II. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

There was a consensus among committee members that any calendar change prompting a thorough and fundamental curriculum review and emphasizing the 30-week aspect of the Academic Year would benefit the institution. Beyond that, we looked for a calendar which would enhance the opportunities for academic variety and flexibility.

We concluded that, relative to Winter Term, a change to traditional semesters would limit not only the variety of learning experiences available to students, but also the innovative and experimental opportunities available to faculty. We found this contrary to the spirit of our educational mission. However, we also found it important to propose modifications to the Winter Term format which would allow and encourage academic programs to take full advantage of the 30-week aspect of the Academic Year.

A number of academic programs have expressed an inability to make effective use of Winter Term under the current 4-1-4 format (e.g., Music, Foreign Languages, Education, Business, Graduate Programs, and the Sciences). For the most part, they feel cut off from the 30-week aspect of the Academic Year. Primarily in response to their objections, we have developed the concept of a lengthened Winter Term (from one month to six weeks), and have outlined some reasonable approaches that can be taken by these various programs to allow for an effective use of the 6-week Winter Term format. (See the section of our report entitled "Concerns and Options" for a discussion of these approaches.)

We recognize that there are some courses that could be taught more effectively over a 15-week term than over 13 weeks. However, to give 15 weeks to those courses would mean sacrificing most of the variety and flexibility inherent in a Winter Term calendar. This issue seems most critical in relation to year-long sequences (e.g., introductory foreign language, physics, chemistry, mathematics, and supervised student-teaching courses). We have addressed this issue in more detail in the section to our report entitled "Concerns and Options." In essence, we are proposing that these programs could restructure their year-long course sequences to distribute the material over all three terms. For example, Basic Physics I and II, and Principles of Chemistry I and II (each comprising 5-unit courses in Fall and Spring) could become Basic Physics I, II, and III, or Principles of Chemistry I, II, and III (comprising 4-unit courses in Fall and Spring, and a 2-unit course in Winter). In this way, the 10-unit sequence would be distributed over the full 30-weeks of the Academic Year. Similarly, Elementary Spanish I and II, and Calculus I and II (all 4-units courses) could be modified to take advantage of Winter Term by conversion to a 3-unit course in Fall and Spring, and a 2-unit course in Winter. Although these changes might produce occasional problems for transfer students, they would alleviate many of the problems commonly associated with the compact nature of our Fall and Spring semesters. At the same time, they would promote active participation in Winter Term.

Music and Education have expressed the opinion that the Winter Term format is incompatible with their academic programs. In the final analysis, however, we found their objections generally traceable to insufficient faculty for staffing Winter Term offerings. (These objections are dealt with in more detail in the section to our report entitled "Concerns and Options."
III. IMPACT ON STUDENTS

The basic tradeoff between traditional semesters and a Winter Term calendar seems to be between a larger number of courses during longer terms and a smaller number of courses during shorter terms. The former option emphasizes extended time for absorbing material; the latter emphasizes a reduction in fragmentation and more intensive learning. Though the committee finds attractive elements in both of these options, we find additional potential advantages to the Winter Term calendar that would make it better suited to the needs of our students.

For instance, Winter Term provides students with the opportunity to focus intensively in a single course, and thus to experience the virtues of "single-minded" intensive learning. Students are also exposed to "change of pace" learning under this format, and to the diversity of innovative, experimental, and travel-study courses. Students have the flexibility to distribute their course load over three substantial terms, to engage in workload management, to accelerate their degree work, take more courses during prime-time hours (9 am to 1 pm), and to coordinate their academic and non-academic responsibilities and interests. In particular, the enhanced Winter Term calendar offers consistent course scheduling across the three terms (both in terms of class times and range of regular catalogue and general education courses). This is particularly important for working and part-time students (who, together, make up a majority of our clientele). In addition, the Winter Term calendar provides the advantage of starting later in the Fall, which could be of benefit to students with agriculture-based summer jobs.

We endorse the concept of a regularly scheduled "Activity Hour" during which students can participate in extra-curricular activities. This would be of particular value to our commuting students. Given the option to distribute their course load over three terms, students operating under a Winter Term calendar would have more flexibility and time for involvement in such activities.

Student surveys have indicated a growing desire for regular catalogue and general education courses during Winter Term. The enhanced Winter Term format would provide quite readily for this option, but would still protect the valuable option for non-traditional courses.

