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negative view of the idea of any Committee. The report

If the decision is made to move to the [Early

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nd colleges, the Faculty Senate and student body voiced

## Are semesters right for Penn State?

Editor's Note: The following is the transcript of a report dealing with the University's scheduled switch to a semester calendar, written by a committee of University faculty members. Because of the possible importance of the report to the community, The Dally Collegian is publishing the report in full. Footnotes have been inated because of space limitations. We believe it is imperative that all faculty, students

iministrators and trustees of Penn State take the time to give careful thought to the attached document titled "Are The career of every faculty member and every student at Penn State will be profoundly affected if implementation The decision will work a major change in the entire structure of the University and affect all of its missions leaching, research, Commonwealth campuses and We believe that the following points about the semester ecision are now clear.

 The pedological and research missions of the University will be adversely affected. The effect upon many major problems and challenges facing the University in the decade ahead is unknown. Vast quantities of University resources have been used in an attempt to implement th decision and a continuing sizeable allocation will be needed for years to come.

We believe there is no shame in changing a decision once made. The shame lies in failing to change a decision vhen it needs to be altered. For the good of Penn State it is time to halt the

On Sept. 9, 1980, Dr. Oswald sept a letter to the Penr State Community in which he stated: I am inclined to conclude that Penn State should return to a semester calendar . . . 1 am further persuaded that broad support exists fo The purpose of this letter is to advise the

early semester calendar, effective in the summer of 1984, *seems probable* although n Later, in the Penn State Intercom (Oct. 30, 1980), Dr. ald reacted to considerable criticism that his letter of Sept. 9 all but indicated that the decision was already made and that the call for interested parties to submit nmendations by Dec. 1, 1980, was mere window "While predisposed to the early semester

University community that a conversion to an

calendar, I am open to persuasive evidence and data against that system... Accordingly, Dr. Oswald made it clear from the outset nat he was merely advising the Community that while the final decision had not been reached in the matter, the decision-making process had progressed to a point where nyone who held contrary views would have to present, it Or. Oswald's words, "persuasive evidence and data against (the semester) system."

Despite this clear signal that faculty input was not part of the decision process, but merely an adjunct to its onclusion and despite the fact that the faculty was given only two and a half months to garner the persuasive vidence and data against the semester system. It appears that a vast negative faculty response was heard. Although the responses or their exact nature were never nade public, investigations over the past months show whole departments opposed conversion, many colleges sent negative reviews, at least one petition was hastily rculated to nine departments in three colleges and came away with more than 100 faculty signatures in opposition to the change, and individual faculty wrote extensive lictments of the idea and forwarded them to Dr. Oswald This opposition last year was based upon assumptions more favorable to a semester change than exist today. The proposed 15 week semester has been cut to 14 weeks. The idea that class sizes could be kept within present bounds s no longer realistically considered. The hope for course eview has not materialized and the need to reduce course fferings available to the students has become apparen Numerous faculty members continue to be distressed a he unliateral nature of the decision; many are downrigh

participatory role of the faculty in such decisions as called for in Perspective on the '80s, it stems also from the common belief which appears to be held by an overwhelming majority of the faculty, even those who ersonally like semesters, that no rigorous evidence exists to support the notions advanced by Dr. Oswald in suppor of change. Furthermore, the faculty recognizes that the major issues identified in Dr. Oswald's Sept. 9 letter: teaching loads, availability of laboratory and large classroom space faculty research, faculty contracts, conversion of courses. curricula and schedules were never resolved prior to the

straged. But, this discontent stems out merely from the

breach of faith with the faculty and the violation of the

resolved now, more than a year after they were It is also now clear that Dr. Oswald's list of major issues s but the tip of a very large iceberg of unresolved issues Furthermore, immense quantities of faculty, staff and inistrative resources are being diverted to this process of change without any concrete notion as to the nensions of that change process; and, without any udgetary restraint. Millions upon millions in unbudgeted funds are clearly turning into sunken costs over a decision which lacks basis in fact and which has the potential to

verely injure Penn State and its programs. Because of this ongoing threat to the integrity of the Iniversity, a core group of senior faculty with nsiderable collegial support, held a meeting in late ovember to initiate action aimed at recalling this decision now. To that end, the Faculty Committee on Semester Revie

has developed this document With the available information, this document reviews ne reasons for the proposed change and measures those easons against reality. It looks at the conversion process. And, it examines the effects the change could have on the iversity, its students, its faculty, its programs, its The document is not exhaustive, but it is designed to ddress major points and issues. We believe this document to be required reading for very student, professor, administrator and trustee. I. Examination of the conversion decision

