

Pre-holiday tests, altered semester develops multiple cons, some pros

by John Dvorak
Nebraskan Staff Writer

Despite the increasing popularity of other methods of calendar scheduling, it appears that the semester plan will be maintained at the University for the next few years.

No one will deny that advocates of the semester system have a clear majority on campus. A poll taken last year by a University Senate Ad Hoc Committee showed that 56 per cent of the faculty members stood by the semester plan.

The plan has strong support in every department of every college on this campus. Dr. Allen R. Edison, chairman of electrical engineering department, Dr. Raymond L. Borchers chairman of the biochemistry and nutrition department and Dr. Donald E. Allison,

(This is the final installment in a series of stories concerning various methods of calendar scheduling.)

chairman of the Germanic and Slavic language department are just a few of the semester advocates.

FOR 97 YEARS now, University classes have operated on it. Its advantages are well known.

A learning unit of 17 weeks permits comprehensive treatment of the necessary subject matter;

—Both students and faculty have sufficient time for independent study and evaluation;

—It provides the desired amount of prime attendance time from September to June;

—It coincides with the calendars of about 70 per cent of the other colleges and universities in the United States.

Dr. Valdis Lejnicks, chairman of the classics department, expressed the popular and widespread opinion which may be the backbone of support for the semester plan, "The semester

is more leisurely; there is time to think things through."

THE TWO MAIN disadvantages of the semester plan are the bobtail period after Christmas and the lengthy final exam period. Even these traditional arguments are challenged by some teachers.

Dr. Charles S. Miller, dean of the college of business administration, questioned, "Is the bobtail a real problem? I've never found it devastating. It is overplayed."

Dr. Adrian R. Legault, professor of civil engineering, feels the bobtail is not really undesirable. It can be a great advantage to the students who want to be in school, Legault said.

The bobtail is bad for those who want to forget about studying, according to Dr. Donald G. Hanway, chairman of the agronomy department. It is not bad for those who want to study.

According to a survey taken by the University Senate Ad Hoc Committee, one teacher felt that final exam period was too short. That is a rare statement, however.

A NUMBER OF faculty members, including Dean C. Peter Magrath of the Arts and Sciences College, did say they were neutral on the length of the final test period.

Magrath pointed out that the two weeks of final exams seems to be traditional.

Dr. Valdis Lejnicks said that he enjoys having the extra time during final exam periods for research, writing and catching up work.

Despite the faults of the system, faculty members are against changing the semester plan. They simply feel it is the best plan available — but there are other reasons too.

Dr. Lawrence Poston, professor of English, theorized that there is a general reluctance to change, no matter how good the alternative might be.

THE SEMESTER system is favored by many faculty members for well considered and valid reasons, he said.

This desire to remain the same is of some importance.

"A lot of the faculty just don't want to change," said Dr. Louis Trzcinski, associate professor of music. "If you succeed in one way, there is a tendency to stay with that method."

Sen. Tom Lonnquist, who introduced an ASUN Senate resolution in favor of the modified semester plan, feels that tradition is partially blocking the path of change.

"What you experience over a period of years is often what you desire for the future," Lonnquist said. "In Nebraska, especially, people tend to be conservative regarding change."

There is a built-in resistance to change among many people, according to Dr. Dale K. Hayes, chairman of the educational administration department. Emotional factors are at least as great as other factors involved, he said.

AS AN ILLUSTRATION, Hayes pointed out that the summer vacation has no real basis. Years ago, young people were needed to work on the farms so school was recessed. The United States is no longer an agrarian economy, but the summer vacation still persists.

With some people, the issue of scheduling can become highly emotional, especially among elementary and secondary educators, Hayes pointed out. However many NU faculty members didn't have really strong feelings about the subject.

"It really doesn't make that much difference with me," said Dr. Raymond L. Borchers.

"This is by no means a barricaded issue with me," Magrath stated.

OTHER STAFF MEMBERS, who see good points in the quarter and modified semester plans, are against changing because they are afraid of what it might entail. "I was at a school that changed from the semester to the quarter plan," remarked Dr. Adrian R. Legault. "It was a real mess. Things were not normal for several years."

Centennial College

Upperclassmen interested in participating in the Centennial College next fall should attend a meeting March 12 at 7 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Centennial room, according to Dr. Philip Scribner of the philosophy department.

Applications for upperclass enrollment in the college may be picked up at the meeting. They are also available from Dr. Robert Knoll and T. E. Beck of the English department, Dr. Jerry Petr of the economics department and Dr. Scribner.

Twenty to fifty upperclassmen will be admitted under a selection process not yet determined. Students may carry a five or six hour class load from the college and will assist in projects.

LAST YEAR A FACULTY Senate Ad Hoc Committee studied the matter and recommended "no change in our current semester plan at the present time."

Dr. Lawrence Poston said, that to his knowledge, no move is underway to even start thinking about a change. Several faculty members concurred with that observation.

People in favor of the semester system have always prevailed, said Dr. Samuel B. Treves, chairman of the geology department. When a majority of the faculty, administration and students feel a change is necessary, it will be made.

No one can predict when that majority will come, or if it ever will come.

Campus Calendar

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

12:30 p.m.

Faculty Womens Club Luncheon and Style show

3 p.m.

Student Affairs

3:30 p.m.

Union Talks & Topics
Quiz Bowl-Questions Committee
Builders-College Days & Tours

4 p.m.

ASUN-Senate Meeting

4:30 p.m.

AWS-Congress

6:30 p.m.

Builders-Workers Council

7 p.m.

Student Action Front-Interviews

Red Cross

NFU Sky Diving Class - Morrill Hall,

Rm 20

Builders

IFC

Rodeo Club - Ag Hall

Centennial Education Project

7:30 p.m.

NU Meds

Career Scholars Seminar

9 p.m.

Mortar Boards

9:30 p.m.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Interviews scheduled Wed. for SAF openings

Student Action Front organizers will hold interviews for community organizers and assistants in the Nebraska Union Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in room 225 G, and Thursday at 3:30 p.m. in room 243, according to Ray Stangle of the SAF.

Twenty-two positions are open. There will be two assistants working during their spare time with each of the 11 community organizers. Community organizers work with

the Lincoln Action Program and explore the needs of low income families and individuals in Lincoln.

In addition to working with the community organizers, assistants will channel ideas and information back to the Student Action Front. Their work will be similar to that of the VISTA program.

The interviews will be informal and are open to anyone who is interested, Stangle said.

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CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

TUESDAY
MARCH 18

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