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**DATE:** May 30, 2012

**FROM:** Robert N. Pangborn *R. N. Pangborn*

**TO:** Administrative Council on Undergraduate Education  
 Advisory Committee for Graduate Education

**SUBJECT:** Credit Courses That Span Semester Dates

This communication is to emphasize that scheduling of all credit courses that span semester begin/end dates, including but not limited to courses with a travel component, will not be possible in the future using ISIS screen ARUAC and NCCR screen ARUCND. This restriction is necessary in order to comply with Senate Policy 34-81 as noted in my prior memo dated January 9, 2012 (attached). Adjustments to semester begin/end dates have recently been put in place to provide greater flexibility in how these courses can be scheduled, and academic units should review these dates in revising their course schedules. This change is effective immediately. The schedule of Semester Begin and End Dates can be found at the following link:  
[http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/course\\_offering/semester\\_dates.cfm](http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/course_offering/semester_dates.cfm).

The guidelines below address how courses that cross semester begin/end dates, and therefore must be partitioned, are to be revised. Recognizing that course scheduling for the FA12 semester is now in progress, and scheduling for SP13 will occur in the near future, the course revision process will have two phases:

**Academic Year 2012-13:**

Current courses with work that falls outside semester begin/end dates must be submitted as separate one-semester courses in multiple semesters using special topics or foreign studies designations and distinct titles. (e.g., X97A, B, C ...; X98A, B, C ...; X99A, B, C ...). Naming of partitioned courses should reflect the linkage between the courses, but specific letter designations (e.g., X97A, B, etc.) are left to the discretion of the offering units and colleges. Units and colleges offering partitioned courses may also determine if the partitioned courses are independent of each other or linked via prerequisites. For example, a two-credit resident education course offered in the spring semester with a separate, yet linked one-credit resident course in the summer may be listed as X97A in the spring and X97A, X97B, or X98A in the summer. Similarly, a two-credit resident education course offered in the spring semester with a separate, yet linked one-credit resident study abroad

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course in the summer may be listed as X97A or X98A in the spring and X99A in the summer. As with any course, credits assigned to partitioned courses must be consistent with Senate Policy 42-23 (Types of Instruction). The one-semester title form will include a required text field for a longer course description (~100-150 words) and a required text field for providing information about any travel associated with the course, if appropriate.

*If all components of a course fall within one semester, no adjustments are necessary.*

Partitioning a permanent course into several temporary, one-semester courses with distinct titles can require course substitution petitions for situations in which the permanent course was either required or a selection within an academic program. Forms for one-semester courses with distinct titles may be submitted by academic units and approved by college associate deans for undergraduate courses or the Graduate School Dean's Office for graduate courses, as is currently the policy for one-semester courses with distinct titles.

Faculty and units may also submit permanent course change or add proposals for partitioned courses through ANGEL in the Course Submission and Consultation System (CSCS). In cases where permanent course changes/adds impact program requirements, a program change proposal may be necessary. Course proposals submitted through CSCS will undergo either Senate or Graduate Council review and approval. Effective April 18, 2012, all newly created proposals to add or change a course, as well as edits of course information for existing proposals, require the faculty member to describe any travel component on the course information page.

### **Academic Year 2013-14:**

By academic year 2013-14, all courses spanning semester boundaries, including those that were partitioned and converted in academic year 2012-13 to one-semester courses with distinct titles, must be converted to permanent course designations by using CSCS. Credits assigned to partitioned courses must be consistent with Senate Policy 42-23. Course proposals submitted through CSCS will undergo existing Senate or Graduate Council review and approval procedures. In most cases a full proposal will be required. Existing guidelines for expedited proposals will continue to be available.

Enclosures (2):      January 9, 2012, Memo from R. Pangborn to ACUE  
Senate Policies 34-81 and 42-23

cc:      Academic Leadership Council  
Larry C. Backer  
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Barbara J. Rowe  
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**DATE:** January 9, 2012  
**FROM:** Robert N. Pangborn *R. N. Pangborn*  
**TO:** Administrative Council on Undergraduate Education

As you know, there has been recent concern and discussion about the issue of courses that span semester boundaries. Many, but not all, of these courses involve a travel component. Since the University is defined as a "term-based" institution, courses that span multiple semesters put us in violation of US Department of Education Title IV program regulations and endanger our institutional eligibility for federal student aid.