The decision to convert to an early semester calendar ind thereby plunge Penn State into a period of unknown nsitional problems, unforeseen difficulties and unbridled expenditures was made by one person, the esident of the University, based upon his assertion of authority. The reasoning used to support the decision has been announced in several letters and communications from the president to the community — students, faculty While authority appears to reside in the president to

make adjustments in the calendar, it is clear that no authority exists for the president to make a change of the nature currently proposed. Furthermore, the reasons asserted as the motivation for the conversion are virtually without support in fact or foundation. This section will explore these premise Authority of the President to Effect the Conversion In announcing his decision on March 12, 1981, to

convert the University to an Early Semester Calendar, ident Oswald stated as his authority: Under the policies of the Board of Trustees the president of the University has the sponsibility for determining the calendar of the institution but only after consultation wi aculty, students and the University Council. While it is true that the president has been allowed to

make changes in the existing term calendar from time time, the Perspective on the '80s clearly isolates a switch to semesters as a calendar change decision requiring special action by the board. The motion passed by the board in adopting the Perspective on the '80s clearly isolates a switch to semesters as a calendar change decision requiring spec action by the board. 1. Agrees in principle with the assumption

and the direction set forth in the perspective, including the agenda of actions which will be needed to implement them; 2. Requires that approval be sought for all spelfic changes which require board action; and, (emphasis added) 3. Requires that an annual review of the assumptions and implementation be conducte in conjunction with the five-year planning and udget process and its outcome reported to the

Board of Trustees. The Perspective addresses the need to initiate review the term system and of alternative calendars. It does not authorize the implementation of any alternative calendar Since the Perspective is specific in its Agenda (Chapter VIII indicating which of its 103 items are to be plemented and in what way, the command to "intitate review of the term system and of alternative calendars' (Perspective, p. 80) is clear. It authorizes review, not Furthermore, the Perspective required not only an exploration of alternative calendars but a review of the term system as well. Beyond these clear statements that the Board wanted a thorough review is the equally clear regulrement in the Perspective to "consult those affected by decisions. disclose criteria for decision making, describe the decision making process, and provide opportunities for eactions after decisions are made" (p. 73). Yet in Dr. Oswald's letter to the community of Sept. 9, 1980, the letter in which he first broached the topic, his approach was not to consult, as required by the

Perspective, but to inform The purpose of this letter is to advise the University community that a conversion to an summer of 1984 seems probable, although no Less than nine months after the Board of Trustees had adopted the 10 year plan and without consultation, the president had concluded to a virtual certainty that Penn State would change to an Early Semester Calendar. He called for thorough discussion among faculty and administrators, but provided only 21/2 months for that activity, later extended a month, to take place under the pall of the all but certain knowledge that such discussion was futile.

The posture of the announcement destroyed any real attempt at discussion of the issue and, therefore, clearly violated the mandate of the *Perspective*. Furthermore, it violated the Perspective's mandate by failing to allow for the review of the term system and alternate calendars to take place and it did a disservice to the entire communit by failing to allow a sound foundation to be established for Of equal concern is the fact that the comment which

was offered was based upon a semester calendar of 15 veeks and 50 minute periods to begin in 1984. The adopte calendar is a truncated 14-week schedule with a dgepodge of 55 minute and 80 minute classes to begin 1983 for which no consideration was given by the 3. Validity of Reasons Offered for the Change The question that arises in faculty conversation most

often about this decision is: Why was it undertaken? Ever hose who believe a semester to be a "better" pedogogica ime frame will usually admit they do not see the justification for the change now at Penn State. The only official pronouncements available are the few letters from the president which state his reasons An examination of those reasons fails to provide evidence to justify the change on any basis except 1. More than 200 institutions changed calendars each year in the decade of the 1970s.

enrollment leading to better utilization of the University's resources throughout the year did not result from the change in 1961 to a term 3. Since 1975 disenchantment with the current calendar appears to have grown. "In short there are more and more advocates of a semester calendar. In fact, a majority of the faculty may now favor a semester system. A semester calendar provides a preferable

learning environment n the Intercom of Sept. 11, 1980, Dr. Oswald added ional reason to this list: 5. Penn State students are at a disadvantage in the search for summer employment, since the term calendar is at odds with most other public institutions in the Commonwealth. s time went on, new reasons appeared. such as Yale, Harvard, Indiana and Johns

Hopkins achieve significant productivity in research under the semester, so why couldn't Penn State. 7. It was argued that the conversion would provide a shake up that would accomplish University wide review of courses and Do any of these reasons, either separately or jointly, support a change from the term system to a semester

