

S4StaffDisagree

I feel strongly that we should get rid of the February break. It breaks the stride of the semester. I always feel that my classes 'click' or 'gel' right around the third week of the semester. The students and I settle in and can really get down to work. The timing of the February break is really bad, I think, because it disrupts this intellectual flow and growth. Just when I am getting them on track as a group, they take off for break. It's really bad academically. Then it takes me more time to get them back on track and into shape after they've taken off somewhere. If faculty are clear in their expectations and give the students a very clear structure for the class and assignments, students should not get so stressed. There are other ways to build in de-stressors, like letting students have two unexcused class absences, varying the types of assignments, doing group work, taking a field trip, watching a movie, etc.

I really like the idea of ending earlier as it gives a longer summer break and allows students/families/staff to enjoy memorial weekend. Hopefully the weather wouldn't be as hot either that day if it is earlier in May for the outdoor ceremonies.

By not having commencement on Memorial Day allows the students to obtain summer work more easily. Students are better able to compete for jobs after commencement with other peer institution. Additional reasons not to have commencement on Memorial Day weekend - it is a holiday, pricing for rentals is increased and travel via air/car, etc is more expensive during this holiday season. Cornell pays holiday pay for this commencement on Memorial Day weekend requiring staff to work. Some staff are required to work this holiday weekend every year. Lastly, staff is asked repetitively asked to volunteer during this 3 day break when their kids, partners and/or friends are on vacation year after year.

I'm not sure we need a February break

Changing Commencement would allow students to be more competitive for summer jobs.

This is a normal semester--comparative to other institutions.

I hear students say the winter break is too long (though too short to take up another project). I believe they'd rather have a longer summer break. I don't have a personal preference, though it may be more difficult for me to have my beginning-of-semester tasks done in time. I like this better than the first variation so I have the time I need to get my work done before students arrive.

This seems to be the simplest Spring Calendar option presented, compared to the current, and S1-S3.

I like early commencement

The earlier start and end dates are desirable, and may justify dropping the 2-day February break, plus the placement of the March spring break is much better than current spring calendar.

This is my favorite of the Spring frameworks. It matches other institutions in start date and spring breaks and removes the awkward Feb break. My only concern is coordinating our commencement with IC so that Ithaca is not overwhelmed.

Agree that February break is not necessary and the earlier spring break and longer summer are great improvements.

I love Option S4 since it makes the summer longer and eliminated Feb. break. I think students would like a break more in the center of the semester for their mental health. I think January break is long enough with this earlier start date.

out of all the spring framework changes, I like this option the best. It gives students another full week of the semester break and graduation is two weeks earlier allowing for a longer summer vacation.

I like where commencement is situated- again allows staff/ faculty time off during the memorial day weekend and ensures that more people are on hand to work the weekend events. Students aren't starting too early or too late.

Remove the February break, students just got back from the holiday.

I like this one as well for the early commencement. It just makes sense not to have it on a holiday weekend.

This one works, too. A 6-week inter-semester is too short to find a job and too long to just hang out. Start spring early and end early to get home for the best pick of summer jobs and the ability to actually make some money in the summer.

this would work fine. Again, moving commencement earlier is a huge priority for staff that have had to work over that weekend for years.

This seems to both alleviate some pressure on the short winter break, and increase the summer. For staff the winter break is hardly noticed since it is so short. Not sure what impact is on students. I am sure many do not leave unless they live locally. With Commencement earlier - where do reunions land?

I think it improves by shifting the semester earlier and shortening the break between semester, however I am unsure of the unnecessary February break-- it doesn't impact me one way or another and am fine with or without it.

February break is not necessary with an earlier Spring Break. Classes start earlier in January, but not until week 3 which is acceptable. Note: this moves only 6 class days to Jan, the other 2 to Feb. Two additional study/exam days could be restored in May and still have Commencement 2 weeks earlier.

Expands summer construction projects opportunities considerably.

Seems efficient and balanced.

Love it. Several institutions have this model. Ultimately, I think students would be happier for their last day to be in early May as opposed to almost June.

Agree with all S4 motivators.

No Feb. break. Spring break is closer to mid-semester. Graduation is earlier, which gives students more time to "take a break" before graduate school OR start jobs with some time between graduation and their new professional life. Students are very 'burned' out at the end of the semester and due to the current academic calendar/late graduation, they don't have time to 'recharge' and take some time off before they must start their next path of life. (particularly in engineering & the sciences)

Yes, ending earlier benefits students (break before starting internships/jobs) and staff (won't have to work a holiday weekend which does not get adequately made up by a comp day). Maybe have a "study" day in February to make up for no February break.

