

To: Academic Council
 From: Lori Livingston, Provost
 Re: Changes to the Important Term Dates
 Date: March 2020

Background:

- In March 2016, Academic Council approved the addition of a Fall co-curricular week to the academic schedule following and in response to a consultative process with university stakeholders.
- The scheduling of this Fall break period was revised in March 2018 (found [here](#)) to have the week normally follow the Thanksgiving long weekend.
- Over the past 18 months, the Student Success Committee has been looking at ways to enhance the academic success of first year students. Revising the September Orientation events has been part of this discussion.
- Additionally in Fall 2019, the OTSU ran a survey to explore student thoughts on the current timing, length and pattern of the exam schedule.
- Finally, in February 2020 Academic Council hosted a Colleagues Exchange on the important dates outlined in the academic schedule. The following is a summary of the discussion, the options discussed, and the resulting proposed actions.

Item	Comments	Proposed Action
Labour Day falls on a late date this year (i.e., September 7). Follow the same approach in scheduling the start of classes as in the past	<p>In this situation we are unable to fit a full exam period into normal schedule and get grades out before the holiday break, (the university's normal practice)</p> <p>For different reasons this occurs once every five years</p> <p>Any changes have to be applicable to ALL class sizes (i.e., from 30 to 400)</p>	Look at a long term change in approach rather than altering once every five years
Alter the start date in fall, by moving, or running classes concurrently with Orientation	<p>In order to have exams start earlier, we might alter Orientation. The Colleagues Exchange discussed a number of options, including moving the two-day event prior to Labour Day, during the Labour Day weekend, or running Orientation while classes are in session.</p> <p>There was some concern that students may be less likely to attend with a shift in date. There was also discussion on how we might make the events fun and focused on important information (i.e., not partying)</p>	Move Orientation to the Sunday before Labour Day, and start classes on Tuesday September 8, 2020

<p>Length of exam period, and exam spacing</p>	<p>The OTSU survey indicated that many students would prefer a longer exam period in hopes of having more time to study in between exams</p> <p>There was discussion on how the university can address the three exams in a 24 hour period rule, in order to allow for more time in-between exams</p>	<p>We currently have a 10 day period. Going forward, we will move to a "normal" 12 day period.</p> <p>Continue to discuss with Faculty the merits of moving to alternate assessment models</p>
<p>Value of assessments</p>	<p>There was concern that the value of final exams can be too high. It was noted that it would be ideal to have a maximum of 40% for any one assessment</p> <p>Current policy states no more than 15% of the final grade can be issued for a specific assessment in the final week of class</p> <p>One council member proposed that the value on assignments due in the final week be higher, while a student representative indicated that students would like less value on assignments in the last week to prepare for exams</p>	<p>Review the exam policy and bring back to AC</p>
<p>Alternate Assessments</p>	<p>The duration of the exam period was discussed. The Provost noted the sheer number of exams is very large and the number of accommodated exams that have to be supported, are significant</p> <p>Explore ways in which the university can reduce the number of final exams and move toward more alternate assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimizing schedule: All sections of the same course write at the same time • Limit length of final to two hours instead of three • Eliminate final exams 	<p>Provost to ask each Faculty Council to review and report back</p>

<p>Release of Grade Dates</p>	<p>There were considerable questions and comments around why we rush to get grades out before the holiday break.</p> <p>It was noted that in the past, the students had asked for an early grade release. However, now that there is a greater focus on mental health maybe we should revisit this.</p> <p>Some courses/ programs require grades to set up for next term (ie nursing clinical)</p>	<p>Grades will not be released unless there are at least 2 days with advisors in the office.</p> <p>Registrar to create a process with those programs that require grades early.</p>
<p>Deferred Exams</p>	<p>Questions were raised about what impact releasing grades might have on the deferred exam schedule</p>	<p>The deferred exam period will largely remain in the same time frame, and will not impact academic standing calculations for most students</p>

Scheduling Guidelines – updated March 2020

The following Guidelines apply only to those faculties which operate on a 60 day teaching term.

1. Scheduling the Start Date of Classes and Length of the First and Second Terms

Each fall and winter term will comprise a maximum of 12 teaching weeks comprising of 60 “lecture days”. Classes will not be held on public holidays or at other times as directed by the University Academic Council, administration or Board of Governors.

