The Academic Policy and Procedures Committee met at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2005 in Oland Hall, Room 120 on the Saint John campus.

1. Further Review of Dates for Withdrawal from Term and Full Courses

The existing deadlines for withdrawal from term courses without academic penalty were approved by the Senates in November 2000 and became effective in the Fall term of 2001. Under the existing deadlines, courses dropped before the final 15 days (3 weeks) of the term are recorded on the student transcript as “W” and carry no academic penalty. Prior to the change to the existing deadline, the dates for withdrawal without penalty were approximately the midpoints of the Fall and Winter terms (7 weeks after the commencement of classes). The withdrawal date for full-year courses (two weeks after the start of classes in January) has been the same for many years.

Part of the rationale for the change to the existing dates for term courses was to provide instructors with greater flexibility in scheduling mid-terms, since students tend to use mid-terms as an indicator of their performance in a course. The retention of first-year students also was a consideration in the change to a later date.

Since the implementation of the existing dates, the Student Standings and Promotions Committee (SS&P) of the two Senates has reviewed the issue on three separate occasions. The Committee conducted a survey on the impact of the revised dates on management of classes. The Committee also has considered a number of concerns around the existing dates, but has been unable to reach consensus on an alternate date.

Most recently, SS&P reported to the March 2004 meetings of the Senates. At its March 2004 Meeting, the Fredericton Senate approved the continuation of the existing regulation on last dates for withdrawal from term courses without academic penalty. This recommendation was not approved at the March 2004 meeting of the Saint John Senate. At the May 18, 2004 meeting, the Saint John Senate approved a motion proposing the last date to withdraw from term courses without academic penalty be revised to “seven weeks after the commencement of classes”.

In an attempt to arrive at a compromise between the views of the two Senates, in its January 2005 report to the Fredericton and Saint John Senates, the Academic Policy & Procedures Committee proposed that the last date to withdraw from term courses without academic penalty fall on the same date as the last date to withdraw with a pro-rated refund of tuition fees. This recommendation was tabled at the January 18, 2005 meeting of the Fredericton Senate, and the matter was referred back to the Academic Policy & Procedures Committee for further consideration.
1. **Further Review of Dates for Withdrawal from Term and Full Courses** (cont’d)

   At its meeting of February 9, 2005, the Committee reviewed excerpts from the March 31, 2004 and May 18, 2004 Minutes of the Saint John Senate, and an excerpt from the draft Minutes of the January 18, 2005 meeting of the Fredericton Senate, noting the issues of concern raised at these meetings, including:

   - the disruption caused by withdrawals in courses involving significant group work, especially by withdrawals that occur late in the term and the disadvantage to the students remaining in the course;
   - potential damage to the University’s relationship with external partners who sometimes sponsor group projects which may flounder as a result of withdrawal of group members;
   - in courses with waiting lists, withdrawals after the add-drop date are unfair to the wait-listed students who are then unable to take the course;
   - in multiple section courses, a significant number of withdrawals results in a misuse of instructional resources including in some cases the addition of course sections that because of overall course withdrawals later prove to have been unnecessary.

   The Committee also discussed basic principles that need to be taken into account in establishing the last date for withdrawal, including:

   - the need for students to have an adequate opportunity for feedback in order to make an informed decision on withdrawal from courses;
   - the need for a mechanism to accommodate students with special circumstances after the deadline for withdrawal without academic penalty;
   - the need for consistency between course withdrawal regulations and the University’s student retention objectives

   The Committee learned that implementation of different withdrawal dates for different levels of courses, (e.g., later date for 1000/2000 courses and earlier date for upper level courses), or implementation of different dates for each campus, would require major systems and technology changes. It was noted that possible changes in tuition fee structure (e.g., per course and/or program differential fees) may require certain systems and technology changes in future which could also afford an opportunity to consider related changes.
1. **Further Review of Dates for Withdrawal from Term and Full Courses** (cont’d)

The Committee considered proposed revisions to the academic regulation on dropping courses that would incorporate the basic principles above, while attempting to address the concerns that had been raised. The proposed revised regulation is attached to this report. A copy of the existing regulations has also been attached for reference.