At the heart of the question is the definition of "terr The major flaw in pointing out benefits of "semesters" over "terms" or vice versa is that there is not a single definition of either word. In fact, the point should be painfully clear to the Penn State community because the semester" calendar proposed and held out for commen ast year is different from the one later selected by the president. And, some of the current problems in the 'term" calendar were created by the Oswald administration in 1972 by changing the calendar from the original "term" system adopted in 1961. To posture the existing reality of the "term system" at Penn State against "semesters' in the abstract is not the pasis for sound decision-making What we are comparing is a 10 week, three times per year schedule (with an equal length summer session) with

a 14 week, twice per year schedule (with an 8 week summer session). Thought of in these terms, we remove the emotionalism of the words and we can talk about Schedule X (existing schedule) and Schedule Y (proposed Now let's look at the seven reasons advanced for the More than 200 institutions changed calendars each year

in the decade of the 1970s. That numerous institutions changed from Schedule X to Schedule Y or from Schedule Y to X, or to Schedules A, B. C or D tells us perhaps that academic institutions are ickle. It does not provide any information about why these hanges have occurred. The fact is that calendar trends are open to interpretation. (A table included in the report) shows clearly that the so called "early semester" has grown in

use from 27 to 53 percent in the last 10 years. Where those 6 percent came from, one cannot say without doing a case analysis of all schools, but it would appear valid to assume most came from schools using the traditional mester calendar because use of the traditional semeste calendar fell from the dominate position of 36 percent to a causing students to terminate summer jobs earlier than paltry 6 percent. What really appears to have happened is ional semester schools moved up the date for starting school in the fall and hence became "early semester" schools. The change from one semester endar to another requires a change in date. The change from a quarter system to a semester system is of a

ifferent order of magnitude. In reality, in 1970, 63 percent of the schools reported use of a semester calendar. By 1979 only 59 percent used a semester calendar Of interest is the fact that while 288 new schools entered the tally over the period, total use of the semester calendar only gained 45 schools. The quarter calendar gained slightly in popularity over the decade as did the 4-1-4. Trimester remained stable. Forty-seven percent of the schools use other than a mester calendar. The most popular calendar in this group by over a 2 to 1 margin is the quarter (Penn State)

Summer enrollment is not as great as hoped for in 196 when we went to terms. No evidence has been produced to explain the cause for this failure. It may result from the paltryness of course erings and the concerted effort over many years to induce faculty to drop their full-year commitment in favor of a 9-month one. However, the real issue is whether the ester schedule will deal with this problem in a favorable way. Without an answer to his question, Reason 2 cannot support a change from Schedule X to Y. It should be clear that the summer session is totally independent of either schedule. Whatever arrangement is

desired for summer can be accomplished now under the Reason 3 Disenchantment with the current calendar (Schedule X) has grown. In fact, a majority of the faculty may now favor

If majority rules on such issues then there should be a vote taken to determine the majority. If it does not rule, then one man's perception of the majority is of little value This statement was made before the definition of a semester schedule (Schedule Y) for Penn State was announced. Even if, for the sake of argument, we accep the view that faculty favored semesters, did that support Schedule Y as proposed or a longer 15/16 weeks concep (Schedule Z), or a 50 minute/10 minute concept (Schedu 2-1), or were people thinking of ivy and Cambridge, and a The fact is that substantial opposition existed to the concept of conversion among faculty and students. The sad part is that that opposition still exists and is growing

with the result that a great University will be in conflict for

No less than three prior calendar review committees during Dr. Oswald's tenure came away unable to muster support for a change. The only difference between the purported new committee working on the Perspective and swald's statement of Sept. 9, 1980, that criticism of the term calendar were commonplace during the discussions associated with the development of the Perspective is not borne out by the document. If the calendar problem was of paramount concern it should appear as such in the ocument. It does not, In-70 pages only three paragraphs are devoted to the recommendation for a review of the calendar. Of 103 concluding recommendations, only one Of equal interest is the fact that the Perspective discusses review of the calendar in the chapter on resource allocation as a possible expenditure policy academic, research, faculty or student policies. Any

more went, it is not considered in any of the sections of Perspective had to do with improving expenditure policies and resource allocation, reasons which Dr. Oswaid acknowledged time and again do not support a change to The proposed change has been condemned by overwhelming numbers of faculty in various departments and colleges. Whole departments have gone on record in unanimous opposition to the change. Whole colleges have demonstrated opposition. Numerous faculty members sent letters of opposition to Dr. Oswald in late 1980. A petition quickly assembled secured over 100 signatures in nine departments in the Colleges of Science, The Liberal Arts and Engineering. It is the view of the authors of his port that such opposition has increased and hardened in the past year.

Additionally, the Collegian editorially opposed the switch in January of 1981. A semester calendar provides a preferable learning

This is the strongest argument in favor of a switch pecause many faculty believe a semester provides a better earning experience because it provides alonger time to similate the totality of material presented in a course and it allows for the material to be offered in smaller dose in shorter classes. However, educational research does not provide igorous proof that one type of schedule provides a better earning environment than another. It is a matter on which ducators have differing professional opinions. The Penn State conversion no longer conforms to the assumptions of those faculty who expressed a supportive liew of semesters last year. Then it was thought we wuld have 15 week semesters with 50 minute classes and many people thought we would return to the old system of onvenient, hourly class change times.