- Fall lectures will normally begin on the ~~Thursday~~ Tuesday following Labour Day.
- Winter lectures will normally begin on the first Monday following January 2.
- Spring lectures (including the 60 day spring/summer and 30 day spring term) will normally begin on the second Monday in May (providing two week break after winter exams).
- Summer lectures will begin the first working day after spring exams.

2. Scheduling Study Days and Examinations

- There will be at least one study day (including Saturdays and Sundays) between the completion of lectures and the first scheduled final examination.
- The total value of any tests or examinations given in the last five days of classes in a semester must be no more than 15 per cent of the final mark for the course (as per the [Academic Staff Responsibilities with Regard to Students](#)).
- The final examination period will be at least 10 days and runs *7 days a week including Saturday and Sunday (although Sunday is avoided if possible)*. No examinations are to be scheduled on Good Friday or Easter Sunday.
- The final day of examinations will be no later than December ~~22-23~~ in the first term and April 25 in the second term.
- Grades will be approved by the deans and due to the registrar’s office within 5 calendar days of the last regularly scheduled exam. Normally they will be due by 10 am on the 5th day providing it is a day the registrar’s office is open.
- For the summer session(s) faculty approved grades will be due to the registrar’s office within 4 calendar days of the last regularly scheduled exam. Normally they will be due by 10 am on the 4th day providing it is a day the registrar’s office is open.
- Term grades will be reviewed by a committee to discuss quality assurance during the first three weeks of the proceeding term.

3. Scheduling Fall Co-curricular Break

Fall Co-curricular break will be scheduled to align with Thanksgiving in October. A four day co-curricular break will run in the fall term. This will normally be in week seven, for Thursday–Sunday subject to other statutory holidays. No formal classes are scheduled; but, faculties and units may use the time to hold optional activities.

4. Scheduling Winter Reading Week:

- Reading Week will be scheduled to align with Family Day in February. No formal classes are scheduled.

5. Scheduling Add/Drop dates:

The last day of registration for the term and 100% refund will be ten days (prorated for condensed terms – ie 6 week spring is five days) from and including the start date of the session (excluding weekends).

Last day to drop with no academic consequence and 50% refund will be twenty days (prorated for condensed terms – ie 6 week spring is ten days) from and including the start date of the session (excluding weekends).

Last day to drop and receive a “W” in lieu of grade will be forty-five days (prorated for condensed terms – ie 6 week spring is twenty days) from and including the start date of the session (excluding weekends).

6. Scheduling Convocation Ceremonies

- June Convocation ceremonies will be scheduled in the first full week in June.

2020-2021 Academic schedule

Fall semester

September 1 to 7, 2020	Fall semester orientation.
September 7, 2020	Labour Day
September 8, 2020	Lectures begin, fall semester.
September 21, 2020	End of regular registration period; last day to add courses, fall semester. Last day to drop courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees, fall semester. Fall semester fees due.
October 1, 2020	Last day to submit online application for graduation for students completing degree requirements at the end of the summer semester.
October 5, 2020	Last day to withdraw from fall semester courses without academic consequences (i.e. without receiving a grade). Courses dropped after this date will be recorded on the academic transcript with a grade of W to indicate withdrawal. Last day to drop courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees, fall semester.
October 12, 2020	Thanksgiving Day, no scheduled academic activities.
October 12 to 17, 2020	Fall study week, no scheduled academic activities.

November 16, 2020	Last day to withdraw from fall semester courses. Active fall semester courses will be graded by instructors.
December 7, 2020	Lectures end, fall semester, except Bachelor of Education.
December 8, 2020	Study break, no scheduled academic activities.
December 9 to 20, 2020	Fall semester final examination period. Students are advised not to make commitments during this period (i.e. vacation, travel plans).
December 18, 2020	Lectures end, Bachelor of Education.
December 24, 2020 to January 1, 2021	University closed.
December 31, 2020	Last day to submit online application for graduation for students completing degree requirements at the end of the fall semester.
Winter semester	
January 4, 2021	University reopens. Lectures begin for Bachelor of Education
January 11, 2021	Lectures begin for all programs, winter semester.
January 22, 2021	End of regular registration period; last day to add courses, winter semester. Last day to drop courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees, winter semester. Winter semester fees due.