This schedule works well too for staff working in academic departments. Moving the last 8 class days into January leaves less "down time", commencement is not on Memorial weekend, which enables staff to have the full weekend for family and activities. The only downside is the missing February break - many public school have that, so it could make it difficult to take time off.

This is by far the best option. I agree with all the S4motivators and this addresses them all pretty well. It times the break the best for students, commencement is before Memorial Day, study/exam period is shortened. In particular, staff don't lose three weeks in January while no faculty are around. It is nice to have a few days of down time but anything that requires faculty input stops during this break so by shortening it, there is greater productivity all around and more time over the summer for break.

earlier start to summer break.

It improves, but I think those are long stretches without a break. I like 2 breaks for the students to get caught up if needed and get a little rest. (Speaking as the parent of a college student)

Again depending on how the Fall calendar works for when classes/exams end in December depends on the start date in January. Having graduation earlier seems feasible.

Move Commencement off of Memorial Day weekend

longer summer allows for better job opportunities for students. a full week in mid-semester is a good time to catch up and travel home.

I like it but I think students need a second break

The earlier commencement is better. And students don't need so many breaks, people don't get that in the "real world"--and students are being prepared for the real world.

One break is better than two during the spring semester.

I also wholeheartedly agree with this scenario.

Also seems like a good proposal. The two-day break in February does not seem all that critical and if a single day of staff and class holiday could be added in February, that may be a possible compromise.

I don't think students will miss February break. I like this one

This seems to answer all the S4 motivators and allows time for staff/faculty to be prepared and an earlier Commencement to "give back" the Memorial weekend to faculty/staff.

Knowing that the February break is short, I do not believe taking it away would cause too much resistance. Again, like that graduation is before Memorial Day weekend.

Best solution for students/pedagogy Better to have earlier commencement Still have problem of breaks not corresponding to children's breaks

I like this calendar as well because many students don't go home for Feb break due to it being so short. With this calendar they still have the longer winter break and get done earlier so they are home for Memorial weekend with families and so is staff and faculty.

I think I like this the best of all. However, consider adding a Monday or Friday Feb break to coincide with Presidents Day. Then, move the move out day out by one day.

Commencement not Memorial Day weekend! More in line with most other institutions.

Two breaks are disruptive. Early graduation improves summer work opportunities

I think S4 improves the calendar based on the following: - moves commencement away from Memorial Day. - nearly a full week of instruction the first week of classes - full week of instruction the last week of classes could move Slope Day back to a Friday. - 4 full study days (assuming Slope Day is Friday.)

This would still shorten the winter break window (which will impact some work, but most major projects can't fit into winter break anyway), but would further help the summer break window for projects.

Start and finish dates are great!

In my role (staff), the Feb. break doesn't really impact me much, so I wouldn't mind seeing it go. Moving everything else up could be a nice way to have a more compact semester, and give a longer summer break.

Best of the four alternatives.

This seems the best option for Spring. I think the February break is not necessary, but the earlier commencement is an improvement.

this seems attractive... early start (but not too early) early finish, concentrated academics without too many breaks (but a nice long spring break).

shortens the winter break, condenses the exam period and does move commencement away from the holiday weekend, however it does move it to Mother's Day which will be an issue for some. Was the scenario of having commencement during the week explored? Or having it on Saturday instead of Sunday?

I agree this calendar is better than the current calendar because it shifts wasted time over break towards more usable time over summer break for internships and jobs. Students might not be as enthusiastic about removing the February break.

Yes. Always wondered about that Feb. break. I.e., what is the point.

longer summer, gets commencement away from Memorial Day Weekend; on the drawbacks, break between semesters could be very short some years

Mid- Jan start date. Good to move graduation away from Memorial day.

Even though there is only one major break during the semester, this S4 makes good sense on starting mid/late January and ending 2 weeks earlier.

Wow, an old-school nose-to-the-grindstone slog! I like the starting date for the sake of parents who bring kids back to campus.

This option looks like the best option for staff, students and faculty if we want to preserve a winter break and move Commencement earlier. Removing February break is the downfall but is there data from students needing this break? would they prefer to start the summer earlier?

I am a coach, and this calendar fits best with our competition season. It would save us a lot of money usually spent on housing and feeding athletes in early January when the dorms are usually closed. This would be a huge budget savings for all of our winter sports!

This is great. Late enough to have a good winter break, but not too long, done early enough, and at the same time the spring break is positioned properly. EXCELLENT!!