The Committee believes the revised regulation provides a number of improvements and advantages over the existing regulation. Some of these include:

- elaborating more clearly the basic principles on which course withdrawal policy is based
- establishing explicit expectations that students should make informed decisions and should obtain information and advice before deciding to withdraw
- acknowledging that feedback in the course is part of the student decision making process
- proposing a compromise set of deadline dates for withdrawal without academic penalty from term courses; these dates are half way between the existing deadline of prior to the final fifteen days (3 weeks) of the term and the last date to withdraw with a pro-rated refund (approximately the mid-point of the term) which was recommended in the January 2005 report of the Academic Policy & Procedures Committee; Senates will have some flexibility on the specific date when it approves the Calendar of Academic Dates each year;
- for 2005-06 the new dates would be November 3, 2005 and March 6, 2006 instead of November 16 and March 16 if existing deadlines were continued, or October 24 and February 24 if the pro-rated refund date were chosen;
- these proposed dates are consistent with the expectation that students normally will receive some feedback on their performance in a course around the mid-point of the course, and, where considering withdrawal, would be able to use this feedback to make a decision in a timely manner;
- creation of a simple petition mechanism to accommodate students in certain circumstances who wish to withdraw without academic penalty after the deadline; this mechanism creates a simple decision making process in place of the existing appeal to SS&P; appeals to change an “F” to a “W” on the transcript have traditionally been a significant proportion of the appeals to SS&P;
1. **Further Review of Dates for Withdrawal from Term and Full Courses** (cont’d)

   The Committee discussed concerns regarding consistency in administering this policy from department to department. It was noted that the petition process is purposefully discretionary in order to take account of conditions and circumstances specific to the academic unit. By placing the decision making at the local level, consistency is important only within the academic unit.

   **RECOMMENDATION:** “That the Committee recommend to Senate approval of the proposed revision to the Academic Regulation on Dropping Courses.”

2. **Proposed Calendar of Academic Dates for 2005-06**

   At its meeting on January 9, 2005 the Academic Policy & Procedures Committee considered the proposed Calendar of Academic dates for 2005-06 for recommendation to the Senates. The proposed Calendar of Academic Dates was discussed at the January 18, 2005 meeting of the Fredericton Senate, and was referred back to the Academic Policy & Procedures Committee for further consideration of the January 4, 2006 date proposed for the start of classes in the Winter 2006 term and the timing of the March break for 2006. The Committee reviewed the draft Fredericton Senate Minutes for January 18, 2005, and considered the concerns identified. It was noted that the Registrar’s Offices on both campuses consulted widely on the proposed Calendar of Academic Dates, and that as a result of feedback received, the date for the start of classes in the Winter Term was changed from January 2, 2006 to January 4, 2006. No concerns were expressed about the dates of the March break during the consultation process.

   At the January 18 meeting of the Fredericton Senate, it was suggested that the first day of classes be moved to January 9, 2006 to allow additional travel dates that are not within the peak holiday period. The Committee considered this suggestion and the concerns regarding the dates for the March break. As noted previously, the change of the date for start of classes to January 9, 2006 would require other date changes around the Spring examination period due to the specific dates of the Easter weekend in 2006. As well, the January 9 start date would shorten the period for submission of grades after the examination period and this in turn would create time pressures for the preparation of the Spring 2006 graduation lists, and any graduation-related student appeals that might have to be scheduled. Good Friday and Easter Monday are established as University holidays through collective agreements with faculty and support staff bargaining units.
2. **Proposed Calendar of Academic Dates for 2005-06** (cont’d)

   During discussion it was noted that the Registrars’ offices make every effort to schedule classes with higher enrolments earlier on the exam schedule to allow additional time for marking. However, this objective is balanced by the need to ensure that students do not have scheduling conflicts or more than two exams within a twenty-four hour period. It was pointed out that the 2005-06 academic year is unique in the scheduling constraints that exist in the Winter term due to the positioning of January 1 and the Easter weekend. These scheduling constraints will not be present for the ensuing few years and there will be greater flexibility in establishing the critical academic dates in those years.

   It was noted that the dates of the March reading week in 2006 actually will be somewhat earlier than the dates in March 2005, where reading week begins 9 weeks after the start of classes in January. Historically the dates for the UNB March break have been the same as the dates for the New Brunswick secondary school system and this would be the case with the proposed 2006 dates. The Committee believes a change from this practice would require firm direction from the Senates, which has debated this matter on a number of occasions in the past and expressed the preference that the UNB dates coincide with the March Break in the public school system.

