

Motion for spring academic calendar timing changes

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March 20, 2019



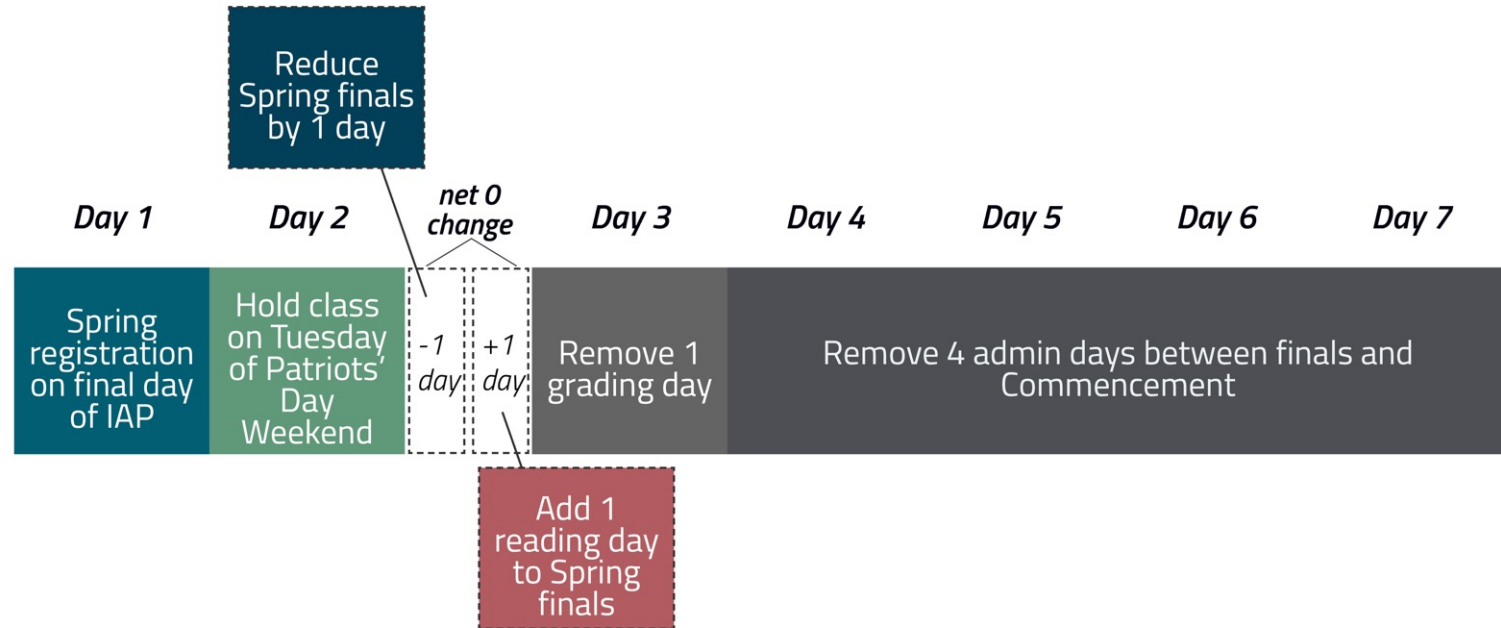
Recap

- Goal was to make adjustments to the IAP and/or spring term academic calendars to enable a **longer summer period, moving Commencement to late-May most years.**
- We developed three options for achieving this.
- Throughout the fall and spring we engaged the MIT community (students, faculty, staff), collected online feedback, and held an in-person student forum.
- As a result of this feedback it has become clear that one of options (Option 2) is the preferred option.
- We are now presenting **a motion for specific modifications to enable Option 2 to be implemented during the 2019-20 Academic Year.**

Summary of options presented

- **Option 1:** Remove one day from IAP. Reg Day on last day of IAP classes (Thr). First day of spring classes is on Friday after IAP. No impact on Patriots' Day student holiday. Four days of finals, but straddling the weekend (2 reading, 1 exam, 2 reading, 3 exam days). Shorter administrative time after finals.
- **Option 2:** IAP stays the same. Reg Day on last day of IAP (Friday). First day of spring classes on a Monday. Remove Tuesday Patriots' Day student holiday. Four days of finals, but straddling the weekend (2 reading, 1 exam, 2 reading, 3 exam). Shorter administrative time after finals.
- **Option 3:** IAP stays the same. Reg Day on last day of IAP (Friday). First day of spring classes on a Monday. No impact on Patriots' Day student holiday. Four days of finals, straddling the weekend, but exams on Saturday(2 reading, 1 exam (Sat), 1 reading (Sun), 3 exam days). Shorter administrative time after finals.

