

# Academic Calendar Proposal Two Options

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# Goals of Changing the Academic Calendar

1. Support student well-being and academic preparedness
2. Facilitate equity of course content across different iterations of the same course
3. Facilitate equitable teaching loads across faculty teaching TR and MWF schedules
4. Support faculty, staff, and students who have children/family members in Boulder Valley School District and Saint Vrain Valley School District
5. Support staff, students, and parents involved in residence hall moveout in spring semester

# Proposal Summary: Common Features of Option 1 (Previously Presented) and Option 2 (the “Early Start” Option)

- **Equalize MTWRF instructional days, shortening the number of instructional days from 73 per semester to 70 per semester (140 instructional days per academic year)**
- **Create a midsemester reading day**
- **Increase number of final exam reading days from 1 to 2 per semester**
- **Spring break falls a week earlier in order to encourage alignment with BVSD and SVVSD; the school district boards make their own decisions but CU Boulder will work with**



## Features Unique to Option 1 (Previously Presented)

- **First day of classes remains the same** as currently: classes start on a Monday (or a Tuesday if Monday is MLK, Jr. Day)
- Midsemester reading day is a **Tuesday** in Week 7
- The last day of classes is a **Tuesday**, final exam reading days are **Wednesday-Thursday**, and the 5-day final exam period is **Friday-Tuesday**
- The day of Spring Commencement (**Thursday**) is unchanged from the current calendar, opening up a day (**Wednesday**) between final exams and Spring Commencement for residence hall moveout



## Faculty feedback received on Option 1 (previously presented)

- Some faculty did not like the midsemester reading day being on a **Tuesday**, saying it would encourage students to miss class on Monday
- Some faculty expressed the preference not to have final exams on **Saturday-Sunday** because of childcare or religious obligations
- Faculty in Arts & Sciences-Natural Sciences expressed concern about having enough instructional days to cover the material, especially for lab classes that cancel class entirely in any “short” week
- ~~Law School faculty would like to keep their unique calendar~~  
(already different from the rest of campus)



## Features Unique to Option 2 (the “Early Start” Option)

- **First day of classes is earlier: Thursday** rather than the following Monday
- Midsemester reading day is a **Thursday** in Week 7
- The **Friday of the last week of classes operates as a Monday** in order to equalize MTWRF instructional days
- The last day of classes is a **Friday**, final exam reading days are **Saturday-Sunday**, and the final exam period is **Monday-Friday**
- The **day of Spring Commencement is TBD**; decided by the Chancellor; it's thus TBD whether there will be a break in between final exams and residence hall moveout



# Advantages of Option 2 (the “Early Start” Option) over Option 1 (Previously Presented)

- Midsemester reading day on a **Thursday** (rather than Tuesday) might encourage students to take Friday off, but we offer a lot fewer classes on Friday anyway so the impact would be smaller
- No final exams on **Saturday-Sunday**
- Our colleagues in Student Affairs would prefer a **“Thursday start” to fall semester classes**, so that first-year students are introduced sooner into academic life rather than having an entire week + weekend of orientation before classes start



**Neither Option 1 (previously presented) nor Option 2 (the “Early Start” option) addresses the concern of A&S-Natural Sciences about sufficient instruction days, especially for lab classes.**

- **However, many of our AAU Public peer universities have the same number of instructional days per academic year as in Option A and Option B—or even fewer**
- **The Office of Academic Planning and Assessment would assist departments in acquiring resources and models from peer institutions in how to manage scheduling and construct syllabi on the new calendar**



# AAU Publics with 140 or Fewer Instructional Days per Academic Year

<u>Option A &amp; Option B proposal</u>	<u>140</u>
Rutgers University	140
Texas A&M University	140
University of Florida	140
University of Minnesota	140
University of Texas	140
University of Virginia	139
University of Michigan	138
University of Wisconsin-Madison	138
University of Pittsburgh	137



# Approval Process

- The decision is made by the Chancellor
- We are seeking input from BFA on their preference, Option 1 (previously presented) or Option 2 (the “Early Start” option), to inform what the the Provost and the Chief Operating Officer recommend to the Chancellor
- The University of Colorado System office and the Board of Regents do not need to approve campus academic calendars, but they would be informed of any changes

## Next Steps, If the Chancellor Approves

- Implementation plans begin immediately with the new calendar to take effect for the 2025-26 academic year
- Campus works with BVSD and SVVSD to align spring breaks starting spring 2026; BVSD and SVVSD school boards must approve their calendars
- Campus-wide open forum for awareness and feedback
- Communication campaign
- Web site dedicated to Academic Calendar reform

# Questions and Discussion



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