

# Fall Break Proposal

The following Policy Paper and Resolution was presented in the November Stater's Meeting:

## POLICY PAPER

**History:** In the past there has been no break during the fall academic semester. The stretch from Labor Day to Thanksgiving becomes difficult and increasingly stressful for students. Every other public institution in the state has a fall break lasting 1-2 days.

Schools with a 2-day fall break

- University of Utah, October 6-7, 2005
- Dixie State, October 6-7, 2005
- Salt Lake Community College, October 6-7, 2005
- Utah Valley State College, October 20-21, 2005
- College of Eastern Utah, October 20-21, 2005

Schools with a 1-day fall break

- Southern Utah University, October 24, 2005
- Weber State, October 21, 2005

The Board of Regents has established that public institutions have 75 days, including final exams, in the academic semester. Currently Utah State University has 76 in the fall academic semester and could take a 1-day fall break and still be within the state requirement.

**Strengths:** Provides students a break from the lengthy stretch of school. Students have voiced their concerns for a fall break. A 1-day break will not make us start or end the semester any earlier. Professors will have an extra preparation day. A break coinciding with the surrounding schools UEA break will allow students, faculty and staff that have school aged kids to have a day off as well.

**Weaknesses:** A break might cause conflict for professors. It might conflict with Friday labs and/or classes. The calendaring committee has already met for the year and will have to meet again. One day might not be enough of a break.

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS** Utah State University has no break during the fall academic semester between Labor Day and Thanksgiving.

**WHEREAS** every other public university in the state has established a break during the fall academic semester lasting 1-2 days, in October.

**WHEREAS** The Board of Regents has established that there be at least 75 days in an academic semester.

**WHEREAS** Utah State University currently has 76 days in the fall academic semester.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that Utah State University establish a 1-day fall break making the fall academic semester 75 days instead of the current 76 days.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this previously mentioned fall break be in October, coinciding with the UEA holiday of the surrounding schools.

**Sponsor:**

Stacy Brown, Education Senator

**Co-sponsor:**

Cody Bingham, Agricultural Senator

The Fall Break was presented to the Calendar Committee:

### **Calendar Committee Report 11/17/05 Meeting**

The Fall Break resolution was discussed. The committee unanimously voted in favor of supporting a Fall Break. The following points were presented:

- All other State institutions have a Fall Break.
- UEA is dynamic and cannot be scheduled around.
- Preference is to not have a Home Game over the Fall Break weekend.
- Third week in October was preferred week for break.

NOTES:

<b>School</b>	<b>Fall Break</b>	<b>Classes Begin</b>
University of Utah	October 6-7, 2005	Wed. Aug 24
Dixie State College	October 6-7, 2005	Tues. Aug 23
Salt Lake Community College	October 6-7, 2005	Wed. Aug 24
Utah Valley State College	October 20-21, 2005	Wed. Aug 24
College of Eastern Utah	October 20-21, 2005	Mon. Aug 15*
Southern Utah University	October 24, 2005	Mon. Aug 29
Weber State University**	October 21, 2005	Mon. Aug 29

\*classes end one week earlier than USU

\*\*does not dismiss school Wednesday before Thanksgiving (students are currently proposing they do)

Two Options were discussed for a Fall Break. Both options are described below as well as the pros and cons for each. A vote of the Calendar Committee was not taken on either option. Faculty should vote on which option they prefer, if indeed, they support the Students and Calendar Committee in having a Fall Break.

**Option 1:** *(Preferred Option)* **Include a one day break the third week of October (Friday) (the semester begins as scheduled) and lose one instruction day.**

**Pros:**

- Does not change the beginning of the Semester.

**Cons:**

- Decreases instruction days from 71 to 70.
- Makes Fall Semester instruction days out of line with Spring Semester.
- Impacts one-day courses (one week of instruction lost for the day missed).

**Option 2:** **Include a two day break the third week of October (Thursday and Friday) and begin the semester on a Wednesday (earlier than currently scheduled). (Faculty contract start dates to be determined.)**

**Pros:**

- Increases instruction days from 71 to 72.
- Makes Fall Semester instruction days more inline with Spring Semester.
- Activities could be set up to keep students here for the weekend.

**Cons:**

- Impacts Connections program significantly. (Connections would have to start on a Sunday or Saturday and include Sunday.)
- Students might not show up early.

## Students' Voice Report

The options were taken back to the students for a vote and the results are as follows:

As explained in ASB 06-11 FALL BREAK, the students have voiced their desire for a fall break in October. This legislation passed in both the Academic Senate, and the Executive Council, in ASUSU. The legislation was then presented at Stater's Council. At Stater's Council we learned that line 12 of the resolution (see attachment) is not an option. We were informed the UEA holiday is not set until one year in advance, and the USU calendar is set three to five years in advance. Academic Senate and Executive Council agree that instead of revolving around UEA, we establish a fall break in the third week of October.

In further meetings two options for a fall break were discussed. Option 1: take a 1-day fall break on a Friday cutting the academic semester from the current 76 days to 75 days, still in regulation. Option 2: Start the fall semester three days earlier on a Wednesday and getting a Thursday/Friday fall break in October, gaining a lecture day. The pros and cons of these two options were discussed in detail and essentially we, as student leaders, wanted to represent the voice of the students. A survey was conducted to get the voice of the students.

What type of fall break would you like?

1. One Friday off during the fall semester
2. Starting school three days earlier to receive two days off during the fall semester.
3. No break...I like things how they are

Results

1. One Friday off during the fall semester – 64/123 votes = **52%**
2. Starting school three days earlier to receive two days off – 46/123 votes = **37%**
3. No break – 13/123 votes = **11%**

With these results, we would recommend a 1-day fall break in the October, on a Friday. This is the voice of the students, but if this option is not a possibility, we would also support the option of starting school three days earlier to receive a two day fall break.