UNIVERSITY SENATE

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Amendment to 8081-01: Guidelines for Academic Calendars

INTRODUCED BY: Council on Educational Policy

DATE: February 20, 1991

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT SENATE BILL 8081-01 BE AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

I. The academic year is composed of two approximately equivalent semesters.

II. The fall semester begins after Labor Day and ends with the last day of examinations no later than December 23.

III. The spring semester begins the third week in January and ends with Commencement on the third or fourth Sunday in May. In those years in which Commencement is held after the third Sunday in May, the beginning of the semester shall be adjusted accordingly.

IV. The following holidays are observed by the recessing of classes:

   (a) Rosh Hashana (two days), Yom Kippur (one day), and Passover (two days), except when these days occur on a Saturday. (It is understood that classes will be recessed before the beginning of the first class after noon on the day preceding each of these three holidays.)

   (b) Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday and Saturday.

   (c) The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday and, when possible within credit-hour constraints, Washington's Birthday.

V. A one-week recess of classes in the spring semester will be scheduled no later than the ninth week. (It is understood that in some years this will coincide with Passover and Easter and in other years it will not. In addition, the placement of Passover and Easter in relation to each other and in relation to their distance from the beginning of the semester may make it reasonable in some spring semesters to schedule two one-week vacations and in others to schedule one vacation plus a "long weekend." ) Classes will not resume before 12:20 p.m. on the day following Easter or the second night of Passover.

VI. One or two weekdays will be set aside as reading days between the last day of classes and the first day of final examinations. (It is understood that quarter classes and courses which meet only once per week will continue to be in session on most reading days.)

VII. Where possible, the official calendar of the University will schedule the same number of class meetings for classes that meet after Noon as the classes before Noon.

VIII. The structure of the calendar which is reflected in the above policies is made possible, especially in the fall, only when Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes meet for a minimum of 55 minutes and when Tuesday/Thursday classes meet for a minimum of 85 minutes.

IX. This policy shall take effect with the 1993-94 academic year.
In establishing the academic calendar, the University at Albany must comply with a variety of federal, state, and State University of New York requirements regarding the quantity of instruction provided, length of semester, fair acknowledgement of religious beliefs, etc. Nevertheless, the University retains some latitude in how it will implement those requirements. The University's calendar policy reflects the University's choices for implementation.

The University last revised its academic calendar policy in consultation with the University Senate in 1980. Since that time, a state holiday has been added (the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday), and several conflicts between University activities and religious observances have been noted by students and faculty: e.g., the need for earlier suspension of classes to allow for travel before Jewish holidays, the need for a later start to classes on the day after Easter, the necessity, in some years, for faculty to submit grades on Christmas Eve. These amendments address many, though not all, of those issues. The basic principles of the academic calendar, on which the University has operated for the past decade, remain unchanged.