

Performing Arts Concerns/Comments on Winter Intersession for October 20 Academic Senate

Choral Program

Overall:

I think a decision such as this--that drastically affects everyone should not be rushed through. This feels extremely rushed. There should be time to think through scenarios and how it affects faculty, students, and more. This should at least be tabled, and a committee formed to truly discuss how this affects EVERYONE and not just the great benefit it is for STEM.

We need to really consider how this affects students with kids.

We also need to take into account the endless hours that Department chairs spend on scheduling. I have no idea how we would also schedule a Winter Intersession on top of everything else.

Proposal 1 and 1b:

One of the most unique, memorable, and challenging opportunities we have for the BC Choirs (especially the Music Majors) is to perform with the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra during the holidays. With proposal one that opportunity would be lost. That is the focus of our program from the end of October through December and is their final exam. This is something the students put on their CV. It is a professional gig and they work so hard to be prepared for that opportunity. With Proposal 1 and 1b the students would have to sign up for an intersession to do the BSO performance. It would not be possible to get all of the students to continue and without all of them we will not have enough to sing with the BSO. They would find someone else and the opportunity would be lost.

Besides the BSO opportunity, the performing arts--and especially choirs thrive during the month of December. Much of our fundraising for tours and other opportunities take place in December. The holidays are a perfect opportunity for the choirs to really get out in the community and represent BC in a variety of ways. If we end our Fall semester at Thanksgiving that would be lost because not enough of the choir students are going to sign up for a Winter Intersession. A whole semester of singing is a great commitment and to expect more is a lot. Winter Intersession is honestly not something I am interested in doing also and so that leaves us in some unfortunate circumstance.

Personally, both 1 and 1b begin during a conference I am partially in charge of. The dates for conference have been planned for over a year and I am on the executive board. Part of my responsibilities on the board is to help run this conference. I am in charge of the entire registration process at the Conference and much more. This would affect the entire first week of school! I cannot believe we are trying to make this change for the Fall of 22. I would imagine that other people also have plans made for the first week of August in 2022.

These proposals also put us starting schools before our children and teenagers do. I know this would be a hardship for many students with children or young family they care for.

Proposal 2:

This seems so misaligned with what anyone else is doing. In this case we finish the school year weeks after the high schools and elementary schools which seems very challenging.

It significantly shortens summer and gives us a strangely open January and February where we cannot travel because our kids are in school. Trying to fit any kind of travel plans into this extremely short summer AND be ready for Fall semester seems really challenging.

For the choral program--we would start school the very week where the major universities, such as USC, Chapman, and Loyola Marymount hold their collegiate festivals. Attending these festivals--which we build our Spring around would not be possible. We would have had one rehearsal! Asking Chamber Singers to commit to an extra 6 weeks and then an entire Spring semester is more than is possible to ask of them.

I feel that these new proposals truly limit the incredible opportunities that Performing Arts has been able to offer their students. The main semesters happen at times that are truly awkward and limit what we can do during key times of the year. I know that it has been said that 40 some other colleges have winter intercessions but the thriving choral programs in CA do not have winter intercessions. This will truly hurt my program and we have already been hit hard by pathways.

Please, at least think this through and do not put it into affect for Fall 2022. This has not been properly thought through.

Commercial Music Program

Proposal 1: This proposal is more similar to our current pattern, so that is a plus. It shifts the Fall and Spring terms each a small amount to allow 8 weeks between them (6 weeks of instruction, Winter Recess, and 1 week of processing). Two caveats to this proposal are that Finals week would start mid-week the week before TG, and run up to TG, and there is a 1-week gap in instruction for the Winter Recess.

This proposal (and 1b) would allow students a chance to complete particular courses they need to transfer/graduate. I know bottlenecks occur in particular disciplines quite a bit. Commercial music has embraced an 8-week course model and offers a 4-week version of a course in the summer. The winter intersession could potentially allow students to study the topic in conjunction with their major in a more flexible way.

Proposal 1b: Very similar to Proposal 1, but with entire calendar shifted 1 week earlier to avoid finals week during Thanksgiving Week. Caveat is that Winter Intersession is split into 4 weeks and 2 weeks by Winter Recess.

(see notes above)

Proposal 2: This proposal shifts Spring term further (and Fall slightly earlier) to place a Winter Intersession immediately after Winter Recess. This allows for 6 weeks of instruction without a 1 week interruption. Caveats: Bigger impact on Spring term placement, and bigger shift from current schedule.

This option seems more disruptive. Proposals 1 and 1b seem like they would be embraced more smoothly.

Band & Orchestra

I actually don't have a strong opinion either way. I don't see foresee a huge impact on how I run my BC courses. The biggest concern for me at the present time is how a schedule change would impact the viability of our new joint BC/CSUB orchestra. If the BC and CSUB semester schedules

are unaligned by more than a week, it would very unlikely that this type of collaboration would be possible. I know CSUB already has a brief Winter Intercession—has there been any discussion of copying the schedule that CSUB uses?

Marching Arts

Just some quick feedback as it relates to my marching ensembles...

- 1 and 1b may be an OK fit for our fall Drum Line (B18A) and Renegade Band (B40) in that they align with the natural ending of the football/band competition season.
- On the flip side, the Christmas parade would now fall either on the processing week or in the winter session, so we may struggle to find students willing to perform after the semester ends.
- The 1/1b winter session may be an opportunity to capture traditionally uncaptured hours of preseason practice for our "Indoor" Drum Line (B18A). Normally students don't register until the spring. (We're actually trying a late start 8-week this semester to experiment with this idea).
- 1/1b may be problematic for our summer semester Drum & Bugle Corps (B28) if we decide to return to a schedule that takes us all the way to DCI Championships, which would overlap with the start of fall semester by a week.
- That could snowball into issues getting the fall ensembles started as I and any staff would be busy with the end of one season while the next one starts a week earlier.
- 2 is a bad fit for fall because of the football/band comp schedule...starts and ends too late. It also almost dissects our "indoor" season leaving about 8 weeks after the culminating event (WGI Championships).

I'm all for an intercession in theory as long as none of our seasons are cut off.

Music (Jazz), Jazz Ensemble

I'm not sure what info you've gathered from the other directors by now. As we discussed in the department meeting, there are valid concerns about event scheduling, particularly winter/holiday concerts that would be near impossible to produce while students are not currently enrolled in a class. I'm not sure to what extent those concerns will weigh against the STEM bottlenecks they are trying to solve, but in FCDC it seemed like admin wanted to hear about how specific programs would be affected. Hopefully you have the notes from Tim. Jen has also voiced some concerns.

I can also see some benefit to an intercession for our department. It's extremely hard for music majors to complete their degree requirements in just two years due to the heavy workload of their core music classes. We often advise them to take no more than 12 units in fall/spring and take a GE class or two in summer. If they could also take a class or two during a winter intercession it would help them finish in two years. That is 8+ weeks off from ensembles and lessons, though.

We could potentially do some interesting things with NC courses like our summer academies, and provide more teaching opportunities for adjuncts.

It does seem like the train has left the station, so we should voice our concerns but also be prepared to adjust and innovate, as we always do.