   Saint Thomas University has approved its schedule of academic dates for 2005-06, which corresponds to that proposed for UNB. The Winter term start of classes date is January 4, 2006, and the dates for March Break are March 6-10.

   After careful consideration of the concerns, the Committee agreed that the date for the start of classes in January 2006 and the dates of the March Break are reasonable and should remain as proposed.

   **RECOMMENDATION:** “That the Committee recommend to Senate the approval of the Proposed Calendar of Academic Dates for 2005-2006, as amended with respect to the last date to withdraw from term courses without academic penalty.”

   Stephen Strople,
   Secretary
C. Dropping Courses

To avoid academic penalty students are advised to pay particular attention to the following information concerning the meaning of symbols, based on the date of withdrawal from a course, which will appear on the official transcript. Exact dates in effect for the current year are noted in the academic calendar at the front of this publication.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor before withdrawing from a course.

Full Year Courses

- Courses dropped up to two weeks following the commencement of classes are deleted from the record. Courses dropped up to the end of the second week of classes in January carry no academic penalty and are shown as a "W" on the transcript.
- Courses dropped after the above-described no-penalty period but within at least two weeks prior to the end of scheduled classes are recorded on the transcript as "F" and a grade of zero (0) is carried into the GPA.
- Courses dropped within the last two weeks of classes are recorded as an "F" on the transcript.

Term Courses

- Courses dropped up to two weeks after the commencement of classes are deleted from the record.
- Courses dropped between the above-described deletion period and the final fifteen days of the term are recorded on the transcript as a "W" and carry no academic penalty.
- Courses dropped after the no-penalty period are recorded on the transcript as "F" and a grade of zero (0) is carried into the GPA.
C. Dropping Courses

i. Students may drop term or full-year courses up to two weeks following the commencement of classes in those courses and those courses will be deleted from the student’s record.

ii. Students may withdraw from term or full-year courses after the first two weeks of classes in accordance with the regulations set out below.

iii. a) Students are entitled to make decisions to withdraw from courses after the first two weeks of classes on an informed basis. An informed basis means that the students shall have a reasonable opportunity to assess their progress in each course and to receive feedback on their performance in each course before making a decision. Students have the responsibility to seek information on which to make their decisions to withdraw.

   b) In courses where the final grade is based in part on term work such as, but not limited to, essays, reports, assignments, projects including group work, problem solving, tests including mid-term examinations, seminar presentation and/or participation, attendance, students are entitled to receive feedback on the portion of this work completed prior to the deadline for withdrawal from courses without academic penalty. Such feedback normally will include, but is not limited to, the instructor’s evaluation of the students’ work. Students also are entitled to consult with the course instructor and/or their advisor to obtain feedback on their performance in a course and are encouraged to do so before withdrawing from a course after the first two weeks of classes.

iv. After the first two weeks of classes, students may withdraw from courses without academic penalty at any time up to and including the deadlines as set out in the Calendar of Academic Dates approved annually by the Senates and found in the Undergraduate Calendar. Normally these deadlines shall be as follows:

   Fall term courses ten (10) calendar days after the last date to withdraw from Fall term courses with a pro-rated refund;

   Full year courses fourteen (14) calendar days after the start of classes in Winter term;

   Winter term courses ten (10) calendar days after the last date to withdraw from Winter term courses with a pro-rated refund;

v. Withdrawal from courses after the first two weeks of classes and no later than the deadlines indicated in iv above will carry no academic penalty and will be shown as “W” on the transcript.
vi. Withdrawal from courses after the deadlines indicated in iv above will be recorded as “F” on the transcript and a grade of zero (0) will be carried into the calculation of the GPA.

vii. a) Notwithstanding the above, a student may petition the Chair, or in the case of Faculties without departments, the Dean or Dean’s designate, of the Department/Faculty which offers the course, to withdraw from a course without academic penalty after the applicable deadline in iv and before the last date of classes for that course. No petition regarding withdrawal shall be considered after the submission of the final grade for the course.

b) The grounds for this petition are restricted to:

i the student made reasonable efforts to obtain feedback on his/her performance in the course prior to the deadline for withdrawal in iv, but was unable to do so;

ii compassionate, health-related or extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student demonstrably had a direct impact on the academic performance of the student in the course.

