

Memo

To: Student Government Association (SGA)

From: Lisa Kensler, Chair of Academic Standards Committee

cc: James Goldstein, Chair University Senate

Date: May 26, 2017

Re: Request for end of semester policy limiting tests/quizzes

The Academic Standards Committee seriously considered your request, as described below:

The SGA has passed a resolution that calls for a policy against faculty giving quizzes or tests worth more than 10% of the final grade during the last 5 instructional days of the semester in courses that also have a final exam. (The resolution doesn't clarify how to apply the policy during the summer terms—especially the minimesters—where it might be appropriate to adjust the number of days).

The committee has decided not to move forward with developing such a policy. We find that few peer institutions hold such a policy. We are confident that enforcing such a policy will be very challenging, if possible at all. We are not supportive of legislating faculty practice to this degree.

In addition, we are not convinced that a policy such as this will actually be in students' best interests or have the intended results of reducing stress. For example, if following suggested policy, end of semester tests/quizzes will be condensed into the week immediately following Thanksgiving break, increasing stress levels over break or requiring more intensive study during this time.

We can see the benefit of having non-weekend study days. However, with our two days of fall break and full week of Thanksgiving break, there just are not days available for adding to the calendar and continuing to meet the other required parameters. If the SGA feels strongly that more study time is necessary between the end of semester and final exams, two possibilities exist: (1) Return the two days of fall break to regular class days and then use them at the end of the semester for study days; OR (2) Return two days of Thanksgiving week (Monday/Tuesday) to regular class days and then use them at the end of the semester for study days.