

October 29, 2020

To: Faculty Senate

From: Lara Smith, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Discussion about Spring Break 2021

Spring Break is currently scheduled for March 1-5, 2021. Faculty input is being sought about Longwood's approach to Spring Break, with the potential for an alternative set of smaller breaks.

For public health reasons, several other universities are moving to cancel a week-long Spring Break. For example, Virginia Tech has recently announced it has canceled Spring Break and is giving "break" days spread throughout the semester ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/more-virginia-colleges-scrap-traditional-spring-break/2020/10/20/c6f7d58c-1325-11eb-a258-614acf2b906d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/more-virginia-colleges-scrap-traditional-spring-break/2020/10/20/c6f7d58c-1325-11eb-a258-614acf2b906d_story.html)).

While all ideas about break are welcome, Senators should gather feedback from their departments about the pros/cons of the following three scenarios:

1. Spreading out five days of break to make them non-consecutive but keeping one for each day of the week.
2. Two days of break instead of five, structured to allow two three-day weekends, with the remaining days used to expand final exam days.
3. Three days of break instead of five, structured to allow one three-day weekend and one four-day weekend, with the remaining days used to expand final exam days.

There are several parameters to keep in mind:

1. Any change would only affect the undergraduate academic calendar.
2. The beginning and end dates of the semester cannot be changed. January 13 is the start of undergrad classes, and May 6 is the last day of finals.
3. The University will be closed on Martin Luther King Day, January 18.
4. Both the Symposium Day and the Research Showcase Day will occur on Wednesday, April 21, after consultation with Melissa Rhoten and Amorette Barber. Only evening undergraduate classes are held that day.
5. We plan to continue conducting almost all final exams online. We still need to manage the need for some face-to-face exams and time for finals for online asynchronous classes to be held.
6. Any change should attempt to balance which class days are removed so that certain calendar days aren't more affected.
7. Both academic and public health considerations should be part of the discussion.

Departments should discuss and submit written feedback to JoEllen Pederson, chair of Faculty Senate, no later than **Wednesday, November 11**. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee will compile the written feedback and report back to Senate at its meeting on Thursday, November 19. The Provost will consult with the Academic Chairs Council, Deans, and the SGA Executive Committee during November as well. The decision about next semester's break days will be announced no later than Thanksgiving.