Option 2



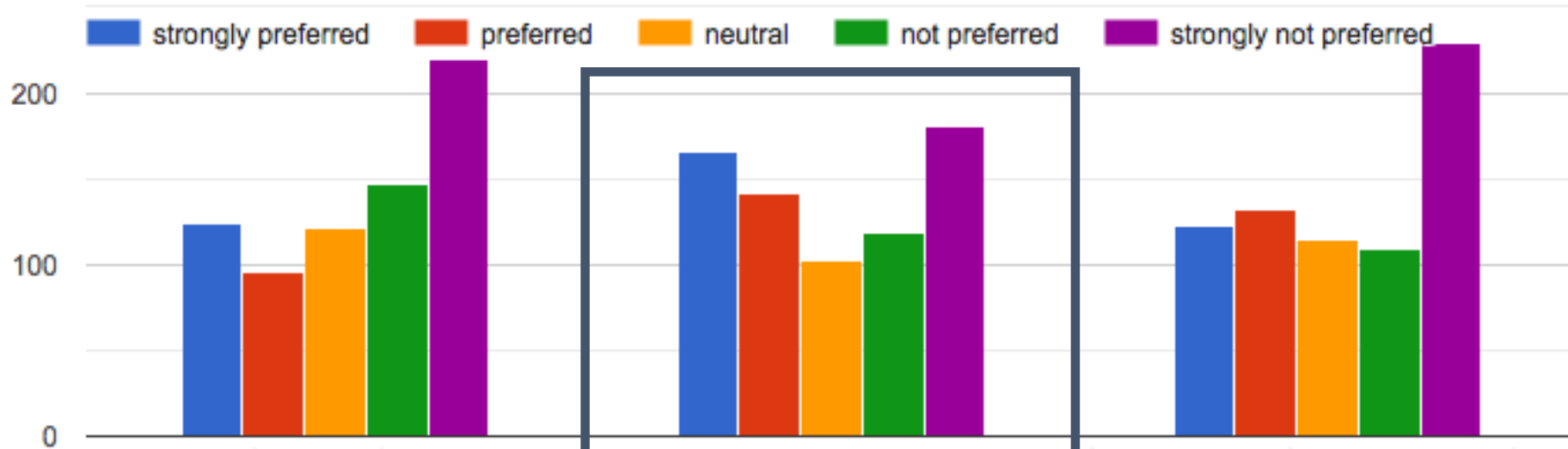
Option 2: Remove Tuesday Patriots' Day student holiday

IAP stays the same. Reg Day on last day of IAP (Friday). First day of spring classes on a Monday. Remove Tuesday Patriots' Day student holiday. Four days of finals, but straddling the weekend, which adds a reading day (2 reading, 1 exam, 2 reading, 3 exam). Remove one grading day. Shorter administrative time after finals.

Feedback mechanisms

- Engaged dean's group, academic council, undergrad officers, CGP; UA & GSC officers; S3, OME, Global Ed; FPC, CUP, CAP, S3, Heads of House, Commencement Committee, and others.
- Online feedback in January: 708 responses ...
 - **58.7%** graduate students & postdocs
 - **34%** undergraduates
 - **4.8%** staff
 - **2.5%** faculty
- In-person student forum on Feb 12 (low attendance, good discussion)

Overall survey results



Option 1: Remove the final day of IAP classes and instead begin Spring classes on that day (i.e. IAP ends on Thursday and Spring semester begins on Friday).

Option 2: Reduce the Patriots' Day holiday to a 3-day-weekend and hold classes on the Tuesday.

