June 1, 2010

“The faculty have worked in Homeric fashion to move the semester conversion forward. The issues to be resolved are many, substantial, and, frankly, not particularly glamorous. They are, however, of critical importance to this University’s future and to the quality of education we provide to students for generations to come.” -- President E. Gordon Gee

Dear Colleagues,

As President Gee notes, planning for the shift from quarters to semesters is an undertaking of breath-taking detail. Nonetheless, this past year has shown us that we can all anticipate a smooth and positive transition to our new university calendar in summer, 2012, thanks to your careful and purposeful work, your imaginative solutions, and—above all—your great good will in taking the first steps toward implementing this monumental change.

Front-Line Contacts and What They’ve Accomplished. A substantial number of you—some 250, in fact—have had front-line roles in that process. Among these are the members of the Calendar Conversion Committee, its eight subcommittees, and especially the calendar conversion designees within each academic unit. The entire university has benefited from the thorough, collegial work of these colleagues.

To date, the primary emphasis of their efforts has, understandably, been on the academic aspects of the calendar conversion. Those efforts have resulted in the following:

- a clear definition of a semester credit hour, with all its implications;
- a weekly semester calendar anchored around a 55-minute class block;
- a new course numbering system;
- a series of electronic templates for the submission of courses and programs;
- the on-going evolution of thinking about effective uses of the May term;
- the thorough review and revision of the Graduate School Handbook to accommodate the changes necessitated by the calendar conversion.

The Nature of the Process. Developments like these have come about through
detailed—and reiterated—consultation with curricular contacts in the colleges and on the regional campuses and with colleagues in the Offices of the University Registrar and the Chief Information Officer.

**Updating the Campus Community.** This year has also been punctuated by regular efforts to disseminate information about the calendar conversion process as widely as possible. We have:

- developed this *OSU* monthly newsletter;
- created a [website](#) that is regularly updated;
- held meetings with:
  - each college leadership team;
  - calendar conversion designees, by college and regional campus;
  - the academic community at large, through separate town meetings for the health sciences, the professional colleges, the arts and sciences, and the regional campuses;
- presented information at special events:
  - Academic Leadership Program, sponsored by the Offices of Academic Affairs and Human Resources;
  - First Year Experience Conference, hosted by the First Year Experience;
  - University Center for the Advancement of Teaching programs, including workshops on course redesign and the May term;
- begun to foster statewide partnerships, such as that with Wright State University, where Ohio State took part in the Semester Summit in October 2009.

**The Coming Year.** As the next steps in the calendar conversion process, colleges and their units will submit their curriculum materials for university-level review from June 2010 through January 2011.

Once past that important curricular milestone, the emphasis of the calendar conversion effort will shift to academic support issues. These will include:

- advising (identifying the advising needs of colleges, determining how best to support those needs, and putting into place those technological resources that can best support advising and communication);
- core business processes (devising business process solutions across all business office areas affected by the conversion of the academic calendar);
- systems implementation (making changes to enterprise-level applications for the student, finance, and human resources areas and to local systems in
the colleges and business offices).

**Down the Road.** In preparing this issue of *QSU*, we have been gratified—as we hope you are—by the milestones we have reached this year. In the two years that remain before the semester calendar is launched, we will need to do still more. This year has taught us that you are fully engaged in planning for the semester shift; you are excited by the new opportunities that the new calendar offers; and you are willing to do the complex work needed to ensure that we move seamlessly forward. With your ongoing commitment and spirit of collegiality, we will meet and pass all the milestones that remain in our journey toward semesters.

Sincerely,

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*Questions or comments about the transition to the semester calendar?  
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