The present plan calls for 14 week semesters and thereby requires that 50 percent more courses be equenced into only 40 percent more time causing ncreased pressure on students, reducing the opp for research papers and projects and exerting pressure on epartments to reduce graduation credit requirements. These factors, along with other related results, reduce the pedogogical support for the Penn State semester concept. Also, the present Penn State plan calls for the reduction of summer instruction from 10 weeks to 8 weeks. Such a reduction runs counter to the whole semester philosophy that condensed study is not as effective as expanded Overall the weeks of instruction per calendar year will be

luced from 40 to 36, or a full 10 percent. Part of the support for a semester plan stemmed from the belief that 50 minute classes spread out over the semester provided a better learning environment than th onger 75 minute periods of the term system Besides increasing these classes from 50 to 55 minutes he Penn State plan now cals for regularly scheduled sday-Thursday class sequences of 80 minute periods. the so called undesirable 75 minute current classes, but it one term, had been used for the conversion. Such a cost, will also be required that a significant number of courses utilize these longer classes because the classroom facilities are inadequate to allow for the heavy use of onday-Wednesday-Friday classes which will result fron

Accordingly, most students will be taking some 55 ninute classes and some 80 minute classes. Monday lednesday-Friday classes will have a standard weekend break and reasonable rhythm. Tuesday-Thursday classes ill be two long midweek classes with a five-day Thursday to Tuesday break Furthermore, it is believed that the 15 minute class reak time on Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes is nadequate to provide transit time between classes at niversity Park for many scheduling options. But since the space will need to be fully utilized. Accordingly, it may be common to have students leave one class early in order to arrive on time to the next or to leave one class on time bu arrive late to a following class. This will disrupt beginnings and endings of classes, especially as class sizes grow a might otherwise be espoused. It will also act as an

thereby cut the effective class time by perhaps 10 minutes further reducing any perceived pedagogical benefit while additional scheduling constraint for students, further educing class and course choice flexibility. Penn State students are at a disadvantage in the search fo summer employment since the term calendar is at odds with most other public institutions in the Commonwea The statement attributes an unsubstantiated disadvantage in the search for summer employment to the lack of conformity of Penn State's calendar to other state public nstitutions. Since students who compete for summer jobs come from both public and private institutions, and from in

best of partial validity. More than 40 percent of all Pennsylvania schools use a calendar other than the Early Semester Calendar. A survey of nearby states shows over 48 percent use other than an Early Semester Calendar. In fact 55 percent of Ohlo chools run on the quarter calendar, only 31 percent use the Early Semester there. The normal summer work season extends from emorial Day thourgh Labor Day. Under the present calendar students are able to be available for that period The proposed change would start classes the day employers would like and perhaps putting Penn State

Other great institutions achieve significant productivity esearch under the semester system. Other great institutions achieve significant productivity UCLA, Chicago, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, It is also interesting to observe that the Perspective puts niversities, University of California, Illinois and esota (p. 8). Of these four land-grant schools, only ernal research than semester schools. In 1978, of the 19 institutions receiving greater amount

Reason 6

Penn State in the class with three great Land-Grant state Illinois is a semester school, the others use the term system. Furthermore, evidence exists to suggest school on a term calendar receive a greater percentage share o federal funds for research and development than did Penn State, the list divides almost 50-50 between semeste and term calendar schools. Yet, only 24 percent of all hools in the nation have a term calendar. The conclusion might be reached that the term calendar allows for greater tside research funding than the semester calendar The conversion will provide a shake up that would

accomplish University-wide review of courses and Careful department by department, program by program review has been occurring for several years to fine tune offerings and programs under the existing term calendar To propose a complete non-directive shake up of rogram which have been carefully developed directly violates the directive contained in the Perspective which

Conscious selectivity is essential if the alternatives open to Penn State are to be used Restructuring the good programs along with the uestionable ones is also an ineffective and inefficient use of resources. The very purpose of the section on inancial Resources in the Perspective, the section calling

. insure that every resource available to the Iniversity is used with the utmost efficiency and effectiveness (p. 4). The concept cannot only be criticized as a haphazard, disorganized approach to refinement, but also as an unworkable one. With the emphasis on change, not an emphasis on quality enhancement, the expected resu

would not be review, but merely reformating. And, indeed

that is the result, Dr. Oswald reported in September 198 "it is somewhat disturbing that so many departments appear to be foregoing the opportunity for potential significant program change." (Intercom, Sept. 17, 1981, p. 2). Interestingly, Dr. Oswald went on to say curriculum evision is not dependent on a calendar change. (Intercom Sept. 17, 1981, p. 2). If it is not dependent on the change, then clearly the change is not needed to effectuate curriculum revision the change is not needed to effectuate curriculum revision. And, if a calendar change is not bringing abour curriculus revision then curriculum revision cannot be a reason to support the change. What reason does support the change? The Perspective calls for review of the calendar for allocation, But Dr. Oswald stated in his Sept. 9, 1980 letter