Under the current 4-1-4 calendar, there is a somewhat artificial requirement that students must attend a certain number of Winter Terms. In addition, students do not need to sign up for Winter Term in order to maintain continuous enrollment privileges. It is our expectation that the expanded offerings will encourage most students to participate voluntarily in Winter Term. Nevertheless, we recommend a thorough review of the policies concerning required attendance and continuous enrollment. We should encourage active participation by students throughout the 30-week Academic Year.
IV. IMPACT ON FACULTY

Many of the same considerations that apply to students also apply to faculty. Specifically, in a traditional semester system, faculty would typically teach four 3-unit courses per semester. Under a Winter Term calendar, teaching loads can be distributed over the three terms to reduce fragmentation, to improve workload management, and to provide flexibility for variations in teaching pace and intensity. A Winter Term calendar also fosters and enhances opportunities for experimental and innovative teaching methods and course content. Additionally, we feel that the change of pace inherent in a Winter Term calendar is conducive to faculty renewal and to research and creative activities.

The committee recommends that all faculty be expected to participate actively over the course of the full 30-week Academic Year. We feel this is not only important, but also realistic, in virtue of the fact that the enhanced Winter Term format provides for the offering of regular catalogue courses on the same basis as in the Fall and Spring semesters. (Regular catalogue courses would not require special review to be offered in Winter Term; non-catalogue courses offered during any term would be reviewed on an annual basis by the appropriate subcommittee of EPC.)

The concern for a lack of accountability for faculty activities and course format and content during Winter Term under the 4-1-4 calendar was given strong consideration by the committee. In order for the 6-week Winter Term to be effective, it is essential that all departments make a strong commitment to become actively involved in Winter Term. This includes reviewing their curriculum within the context of the 30-week Academic Year, under a three-term format, and identifying and offering appropriate regular catalogue courses (including general education courses) during Winter Term. In addition, faculty must expect to engage in regular advising and committee-related activities throughout the course of the 30-week Academic Year. Department Chairs and Deans would share, with the faculty, responsibility for assuring active participation throughout the academic year. (We are not recommending that all faculty be explicitly required to teach during all three terms. In certain circumstances, "active participation" might mean research or scholarly activities, or special projects. We are recommending that faculty be accountable for their activities in all terms for which they are under contract, and we feel strongly that Department Chairs and Deans should be actively involved in this process.)

In relation to accountability for the form and content of Winter Term courses, it is our expectation that many of the Winter Term offerings will be regular catalogue courses, and must meet the same standards that are in effect during the Fall and Spring semesters. We think this is reasonable, since the expanded Winter Term format mirrors the 6-week Summer Session, and is roughly half the length of the Fall and Spring terms. (For instance, a 3-unit catalogue course would typically meet MWF for 2 hours per day, or TTh for 3 hours per day, and thus would be directly comparable to a Fall or Spring offering of the same course.) The committee overseeing non-catalogue offerings would be expected to engage in a more effective and thorough process of review than is currently practiced, and faculty would be expected to respect and abide by the recommendations of the committee.
V. OPERATING ISSUES

As a relatively small institution, serious consideration must be given to the operating issues associated with supporting any of the calendar options under consideration.

The committee recognizes that a two-semester system is easier to administer at all levels (from registration processes to departmental planning), and that such a system is consistent with CSU System administrative policy and practices. Every term involves budgeting, use of facilities, articulation with other campuses in our region, registration procedures and scheduling of classes, logistics of resource allocation, fee collection and management, advising, grade reporting, and many other things as well. Clearly a two-semester calendar requires less effort than a Winter Term calendar to support these various operational necessities. But we feel it is important to weigh this benefit against the academic strengths of the Winter Term calendar. Furthermore, we cannot ignore the fact that the CSU System provides funding support for Winter Term, and that a negative staffing impact might well accompany a change to a traditional semester calendar.

It is important to recognize that operating issues are driven, for the most part, by FTE considerations (due to the funding structure of the CSU System). We feel that the most significant way to increase FTE is to improve the academic quality of the institution, and to enhance the perception of that quality by our prospective students. We feel that the variety and flexibility inherent in the Winter Term calendar can foster and encourage the development of a quality academic environment. It retains many of the academic benefits of a two-semester system, while providing additional options and opportunities for the cultivation and nourishment of academic excellence.

