

## THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | OKANAGAN



## OKANAGAN SENATE SECRETARIAT

## Enrolment Services

## Senate and Curriculum Services

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[www.senate.ubc.ca](http://www.senate.ubc.ca)**11 March 2009****To: Okanagan Senate****From: Learning and Research Committee****Re: Referral from Okanagan Senate – Vancouver Winter Olympics 2010 (approval)**

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**Background**

As Senators may recall that in February 2008, the Learning and Research Committee recommended that the Okanagan Senate the following option listed in the attached Appendix A: *Proposal to Extend Mid-term Break in Term 2, 2010 at UBC Okanagan* to take a two-week break from classes in February 2010 to accommodate the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.

At that time, the Learning and Research Committee agreed that the extended break would allow the university community, including students, staff, and faculty, the opportunity to attend and perhaps volunteer at the games. As well the Committee felt that the two UBC campuses should be unified in their decision to extend the February mid-term break so that students from both campuses have fair opportunity to participate equally in this potentially once-in-a-lifetime event held so close to home. It was understood by the Committee that UBC would be establishing a *2010 Secretariat*. It was also expected that there would be direct discussions between VANOC and the student governments at each campus regarding volunteer and other opportunities for student engagement.

Senators unanimously voted against the recommendation circulated by the Learning and Research Committee and the motion failed. At the time, at least one Student Senator expressed concern about extending the mid-term break when opportunities for Okanagan students to participate in the Olympics appeared to be very limited.

### **February 2009 Referral by Senate to the Learning and Research Committee**

At the 11 February 2009 meeting of the Senate, a petition was presented on behalf of over 650 UBC Okanagan community members. Signatories requested that Senate reconsider the aforementioned option as presented last year. The Senate agreed to refer this matter to the Learning and Research Committee, as listed in the following motion:

*That the Senate refer to the Learning and Research Committee consideration of the petition received from members of the campus community regarding participation in the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, with specific reference to whether the 2009/2010 Academic Year should be amended to extend the Term 2 mid-term break by one-week and if any other changes to that academic year are necessary as a result; and*

*That the Committee report back to the Senate by 11 March 2009 with any necessary recommendations.*

### **Learning & Research Committee Recommendation to Senate**

Learning & Research Committee members have not reached consensus on a recommendation to Senate in response to the referral. Although the previous Senate recommendation was made by the Committee's predecessor during the previous triennium, there is some continuity of membership. Some members feel that, while it would have been a good idea in February 2008, the window for adjusting the 2009/2010 Academic Year has now closed. Others feel that it would not be too late to adjust the Academic Year, as long as particular effort is made to communicate changes to the previously published dates. A third group of members feel that it is not necessary to adjust the Academic Year at all and would have voted against the motion no matter when it was proposed.

The Committee also heard concern about additional costs associated with this potential change. While there has not been sufficient time to collect data, it has been suggested that the University would incur significant costs related to an extra week of operations. Members have also acknowledged that students would enter the summer job market later and would therefore be less competitive in securing employment and their earning potential is reduced.

While the Committee is not able to reach consensus on whether Senate ought to revise the Academic Year, members are committed to ensuring that the student voice on these issues is heard. For this reason, the Committee has elected to place the following motion before the Senate for decision.

**MOTION:**

*That the 2009/2010 UBC Okanagan Academic Year be modified to extend the Term 2 mid-term break by one week to span the period from February 15 through February 26, 2010, and*

*That the last day of the April 2010 examination period be set as April 30, 2010.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dr. Peter Arthur  
Chair, Learning and Research Committee

## Appendix A

### Proposal to Extend Mid-term Break in Term 2, 2010 at UBC Okanagan As considered by the Okanagan Senate at its February 2009 meeting

The Winter Olympics will be held in Vancouver and Whistler from Friday February 12, 2010 to Sunday February 28, 2010. In order to allow the university community to be freer to participate in the activity, the proposal is to extend the midterm break during Term 2 in 2010 to two-weeks instead of the usual one-week.

Based on a similar proposal approved by the Vancouver Senate, two possible scenarios for Term 2 are proposed below. Scenario A is the Term 2 as it is currently published on the Senate website: (<http://www.senate.ubc.ca/okanagan/termdates.cfm>). Scenario B assumes mid-term breaks is extended by a week with term and examination dates adjusted accordingly. This scenario requires two exceptions (extending the mid-term break to 10 days from the usual five days; ending examinations on April 30 instead of by April 28) to the Senate Policy and Current Practices on Term and Examination Scheduling (<http://www.senate.ubc.ca/okanagan/policies.cfm?ID=8>).

<b>2010</b>	<b>A: Published Term 2</b>	<b>B: Recommended Term 2</b>
Classes begin	Mon., January 4	Mon., January 4
Mid-term break Term 2	February 15-19	February 15-26
Break length	5 days	10 days <sup>1</sup>
Classes end	Fri., April 9	Thurs., April 15
Teaching days	63 days <sup>2</sup>	62 days <sup>2</sup>
Examinations start	Wed., April 14	Mon., April 19
Examinations end	Wed., April 28	Fri., April 30 <sup>3</sup>
Examinable days	13 days	11 days <sup>3</sup>
Days from term end to exam start	4 days	3 days
Easter statutory holidays	April 2 & 5	April 2 & 5
2010 Olympic dates	February 12-28	February 12-28
2010 Paralympics	March 12-21	March 12-21

<sup>1</sup> Indicate exceptions to current policy and practice on term and/or examination scheduling.

<sup>2</sup> Minimum 60 teaching days and optimal 63 teaching days. Term 1 and Term 2 are equal in length where possible. Term 1 length in 2009 is 60 days.

<sup>3</sup> Examinable days include Saturdays. 13 is the current number of days scheduled for examinations.