February 5 , 2021	Last day to withdraw from winter semester courses without academic consequences (i.e. without receiving a grade). Courses dropped after this date will be recorded on the academic transcript with a grade of W to indicate withdrawal.
	Last day to drop courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees, winter semester.
February 15, 2021	Family Day, no scheduled academic activities.
February 16 to 21, 2021	Winter study week, no scheduled academic activities.
February 28, 2021	Last day to submit online application for graduation for the spring session of convocation for students completing degree requirements at the end of the winter semester.
March 12, 2021	Last day to withdraw from winter semester courses. Active winter semester courses will be graded by instructors.
April 2, 2021	Good Friday, no scheduled academic activities.
April 4, 2021	Easter Sunday, no scheduled academic activities.
April 12, 2021	Lectures will follow the Friday schedule on this day only. Lectures end, winter semester, except Bachelor of Education.
April 13, 2021	Study Break, No Scheduled Academic Activities
April 14 to 25, 2021	Winter semester final examination period. Students are advised not to make commitments during this period (i.e. vacation, travel plans).

April 23, 2021 Lectures end, Bachelor of Education.

Spring/Summer semester

April 26, 2021 Start date, Bachelor of Education (see Faculty of Education's Field Experience Handbook).

May 3, 2021 Lectures begin, six week spring session and 12-week summer semester.

May 7, 2021 Last day to add six-week spring session courses.

Last day to drop six-week spring session courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees.

Six-week spring session and 12-week summer semester fees due. Fees are due at the time of registration for any six-week spring session or 12-week summer semester courses registered after this date.

May 14, 2021 Last day to add courses, 12-week summer semester.

Last day to drop 12-week summer semester courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees.

Last day to withdraw from six-week spring session courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees.

Last day to withdraw from six-week spring session courses without academic consequences (i.e. without receiving a grade). Courses dropped after

this date will be recorded on the academic transcript with a grade of W to indicate withdrawal.

May 24, 2021

Victoria Day, no scheduled academic activities.

May 31, 2021

Last day to drop 12-week summer semester courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees.

Last day to withdraw from 12-week summer semester courses without academic consequences (i.e. without receiving a grade). Courses dropped after this date will be recorded on the academic transcript with a grade of W to indicate withdrawal.

Last day to withdraw from six-week spring session courses. Active six-week spring session courses will be graded by instructors.

June 10 and 11, 2021

Spring convocation. For more details, please refer to uoit.ca/convocation.

June 14, 2021

Lectures end, six-week spring session.

June 15, 2021

Spring six-week session study break, no scheduled academic activities.

June 15 to 19, 2021

Study break, 12-week summer semester, except Bachelor of Education.

June 16 to 19, 2021

Spring session final examination period. Students are advised not to make commitments during this period (i.e. vacation, travel plans).

June 21, 2021

Lectures begin, six-week summer session.

Lectures resume, 12-week summer semester.

Six-week summer session fees due. Fees are due at the time of registration for any six-week summer session courses registered after this date.

June 25, 2021

Lectures end, Bachelor of Education nine-week session.

June 25, 2021

Last day to add courses, six-week summer session.

Last day to drop six-week summer session courses and receive a 100 per cent refund of tuition fees.

July 1, 2021

Canada Day, no scheduled academic activities.

July 5, 2021

Last day to drop six-week summer session courses and receive a 50 per cent refund of tuition fees.

Last day to withdraw from six-week summer session courses without academic consequences (i.e. without receiving a grade). Courses dropped after this date will be recorded on the academic transcript with a grade of W to indicate withdrawal.

July 12, 2021

Last day to withdraw from 12-week summer semester courses. Active 12-week summer semester courses will be graded by instructors.

July 19, 2021

Last day to withdraw from six-week summer session courses. Active six-week summer session courses will be graded by instructors.

August 2, 2021

Civic holiday, no scheduled academic activities.

August 3, 2021	Lectures will follow the Thursday schedule on this day only. Lectures end, 12-week summer semester and six-week summer session.
August 4, 2021	Study break, no scheduled academic activities.
August 5 to 8, 2021	Summer semester final examination period (includes six-week and 12-week courses). Students are advised not to make commitments during this period (i.e. vacation, travel plans).

Notes:

- Fourth-year students in the Medical Laboratory Science program will have program start dates prior to the first week of lectures stated in this academic schedule. See Medical Laboratory Science program start dates for details.
- See the Faculty of Education website for Bachelor of Education important program dates and details.