Effective long-range planning and scheduling is crucial to the efficient use of instructional and administrative resources. We recommend that departments engage in planning processes aimed at securing long-term commitments to curriculum and course-offerings. Specifically, we recommend that every department maintain continuously at least a two-year commitment to specific course offerings (particularly core and general education), and to the terms during which these courses will be offered. This should improve the scheduling of facilities needed for particular courses, and should allow students to plan their academic programs more effectively.

As part of our proposed modification of the Winter Term calendar, we recommend establishing standard 120 minute class modules (Monday through Friday) during Winter Term in order to facilitate the scheduling of courses. In addition, we recommend moving to 60 and 90 minute class modules (rather than the current 58 and 87 minutes), with 10-minute breaks (rather than 7 and 13), during the Fall and Spring semesters. Lastly, we recommend starting at 7:30am during the Fall and Spring semesters to optimize facility usage. (See Appendices B and C for sample academic calendars and proposed class modules.)
CONCERNS AND OPTIONS

The committee has been concerned with the question of how the special opportunities of Winter Term could be integrated with the more traditional aspects of the Fall and Spring semester offerings. We would hope that the following principles would be considered by all departments and programs while reviewing their curricula in the context of an enhanced Winter Term calendar:

A) It is to our advantage to design curricula that will encourage student and faculty participation in Winter Term.

B) An enhanced Winter Term calendar can accomodate course sequences that are distributed over the full 30 weeks of the Academic Year.

C) Special Winter Term courses could be designed which would complement or supplement courses in the Fall, Winter, or Spring.

A few departments have expressed serious reservations about their ability to make effective use of Winter Term, and have in some cases also suggested that the retention and/or lengthening of Winter Term would be a detriment to the objectives of their programs. These include Foreign Languages, Music, Education, and Physical Education. Some faculty in the Sciences have expressed reservations about their ability to take advantage of the compact nature of the three terms. Finally, there has been little participation in Winter Term by the Graduate and Professional programs, due to reservations about the compressed nature of the one-month format. The committee is concerned about these reservations, and feels it is important to propose possible remedies. Note that these are suggestions of possible approaches to dealing with concerns about the Winter term format, and are generally directed to those concerned about the compressed nature of the terms under a Winter Term calendar.

1) Foreign Languages: The foreign language skills development courses (such as Elementary Spanish I and II) require sequential, continuous, and extended instructional exposure to the spoken language. Their current approach is to offer two 4-unit courses in the Fall and Spring, which translates into approximately 26 weeks of instruction. This also leaves nearly 8 weeks between terms, when skills developed in the Fall can quickly dissipate. Finally, they say that "students' concentration span in a foreign language class seldom exceeds 45 minutes."

We suggest that they could modify their curriculum so that a sequence of two 4-unit courses would be replaced by a sequence of three courses, comprised of 3-unit courses in the Fall and Spring, and a 2-unit course in the Winter. This would provide for a sequential, continuous, and extended instructional exposure to the spoken language for the full 30 weeks of the Academic Year. It would also retain a total of 8 units for the sequence. Finally, in response to their indicated desire for 45-minute class periods, we propose that they could easily elect to meet a 3-unit class four days a week for 45 minutes each day (which would be otherwise equivalent to 3 meetings per week for 60 minutes a day).
2) **Music:** The Music Department is concerned about a similar problem, though in their case many of the limitations are related to insufficient staffing to cover the variety of 1-unit courses in Winter Term that would be necessary to assure continuity in skill-development.

We recommend that their needs be carefully considered, but point out that this is not, strictly speaking, a criticism of the Winter Term format. In the long run, staffing would be supported by the additional student credit-hours generated in Winter Term. We also suggest that if support were to be found, the Music Department might consider offering special Winter productions, or programs for children scheduled in coordination with the Drama Department's Children's Theatre productions.

3) **Physical Education:** Coaches have been working with student athletes during January despite the fact that students have not been signed up for Winter Term units, and despite the fact that the WU's for coaching have all been allocated in the Fall and Spring.

As in the case of Music, we recommend the consideration of additional support for Winter Term activities. Again, we expect that in the long run the additional student credit hours would support the additional staffing.

4) **Sciences:** Science departments such as Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Mathematics have suggested that they sometimes do not have enough time under the compressed semester format of the 4-1-4 calendar to cover the necessary material in their courses.