This is an okay compromise. I'm not sure February break is essential. The earlier Commencement would be wonderful for staff. The timing of spring break is good (actually normal for once!). We are eating into winter break, but not as drastically.

This option also shows merit. Many of the things said about the last calendar also apply here. There are many positives, and yes a couple negatives but I don't see the negatives being more impactful than the positives

I like the compact schedule.

Feb. break is unnecessary. Starting immediately after MLK Day makes sense as it still gives staff 2 weeks to reset prior to students returning.

I think this works good. But there might be a lot issues with no February break, but it doesn't effect me not having it.

Removing February break would allow for better course instruction, instead of starting the semester and then immediately having a break. Reducing the study/exam period is also much needed.

This is my favorite. There is really no need for a February break. The January start date is late enough so that people have time to recover from the fall but not so long that the May exams butt up against graduation.

This is good, but not as good as S3. I like the two breaks (with Spring Break being earlier and a long weekend around Easter).

I like that the start date is still after MLK day, graduation is earlier, and the 2 day break has been dropped.

This seems like the best spring schedule. It starts late enough for students to fully recover from the fall break, has a repositioned spring break and ends early, allowing for a significantly extended summer. Perhaps one of the study days could be moved to allow another one-day reprieve partly through the exam week?

I think its helpful for students to end the semester early, especially those needing to find summer employment

February break isn't needed,

It's better to have classes start closer to the beginning of the week rather than the end of the week. Plus, no commencement on Memorial weekend. Yay!!!!

This is the second best one (personally my favorite, but I know we have to think of everyone's needs). We go back to a traditional calendar and undo the reactionary changes made a few years ago. We start at a normal time, break in the middle, and end at a normal time. And avoid memorial troubles.

To me, the best of the Spring calendar idea. Early Start, early graduation and spring break about in the middle of the semester.

I like the earlier start in January, earlier commencement, wonder about losing that two day break and mental health issues due to weather but see the point.

Moving commencement to an earlier date makes a great deal of sense

This makes the most sense. Although I would recommend adding in the one study day in the middle of exam week. It is a beneficial day to study and recover for late exams. Commencement on Memorial Day never made sense and penalized staff who had to be there and so miss out on a day with family.

Shortens winter break, moves commencement earlier, longer summer.

I like this a lot. No need for the Feb break!

I agree that the February break is unnecessary, and anything to change commencement day!!

A longer summer is preferable, and there's not much happening in January. A caution is to make sure Ithaca College commencement is not the same weekend, as this city cannot handle both events at the same time.

Also good - gets Commencement off Memorial Day Weekend.

This is the best version for spring unquestionably. Earlier commencement. Reasonable start date in January. One break --- traditional spring break. ALL GOOD!

Feb break is pointless -- get rid of it. S4 is the best proposal so far.

commencement does not fall on Memorial Day Weekend

2nd favorite spring solution

Earlier commencement is beneficial as discussed for S3, and the elimination of the two day break gives two more days for trips over winter break.

no need for Feb break as the students just came back to class after Christmas

This is the best choice. Moves commencement up; longer summer for students.

Again, finally get a Memorial Day weekend with my family!

I like this too, in terms of the general timing of the semester start and end, as well as minimizing the Feb break to nothing (which is how it was when I was a student).

S3 was the better option.

This seems like the best option. The semester starts earlier, but not so early that it would be difficult to be prepared for the start of the semester. While it eliminates the February break, it better positions spring break. The reduction of the study/exam period is minimal. Moving up Commencement is extremely helpful to those who work in student services as well as the students who are eager to get started on summer earnings.

The Commencement event occurring earlier is very appealing. The return for spring semester would be tight but more possible for academic grade review and orientation.

moves Spring break to March, more or less half way between the semester. Starts slightly later in January than S3 and ends earlier.

removes the unpopular February break, positions Spring break better in line with peer institutions, reduces the between semester break, gives Building Care more time between Commencement and Reunions to get the buildings in proper order

Earlier start to spring semester; earlier end to semester. Keeps MLK day. Exams are more compressed. Does not provide for more time for residence hall preparation prior to commencement.

Current February break is not useful so this is better.

longer summer break for students who work

This calendar appears to cover all the academic concerns that have been brought forward.

This is another nice solution, and also allows for commencement to be earlier,

Students still get a generous Winter Break. The Feb break is just odd, and eliminating it makes sense. Spring break in March is a good half-way point, and having Commencement earlier means students have a longer summer to work and save money or take advantage of opportunities to travel and do internships.

Semester ends two weeks earlier - giving back a long holiday weekend. Puts spring Break in "traditional" college break slot. Extends summer for students needing internships and families going on vacation...