that cost savings are "not of a magnitude to warrant a II. Effect of the decision If the changing of the calendar from the existing term system to a particular form of semester system were simply the quick and easy rescheduling of the date on which classes began and ended and a realigning of class periods we would not need the massive bureaucratic effort established to make the conversion. The fact is that the conversion is a hugh and costly process and the change will affect, in one way or anothe all of the vital missions and functions of the University. he entire educational package needs to be reorganized and fit into the existing resources available: faculty classroom space, library facilities, laboratories, etc. Activity schedules and patterns need to be disrupted for existing faculty and students. Allocation of time between teaching duties and research duties of faculty and

entire well-being of the University. This section will explore the nature of the conversion process and touch upon a representative list, but not a complete list, of difficulties and disadvantages associated with the calendar proposed for Penn State. A. Conversion Process Many have compared the change to a semester calendar as equivalent to the 1961 change to the term system. That omparison is fallacious because the inherent nature o the term calendar created a chance for greater flexibility in course offerings than did the preceding semester system. This has been reflected in the immense expansion of available courses since 1961. These will now have to be compressed into fewer courses. The 1961 process allowed for simple reformating on a course by course basis. The proposed change will require deleting material and courses as well as reduced Arthur O. Lewis Jr., associate dean of the College of The Liberal Arts, Head of the Calendar Conversion Council

graduate students is affected. These interrelationships a

but the tip of a massive iceberg. The impact affects the

in 1961 when the University switched to the term system "He said he didn't remember any problems (in 1961). lowever, the new switch, he said seems to be another story. This is the toughest job we've ever had at this place he said." (The Daily Collegian, 1/18/82) littees in almost every department and program have been working to address these difficulties as well as dozens of administrative committees. This process is rting significant resources from the primary tasks and missions of the University The conversion process has not been budgeted nor ted out and as a result, the actual expenditure to be made for the change is unknown. In 1980, the Chairman of the Faculty Senate's Academic Planning Subcommittee

stated the salary cost alone for the change could run in the millions of dollars. The University of California which made the easier transition from semesters to terms some years ago This not only increases the class length by 5 minutes over | estimated refrospectively that a total time, equivalent to semesters could be suggested a staggering total cost i the \$50,000,000 to \$100,000,000 range. The question must be asked:

Is Penn State in the process of spending ten of millions of dollars in this process? The question needs to be answered conspiciously absent from the conversion decision. The University in its 1981-82 Appropriation Request stated that rising costs have outstepped income every year for the past several years. Because of this, the Iniversity's management has worked assiduously to mize whenever possible. While this statement is clearly true with regard to overall University operations this philosophy is conspicuously absent form the Besides the outright gross expenditure of University unds, it is logical to assume that the consummation of aculty, staff and administration time on this project wil result in concommitant deterioration in the teaching and

research effort. The ultimate result of these effects might be reduced external research funds, higher tuition, tighte budgets, declining productivity and the panoply of ills associated with the diversion of productive resources faculty, staff, physical plant) to non-productive tasks This entire expenditure/cost process for calendar hange creates a non-accountable budget center which ovenes the mandate of the Perspective on the '80s. The Perspective specifies that situations in which esources are consumed by a budget Center for which the nter is not charged should be examined (Perspective, p.

inued fulfillment of its statewide multiple missions will be seriously limited if the currect erosion of resources is allowed to continue (p. 4). The policy on financial urces embodied in the Perspective states that a major task during the 80s will be to reverse this erosion of resources trend while concurrently ensuring that every urce available to the University is used with the evidence to suggest the calendar conversion will lead to increased efficiency or effectiveness. Furthermore, the nversion process is in itself an erosion of resources because it constitutes an expenditure which dose not lead R Effects of the Conversion The exact effect of the conversion is in part speculative

because many aspects of the change remain undecided, intried, unplanned or unspecified. Those changes which are in process of review continue in a state of flux from week to week. Nevertheless, certain effects are clearly emerging as the shapeing forces of the end result and, therefore, certain relationships can be isolated and discussed now which were not clear several months ago.
1. Course Offerings, Class Size, Class Schedule A basic distinguishing characteristic between the term system and the semester system is that the course ffering cycles are reduced from 3 per year to 2 per yea ensate for this change students must take mor courses simultaneously in order to graduate in the same time period (i.e., 4 years) and meet the same credit ments in that time. A student taking 12 credits pe erm will have to take 18 credits per semester. To compensate for this 50 percent increase in course load, a semester is made longer than a term and class erlods are reduced in length so that equal amounts of material are spread out over a longer time period. Learning increases, it is argued by some, because of the greater time available to absorb such material and the lower pace under which a semester progresses. Other rgue that the greater time over which a course is spread

out is counterbalanced by the need to handle more courses simultaneously and because of the distraction sioned by more weekend and inter-term breaks. No conclusive educational research can support either arning sequence over the other The issue really is what impact will the proposed emester calendar have on Penn State. Several facts are clear. While the reduction of three terms to two semesters would suggest a change from three, 10-week terms, to two, 15-week semesters, the directive is to have only 14-week semesters, thus cutting the academic year by almost 7 Students will have to increase course loads by 50 ' percent to makeup for the conversion from three terms to

two semesters, but will only have 40 percent more time pe semester in which to absorb the 50 percent increase. The shortened semester is being accomplished by boosting class periods to 55 minutes for Monday-Wednesday-Frid classes and by having a Tuesday-Thursday schedule of 80 Among those who have around in support of a semeste switch, a primary reason for conversion was to convert the 75 minute classes to 50 minute classes. Yet, the new calendar will contain regularly scheduled classes of 80 minutes all day Tuesday and Thursday and 55 minute These scheduling changes demand one or more of the following variables be adjusted in order to accommodate The variety of course offerings be reduced