In the context of the lengthened Winter Term, we suggest that these departments engage in curriculum review similar to that suggested for the Foreign Language programs. There may be many courses or course sequences that require no modification. However, if a program has the desire to take advantage of the 30-week aspect of the academic year, there are options available under an enhanced Winter Term calendar. For example, a sequence of two 5-unit courses (such as Principles of Chemistry I and II, or Basic Physics I and II) could be redistributed over three terms as a sequence of 4 units in the Fall and Spring, and 2 units in the Winter. Similarly, a sequence of two 4-unit courses (such as Invertebrate Zoology I and II, or Calculus I and II) could be redistributed as a 3-unit course in the Fall and Spring, and a 2-unit course in the Winter. In each case, the total units for the sequence would remain the same, but instruction would be extended throughout the full 30 weeks of the Academic Year.

We recognize that there are potential problems with transfer and off-sequence students, but we believe that the advantages of the full 30-week sequences would outweigh the inconveniences for those students who might be affected. Note also that the 2-unit courses would be regular catalogue courses, and could be offered during any term of the Academic Year, or even during Summer Session.
5) Education/Student-Teacher Supervision: Student teachers in the schools are currently unsupervised during January. We recognize this to be an especially serious problem, and share the concerns of the School of Education. Were these student-teachers to remain unsupervised (as they have under the tenure of the 4-1-4 system), our ability to work effectively with the public schools could be adversely affected. It is essential, therefore, that we utilize the full 30 weeks of the Academic Year for supervision of our student-teachers.

Student-teachers currently sign up for two supervised Multiple Subject student-teaching courses (EDMS 3815 and 4815, 5 units each) during the term for which they are student teachers.

We suggest that students doing their student-teaching during the spring sign up for one of their supervised courses during Winter Term, and for the other during the Spring term. These students would sign up for the same total number of units, but would be guaranteed supervision over the full 18 weeks of the public school system's Spring Semester.

If this increased supervision were to require additional staffing, we strongly support the allocation of appropriate resources, as we feel this is a crucial program within the context of our role as a regional campus of the California State University System.

6) Graduate and Professional Programs: Under the one-month format, particularly with the emphasis on innovative and experimental courses, it has been difficult for some of the graduate and professional programs (particularly in the School of Business) to offer Winter Term courses.

The Dean of the School of Business has indicated that a 6-week format would allow for active participation in Winter Term by the MBA program. Winter Term course offerings by the MBA program would allow their students to accelerate their progress toward a degree. This would be an especially valuable option for part-time students in this program.

In addition, the director of the MPA program in Public Administration has expressed support for lengthening Winter Term to 6 weeks, as this would allow for the regular scheduling of graduate courses during all three terms of the Academic Year. As in the MBA program, this would be of particular benefit to their part-time students.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our assessment of the two viable calendar options in terms of the listed criteria, the enhanced Winter Term option was judged preferable in four out of the five major areas. Only in relation to Operating Issues did the traditional two semester calendar option rank higher, though that ranking was tempered by the likelihood that we would suffer a staffing reduction if we were to drop Winter Term and adopt a two-semester system. In the final analysis, the committee recommends continuation of the Winter Term calendar, with the provision that the calendar undergo modifications to improve the effectiveness of its implementation.

The following are our specific recommendations:

1) Winter Term should be extended to six weeks, while retaining a minimum of 60 instructional days in the Fall and Spring.

2) Winter Term must be integrated into the regular functioning of the University. In particular, Winter Term needs to be viewed as an essential component of the 30-week Academic Year, and needs to provide students, faculty, and staff with all the academic, cultural, social, and operational amenities available during the rest of the academic year. But Winter Term must continue to provide the possibilities for a variety of enhanced educational experiences.

3) All academic departments, divisions, and programs are to participate for the full 30 weeks of the Academic Year.

4) All faculty must be held accountable for their academic and administrative responsibilities in all terms for which they are under contract. We recommend that faculty, departments, and, particularly, department chairs and academic Deans should be actively involved in assuring this accountability during all three terms of the Academic Year.

5) Regular catalogue courses (including general education) are to be scheduled and taught during Winter Term on the same basis as during the Fall and Spring semesters. Non-catalogue courses should be reviewed annually by the appropriate subcommittee of EPC.

6) There should be no further need for a specially appointed Director of Winter Term. Academic administrative functions during Winter Term should be the responsibility of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, as in the Fall and Spring. The Educational Policies Committee and Graduate Council should retain their responsibilities for curricular review.