Senate Policy 34-81 stipulates that "the student must be registered for the course during the semester in which the course requirements are completed and the grade or symbol must be assigned at the end of that semester." However, given the growing importance of providing students with exposure to venues related to their studies, especially globally, we would like offer faculty maximum opportunity for scheduling classes having a travel component, while still remaining in compliance with federal regulations.

As a procedural matter, this will be accomplished with the following:

1. Consistent with the earlier scheduling of commencement this year, the spring semester end and summer semester begin dates will be one week earlier than in the past. Spring semester 2012 will end on the Sunday of spring commencement weekend and the summer semester will begin the following day (Monday).
2. The fall semester end and spring semester begin dates will coincide with fall commencement. Fall semester 2012 will end on the Sunday of fall commencement weekend and the spring semester (2013) will begin the following day (Monday).

Changes to spring end/summer begin dates have already been made and can be viewed at [http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/course\\_offering/semester\\_dates.cfm](http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/course_offering/semester_dates.cfm) The changes to the fall end/spring begin dates will be programmed later this week.

In order to maintain our compliance with federal aid regulations, it is imperative that Penn State courses are "term-based" – that is, courses should fall wholly within the semester. For courses in which the travel component takes place during the fall or spring semester, for

example, over the Thanksgiving break or over Spring break, these calendar changes will have no impact on the scheduling of the course. For courses in which the travel component takes place after the completion of classes, these new semester dates allow courses with travel components to run by splitting the course into the classroom portion and a separate travel component. In other words, a course would meet for the appropriate number of credits in the fall, spring, or summer semester in the classroom. A separately registered part of the course that encompasses the travel, assigned an appropriate number of credits, would occur during the following semester or summer session. So, for a course that involves class work during the fall semester and a travel component over the winter break, a classroom-based course would meet during the fall semester. The number of credits assigned to this course would be indicative of the amount of work involved in the classroom-based portion of the course. Students would register, complete the classroom work, and be graded on this course during the fall semester. The travel component, occurring during the break, would be scheduled for the spring semester. The number of credits assigned to the travel component of the course would be indicative of the amount of work involved in this travel-based portion of the course. Students would register, complete the travel work, and be graded on this work during the spring semester.

The ARUAC screen used to create course sections will henceforth require the course section begin and end dates to fall within the semester begin and end dates. This change will apply to all courses that have previously bridged semesters, not just those with a travel component. It is recognized that there may be special circumstances where an exception to the term-based course requirement is warranted. Therefore, a subcommittee of ACUE will be composed to review and approve these instances, consisting of several college associate deans and representatives from such offices as Student Aid, the University Registrar and Global Programs.

Cc: University Faculty Senate Officers

### **Senate Policy 34-81 Enrollment**

An official record of course participation (grade or symbol) is limited to a student who is registered for a course according to an official University registration procedure. Except as provided for in Section 48-40, the student must be registered for the course during the semester in which the course requirements are completed and the grade or symbol must be assigned at the end of that semester.

*Revised: 1/24/89*

### **Senate Policy 42-23 Types of Instruction**

A course credit by instruction is defined as listed below for various types of educational experiences. In all cases, the course must be in the charge of a qualified member of the University's instructional staff, and formal evaluation of the student's achievement must be included in the course. The distribution of time between class activities and outside preparation varies from course to course; however, for the average student, a total of at least forty (40) hours of work planned and arranged by the University faculty is required to gain 1 credit.

1. Lecture, Discussion, or Recitation. The distribution of time is usually one-third formal instruction and two-thirds outside preparation. Formal classes are normally scheduled for twelve and one half (12 & 1/2) hours per credit.
2. Laboratory. The distribution of time varies from twenty-five (25) to thirty-seven and one-half (37 & 1/2) hours of laboratory instruction per credit with additional sufficient outside preparation.
3. Undergraduate Theses, Projects, Honors Programs, and Field Trips. At least forty (40) hours of work are required per credit with varying amounts of individual instruction.
4. Student Teaching and Internships. At least forty (40) hours of work are required per credit. Prior written approval of the appropriate University faculty is required for subsequent granting of credit.
5. Workshops. At least forty (40) hours of work are required per credit.
6. Individualized Instruction (e.g., Independent Learning courses and computer-aided instruction). At least forty (40) hours of work are required per credit, with varying amounts of individual instruction.

*Revised: 2/4/75 (as Rule L-2)*