2. The sequencing of certain courses be

abandoned so that some courses can be taken

simultaneously that used to be taken in ilding block sequence. 3. Course prerequisites be reduced 4. The number of sections available per course be reduced. Class sizes be increased. 6. Classes be scheduled not at times mos desired by students and faculty, but at times vhich consider classroom and laboratory

availablity above all other questions. 7. The number of credits needed to graduate 8. The number of preparations and classes per week be increased for faculty. 9. Graduate assistants do more teaching 10. The number of students enrolled at the University be reduced. 11. The number of faculty be increased. 12. New classroom and laboratory space be

At present, our review of departmental activity confirms that departments are moving toward implementing choices one through nine. All of these choices will have a egative effect on teaching and learning. Choices 10 hrough 12 will negatively impact fiscal policies and tuition if they must be utilized. It is, therefore, believed that the ultimate effect of the Course Offering, Class Size, Class Schedules parameters

 Increase, rather than decrease, pressure on students. Reduce available course offerings, make l more difficult for students to get the variety of courses presently offered, and make it more difficult to sequence courses. Provide less student-professor contact because both groups will have more complex schedules and bigger classes. Permit fewer blocks of free time for uninterrupted study, scholarly research activities, faculty meetings, and part-time Increase demand on library facilities because of the number of credits each studen will have to take simultaneously and the fac

that examinations and projects typically occur at similar times in many courses. Increase demand on printing and photocopy facilities, secretarial and graduate student resources at peak examination periods Decrease the ability to give significant examinations in class because of the reductions in some class times from 75 to 55

 Require that faculty teach more courses simultaneously but not more credits per year Instructional productivity will not increase bu fragmented, less compact, teaching loads wi more preparations will result in reduced productivity in other areas such as research. Require that faculty and student scheduling preferences take a back seat to facilities scheduling. Prolong the undergraduate careers of students with uncommitted majors who wish to

explore various areas of study and reduce the student flow between campuses because each semester will represent one-eighth of an entire career rather than only one-twelfth as a term All of these effects directly contradict the mandate of e Perspective on the '80s which commands increased exbility in programs and student curriculum, increased efficiency in use of resources, greater faculty-student contact and the preservation of faculty time for research

2. Classsroom Space, Laboratory Space, Libraries, In his 1981-82 Appropriate Request, Dr. Oswald said "Basic courses in Business Administration are severely overcrowded, and are not available to some students who need them. Class sizes frequently exceed 600 students. First year calculus courses usually exceed 400 students exceed 70 students, more than triple the usua section size for this type of instruction.

ne combined effect of the semester shift coupled with allable faculty resources suggests a significant increase n class size across the board and difficulty in finding The Calendar Conversion Council has announced that the current flexibility of the different sequences of class etings currently used at University Park will be eable under the semester calendar (Intercon 10/1/81). They have sald pressure on facilities will be Jack F. Kavanaugh of the Calendar Conversion Council was recently quoted as saying, "Whatever the distributio f classes will be, the maximum utility of the physical

plant will be needed to accommodate an increases number of classes." (The Daily Collegian) With the severity of the existing situation as evidenced in the President's budget request message, it seems ncumbent upon the University to justify the intense ditional burden which will be placed upon classroom acilities. Essentially, the semester shift will eat up badly needed slack classroom capacity and leave no future roo vsical plant. But the situation goes beyond classroom space, it

extends into laboratory space and to the very heart of the Iniversity, the Library, Dr. Oswald's 1981-82 Appropriation Request also "Certain laboratory sections in many of the natural and physical sciences, as well as engineering, have been reduced or eliminated because of the high cost of laboratory

Yet, the semester decision is calculated to reduce laboratory availability further because of the need to schedule more laboratory sections simultaneously. The nester schedule means more students will have to use a limited supply of equipment at the same time than is true under the term system. The same problem exists with the library which is the intellectual laboratory for the entire community. If 1,200 students are enrolled in a given course over the academic vear, under the term system 400 students a term need to use library materials for that course simultaneously. If ,200 students take the same couse on a semester basis 600 students will need simultaneous access to library materials for that course. Library demand can increase 50 percent. Additionally, with "scattered" schedules the library may become a between class haven, increasing the load even more. Dr. Oswald expressed great concern for the library

facility in his 1981-82Appropriation request: "The ability of the University's Libraries to purchase appropriate materials for research and study has been seriously eroded. From 1969 to 1979, the price of the average book has risen nearly 130 percent andthe price of the average periodical has risen over 218 percent. During the same period, funds available for the purchase of the library materials has risen only And this was echoed in the Perspective on the '80s which states that in the decade ahead the libraries will be fronted with major problems arising from continuing rapid increases in the amount of information to be store