7) All departments, divisions and programs will need to engage in careful review of their curriculum in order to adjust it to the context of the 30-week Academic Year with a 6-week Winter Term. Specifically, departments should identify courses which can be taught effectively during the 6-week Winter Term, and sequences of courses which could be modified to take full advantage of a 30-week Academic Year,
8) Individual faculty members will need to review and refine any existing course proposals for non-catalogue Winter Term offerings prior to submitting them for review by EPC. (These courses, which may have been offered previously under the one-month format, need to be considered in the context of the six-week format.)

9) An interim committee should be established, for a period of two years, to assist in the transition to, and initial implementation of, the enhanced Winter Term calendar.

10) As resources become available, special consideration should be given to the needs of programs that might be adversely affected in one way or another by the retention and/or extension of Winter Term. (Supervisors of student-teachers, Music faculty, and Athletic Coaches are among those who have been identified as having specific concerns about this kind of impact.)

11) A careful review needs to be conducted to determine whether students should be required to participate in a specific number of Winter Terms, whether enrollment in Winter Term should be considered a part of continuous enrollment, or whether student participation in Winter Term should be strictly voluntary. This could affect the definition of full-time status during Winter Term, as well as eligibility of our students for financial aid of various forms. We should also review the fee structure and consider allocating fees in a way that is appropriate to the calendar. Finally, there should be a review of the policies concerning course loads and full-time status.

12) Classes should meet 60 minutes per unit per week in the Fall and Spring, and 120 minutes per unit per week in the Winter. During the Fall and Spring, standard MWF class modules should be 60 minutes (as opposed to 58-minute), and TTh modules should be 90 minutes (as opposed to 87 minutes). During Winter Term, to facilitate scheduling, standard class modules should be 120 minutes. (Note: 3-unit Winter Term classes meeting three days a week would use one module each day; 3-unit classes meeting twice a week would require one-and-a-half modules each day. 2- and 4-unit classes would be scheduled in a similar fashion.) In the Fall and Spring, there should be a student Activity Hour every TTh from 12:30 to 1:15pm. During the Winter, there should be an Activity Hour every day, from 12:15 to 1:00pm. Classes should start at 7:30am (as opposed to 8:00am) in the Fall and Spring, and at 8:00am in Winter.

13) In the event that it is not in the best interests of the University to implement the enhanced Winter Term calendar option, the committee recommends adoption of a traditional two-semester calendar, using our current curriculum. We do not recommend a general shift to 4-unit courses. We feel this would severely limit the range and number of electives that students could take, and that it would also cause difficulties for students transferring to and from our campus.
APPENDIX A: PRESIDENT'S CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

To: Jacqueline Johnson, Chair
   Richard Alter
   James Bowen
   Thomas Carter

   James Tueidio
   Robert Van Regenmorter
   Ninos Isaac (or designee)

From: John W. Moore, President

Date: January 7, 1986

Subject: ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The current 4-1-4 calendar has been in place at CSU Stanislaus since 1973. When first initiated, the 4-1-4 calendar was viewed as distinctive and innovative, and it was implemented with vigor and enthusiasm. In recent years, the 4-1-4 calendar has been the subject of campus debate, criticism, and study.

Ambiguity and concern about the future of the 4-1-4 calendar suggest that it is essential that decisions be made regarding the University's academic calendar. Prolonging the ambiguity in this regard will make it difficult for faculty, staff, and students to plan academic programs and schedules effectively. The importance of the academic calendar to the University requires that the issue be approached thoughtfully and carefully, but also expeditiously.

Therefore, we should plan the 1986-87 academic year on the basis of the 4-1-4 calendar while the Ad Hoc Committee on the Academic Calendar carries out and completes its charge by the conclusion of the Spring Semester 1986.

The responsibilities of the Ad Hoc Committee are to:

1. Identify criteria to be used in assessing alternative academic calendars including but not limited to:
   a. the mission of the University, as a public university within the CSU system, serving a diverse clientele, both on and off campus;
   b. the diversity of program offerings including both liberal and professional studies at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
   c. implications for the quality of teaching and learning;
   d. the needs, interests, and lifestyles of CSU Stanislaus students;

2. Consider the options of full-time and part-time academic calendars and make recommendations to the University on the best approach for planning for the future.

3. Finalize the 1987-88 calendar.”