to be offered in winter into summer, and begin spring semester after the Christmas Holiday. In addition, the district is proposing to allow faculty to take part of their annual teaching load (taught in fall and spring semesters) and move it into into a more robust summer semester.

We see the following as possible benefits to moving to a traditional fall-spring-summer trimester system:

- A longer but flexible summer intersession would allow for greater latitude in scheduling courses.
  - Courses could be scheduled in a variety of lengths from 4 to 14 weeks.
  - Courses which contain a laboratory component could be scheduled for more weeks requiring less in-class time per day
  - Two courses in a sequence could be compressed into two-6 week sessions to accelerate completion.
  - Some summer session classes could be started later to target recent high school graduates.
- Greater continuity of instructional programs throughout the year. For example, programs such as basic skills, the arts, forensics etc. are likely to benefit from eliminating the almost two month break between fall and spring in the current calendar.
- Less reliance on intersession courses to fulfill transfer requirements.
- Greater continuity in shared governance activities from fall to spring.
- Faculty would have the option of spreading their teaching load over 3 semesters instead of two; alternatively they might be able to take their full load over different semesters such as Spring and Summer or Summer and fall.
- Possibly avoid staff furloughs that might occur as a result of a diminished winter intersession.
- Summer FTES can be used either forward (for the upcoming year) or backward (previous year) making it easier to manage our overall FTES.

### Conversion of Class Schedule to the traditional "Carnegie Hour"

The district has sunshined a proposal to move current class scheduling from a compressed calendar model to the traditional "Carnegie hour". This will result in shortening in-class time for courses. For example, a class currently scheduled for 1 hour and 35 minutes twice a week under the current system would be shortened to 1 hour and 30 minutes twice a week resulting in a loss of 10 minutes per week of class time. The semester would also have to be slightly longer than the current 16





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week; Class time for holidays that occur during the semester would need to be made up at the end of the term.

We see the following possible benefits of moving to a Carnegie Hour:

- It will allow classes to be offered in 1 hour or 1 ½ hour blocks
- Students will have a significantly easier time putting together a course schedule without class conflicts
- More courses can be scheduled into the typical day
- All classes will start on the hour or half-hour eliminating confusing, seemingly random class start and stop times
- It could create the potential for a “college hour” which is a full hour, and could extend to four or five days a week
- Potentially create better, more flexible time for professional development
- Greater use of college facilities on Fridays
- Easier to create “block programs”, and avoid inter-divisional scheduling conflicts
- Full time faculty will receive the same pay for fewer actual hours worked, although hourly pay per class section would decrease. This could be rectified by a concomitant increase in the hourly pay scale.
- Although the hours per class will actually be less (a decrease in revenue) the term-length-multiplier used to calculate overall FTES will be greater because of a slightly longer semester (increasing revenue)
- A week-long holiday at Thanksgiving would work well with a 16-week-plus-holidays calendar.