. [from] technology and societal change, and isingly tight budgetary contraints. (Perspective, p The Senate Committee on Libraries Report (11/11/80) concluded that to operate the library under a semester calendar cost would "palable and - in some areas izeable." The report goes on to state that: .. The library might find itself strapped in several important areas with budget, staff and public services stretched even thinner than is the case at present. At the present time this earlier fear appears to be

Research is a major mission of the University. It is ecognized in the Perspective on the '80s as a paramou Penn State is recognized as one of the

nation's leading research universities (Perspective, p.5) The primary concern of the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies during the 1980s should be the identification of areas in which research capacity can be strengthened (Perspective, p.14). in light of changing instructional demands, steps should be taken to preserve faculty time for research and advanced study (Perspective, p.17). More faculty members need to devote more time and energy to research, whether internally

or externally funded (Perspective, p.48-9).

report's conclusion that the calendar change "could State" was based upon its judgment that teaching the same load of couses under a semester calendar occurs in a more inefficient manner and steals valuable time from other necessary faculty functions. This concern was addressed in Dr. Oswald's letter nnouncing the conversion decision by saying: requirement that the faculty teaching loads

to research could be serious, both from a program funding standpoint and from the dally nder the current term system. The fact is, however, that in many departnment it is clear conduct of research activities. Such nat teaching loads are being arithmetically exchanged; disincentives should be minimized. or neutralized, yet the cost is at best appear hat is, faculty will be teaching the same load as before extremely high. The Committee recognizes that but it will be distributed as three courses simultaneous there are many and varied arguments favoring ather than two. A three course per semester teaching load would make the Early Semester Calendar. However, in the Penn State less competitive in the recruitment and area for which we have been charged, [research etnetion of high quality faculty. The normal teaching load the Committee finds few positive elements. I t major state universities comparable to Penn State is sharing with the administration the ustomarily no more than two courses per semester, an commitment to scholarly research as an often less in the highly research active areas. (Senate integral part of the mission at Penn State, we arch Report, 11/11/80) are obliged to state our concern over the

octential damage to the climate for research a process of course deletion, section deletion, reduced Part of the basis for this serious concern was the rogram and reduced scheduling flexibility and class size eaching load-research trade-off. The report state crease - in a word - at the expense of the student body If the present teaching load for most of the nd the teaching program University Park faculty — six courses per academic year - is maintained under the . Tuition, Funding and Efficiency In Dr. Oswald's message of March 12, 1981, he stated: semester system, class preparation increase from six to nine per week. The numb The total tuition for an academic year will not increase as a function of the calendar change. of class preparations is in many ways more We believe there will be no means of ever determin important than the length of the class period in determining the true instructional workload Moreover, a significant advantage of the present system, the possibility of scheduling roposed semester schedule. significant blocks of time for course preparation or other duties as required by PS

what portion of future tuition increases or appropriation equest increases will be attributable to a change to the It is clear that there will be substantial economic effects. The existing term system appears to be a uniquely efficient system to accomplish Penn State's dual objectives, a broad menu of courses and of quality It was not known what the exact teaching load would be in November of 1980 when this report was presented. The teaching and high level research activity.

Shoemaker-Kusko

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The semester calendar proposed will substantially present serious obstacles to the research mission of Penn | reduce this efficiencywith no offsetting gain. The dream of a more leisurely campus life style, more student research projects in undergraduate courses and a better learning environment is desired by all faculty. Unfortunately, that dream will not come to pass by institution of semesters at Penn State. Student academic pressure may increase overall, and it certainly will for the thousands of students in the three

year transition classes. Research and teaching duties will e traded off so that one program or the other suffers. under this early semester calendar have a The overall output of the University will be reduced and paricular arithmetical relationship to a load et tuition will remain the same. The academic year will be reduced by over 10 percent from 36 weeks to 32 weeks and yet tuition will remain the The regular 10-week summer term and the opportunities t provides, will be reduced by 20 percent, to 8 weeks, and tuition for that term will be adjusted in such a way that

insferring between departments, colleges and amouses without loss of time. ne bottom line is that the University will offer less for In departments where this load is being reduced, it is by the same or more cost. The semester decision is the one single decision of reatest import for the University in at least two decades. et. It has been made without effective participation by the niversity community -- faculty, students, trustees. And it is a decision which is the antheisis of the mandate of the

he semester decision will

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and sequencing programs and more difficulty in

erspective on the '80s adopted by the Board of Trustees. hat charge requires pursuit of quality, selectivity and lexibility through planned, thoughtful change. roposed semester schedule is not an innocent shift of the dates upon which classes begin and end. It is not a ninor readjustment of the length of classes and the Whether recognized or not when the decision was made, handle the demand for its services the student body. quality and levels of service.