Option 3: Use a Saturday as one of the four days of final exams.

Key takeaways

- Only one of the three options has marginally more respondents who prefer it versus those who don't, and that is **option 2**.
- That holds true overall and for each of the subcategories of undergrads, grad students, and faculty-staff-postdocs.
- If we add the “neutral” votes to the “prefer” votes then all three options would be acceptable to the majority of the respondents— but that is not true in the subcategories, where we could not say that about option 1 or option 3 for the UGs.
- **Option 2 is the only one that would be acceptable to UG respondents (on average), and it is most strongly preferred by grads, faculty and staff.**

Option 2 is recommended

IAP stays the same. Reg Day on last day of IAP (Friday). First day of spring classes on a Monday. Remove Tuesday Patriots' Day student holiday. Four days of finals, but straddling the weekend (2 reading, 1 exam, 2 reading, 3 exam). Shorter administrative time after finals.

CAP recommendation (Prof Scott Hughes)

- The Committee on Academic Performance supports a motion to modify the calendar so that commencement happens before June in most academic years.
- Individual members of the CAP prefer different options:
 - The majority of student members highly value the 4-day Patriots' Day weekend, giving them a chance to recover following Campus Preview Weekend.
 - The majority of faculty expressed concerns about the impact of weekend exams on staff and on observant religious students.
- **Following our discussion, the CAP would support either Option 2 or Option 3, and hence supports the motion being presented today.**

CGP recommendation (Prof Brad Skow)

- The CGP has voted on the proposal to change the academic calendar in the way described in option 2.
- 8 members voted to recommend the change; 1 member voted to recommend the status quo; 3 members did not record a vote (not even an abstention).
- **So a strong majority of the committee recommends changing the calendar per option 2.**

Note: One member who voted yes registered some reservations, which I here pass on. First, the proposed calendar might make it harder for registration day to serve some of the functions it currently serves. The member mentioned: being a day when students meet face to face with their advisor; being a day when departments hold beginning-of-term events, for example, events where instructors present the problems they will address in their class/studio/workshop. The problem is that under the proposed changes registration day coincides with a day of IAP classes/activities, so students may have IAP obligations. Finally, the member worries that shortening the time from the end of finals to commencement will result in more students being removed from the degree list.

Motion

Moved that the Faculty approves the following updates to *Rules and Regulations of the Faculty* to allow Commencement to be held one week earlier; all additions in bold and deletions stricken:

2.11

Fall term shall begin on the Wednesday after Labor Day, followed by:

- ...
- A four-week period set aside for academic and independent activities (**IAP**), ending on Friday~~}.~~

Spring term classes shall begin on the ~~Tuesday~~ following ~~the four-week period described above (the first Tuesday in February)~~ **Monday**, followed by:

- fourteen calendar weeks for classes (ending on ~~Thursday~~ **Tuesday**), interposed with a one week Spring vacation after the seventh week of classes;
- a ~~three~~ **two**-day reading period **followed by one day reserved for final examinations**; and
- a ~~five~~ **two**-day **reading** period **followed by three days** reserved for final examinations.

Motion, *continued*

The last classes in all full-term subjects shall be held no later than the day preceding the reading period in each term. The day preceding the first day of classes of **each-the fall** term shall be set aside for registration activities. **In the spring term, registration activities shall take place on the last day of IAP.** Commencement shall be held on the second Friday following the spring term examination period.

...

Half-term subjects held in the first half of the spring term (H3) shall begin on the first **Tuesday in February-Monday after the end of IAP** followed by seven calendar weeks for classes ending on Friday...

Half-term subjects held in the second half of the spring term (H4) shall begin on Monday of the eighth week of the semester following the one-week Spring vacation. This will be followed by: seven calendar weeks for classes ~~ending on Thursday-Tuesday~~; a **three-two**-day reading period **followed by one day reserved for final examinations**; and a **five-two**-day **reading** period **followed by three days** reserved for final examinations...

Motion, *continued*

Classes shall be suspended during the following additional vacation periods:

- ...
- Patriots Day;
- ~~• Day following Patriots Day.~~