 Affect the ability to maintain the physical Affect the ability to maintain the viability of the Commonwealth campus system. Affect the ability of students to maintain flexibility in their courses of study, and Affect the ability of faculty to carry on research and junior faculty to secure promot and tenure. n short, the semester decision affects all of the major

sues confronting the University as it moves through the Students will have less flexibility in scheduling courses 1980s. It affects them all at once and in unknown magnitudes and directions. It has been made without exploration of its affect upon, and interaction with, the major problems and challenges facing the University now and in the decade ahead. While it is possible the semester decision could benefit the University, most of the evidence strongly suggests that net damage of a significant nature will occur to the

The facts show that a plethora of problems of significant import remain unresoved and the impact of ossible solutions are unknown. Yet an arbitrary implementation date has been established to force onversion just after a new administration takes the helm. A decision of this magnitude must be fully researched in advance, its impact assessed and an informed, considered This was not the case with the semester decision. The time between the adoption by the Board of Trustees of the

concept of reviewing the calendar as a way to effect

announcement of President Oswald's statement of Intent

to convert the calendar, occurred in a period of just over

financial economies, in January of 1980, and the

 Affect the ability of the University to Affect the ability to maintain the size of Affect the level of tuition and state funding necessary to maintain standards of Affect the ability to attract research

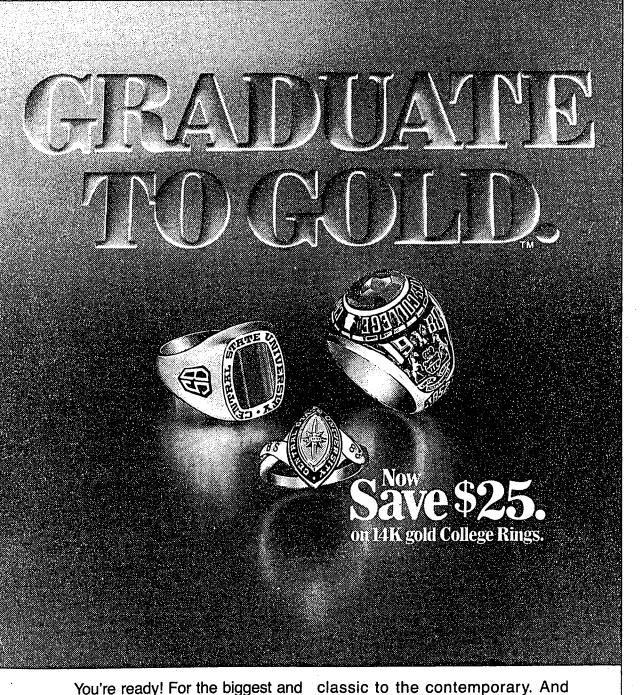
> implementation) by the Board of Trustees in the Most discouraging, vast quantities of University resources have been shifted toward the implementation of his decision. No budget exists to accurately account for the true costs of faculty, student, administrative and physical plant resources already allocated to this task. But seems apparent that millions of dollars of resources have been and are being usurped in the task; a task of nonproveableworth and which holds out the prospect of significant damage for Penn State.

Today we are faced with a multitude of problems and challenges in higher education and at Penn State. This is a Resource reallocation and retrenchment in higher education. Reduced federal and state support for higher education and student aid-

 Increased competion for research dollars. In such a time, the semester decision can be seen, at best, as an unwarranted and unjustified diversion of resources away from the prime tasks that face us. At worst, implementation of the semester idea can be seen as exacerbating the difficulties we face in the decade ahead, destroying the ability and opportunity of the University to adapt to changing times and diminishing the uality of the institution. Speaking for ourselves and numerous other faculty and students with whom we have had direct contact, we urge mmediate cessation of work towards implementation of this decision and a withdrawal of the decision until such time as a full review of its impact on the primary missions

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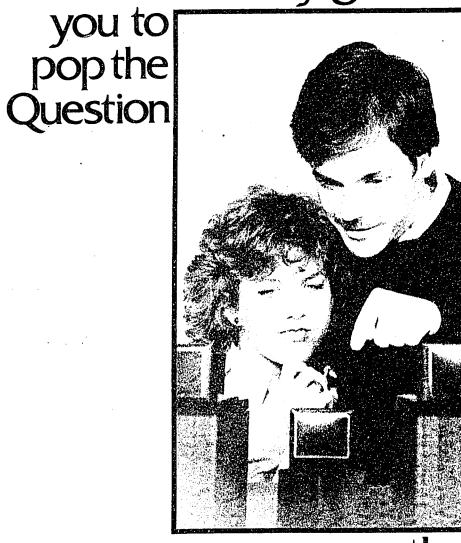
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