c) The student shall submit the petition in writing no later than the last date of classes in the course, explaining the grounds on which the petition is based. It is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation in support of the petition which demonstrates the grounds cited. The Chair, Dean or Dean’s designate, as the case may be, has the option, but is not required, to meet with the student. It is expected that a decision on the petition will be made expeditiously.

d) The Chair, Dean or Dean’s designate, as the case may be, shall have the sole and only discretion to grant the petition, and, where satisfied that the student has established either grounds as set out in b), normally will grant the petition.

e) Where the decision of the Chair, Dean or Dean’s designate is to grant the petition, the course in question will be shown as “W” on the transcript.

f) The decision of the Chair, Dean or Dean’s designate on the petition is final and not subject to appeal. However, students may have recourse to appeal to the relevant appeals committee on related matters as set out elsewhere in these regulations (see for example the section headed “Right of Appeal”).
### Attachment # 2: Academic Calendar Fall Term 2005

#### July
- **1 Friday**  
  Canada Day – University Holiday – No classes*
- **4 Monday**  
  UNB Fredericton Summer Session begins
- **9 Saturday**  
  UNB Fredericton on-campus early registration for new students

#### August
- **1 Monday**  
  New Brunswick Day – University Holiday – No classes*
- **10 Wednesday**  
  UNB Fredericton Summer Session classes end
- **11-12 Thursday-Friday**  
  UNB Fredericton Summer Session examinations

#### September
- **2 Friday**  
  Residence open for new and returning students
- **5 Monday**  
  Labour Day – University Holiday – No classes*
- **6-7 Tuesday-Wednesday**  
  Academic Programming & Orientation Week
- **6 Tuesday**  
  Start of NURS classes for 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 4\textsuperscript{th} Year Nursing students, UNB Fredericton, Bathurst and Moncton
  
  Academic Orientation for 1\textsuperscript{st} Year Nursing students, UNB Fredericton, Bathurst and Moncton
- **7 Wednesday**  
  Start of NURS classes for 1\textsuperscript{st} Year Nursing students, UNB Fredericton, Bathurst and Moncton
- **8 Thursday**  
  Start of classes for both campuses
- **20 Tuesday**  
  Last day for payment of University fees
- **21 Wednesday**  
  Last day to opt out of Student Union Health & Dental plan
  
  Last day to opt out of International Health Insurance

#### October
- **10 Monday**  
  Thanksgiving Day – University Holiday – No classes*
- **20 Thursday**  
  Fall Convocation – UNB Fredericton
- **21 Friday**  
  Fall Convocation – UNB Saint John
- **24 Monday**  
  Last day to withdraw from Fall Term courses with pro rated refund (see University Refund Policy, pg. C.X)

#### November
- **3 Thursday**  
  Last day to withdraw from Fall Term courses without academic penalty. A grade of “W” (withdrawn) will be shown on the academic record.
- **11 Friday**  
  Remembrance Day – University Holiday – No classes*
- **23 Wednesday**  
  Last day in Fall Term to hold class tests (see Examination, Standing and Promotion regulations Part A. General, Item 7)
### Academic Calendar Fall Term 2005 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Reading period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>First day of Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Last day of Examination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Days for Fall Term 2005 – 63 days**

### Academic Calendar – Winter Term 2006

#### January

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Start of classes for both campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Last day for payment of University fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Last day to opt out of Student Union Health &amp; Dental plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Last day to opt out of International Health Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Last day for payment of University Fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Last day for adding Winter Term courses. Winter Term courses dropped up to and including this date not shown on academic transcript. Last day to withdraw from Full-year courses without academic penalty. A notation of “W” (withdrawn) will be shown on the academic transcript.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from Winter Term courses with pro rated refund (see University Refund Policy, pg. C.X)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from Winter Term courses without academic penalty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>Winter Term break – no classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Academic advising and registration for continuing students begins for UNB Fredericton. Details to be announced by Faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Last day in Winter Term to hold class tests (see Examination, Standing and Promotion regulations Part A. General, Item 7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### April

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Reading period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>First day of Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>Friday-Monday</td>
<td>Easter – University Holiday – No classes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Last day of Examinations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Winter Term teaching days – 62 days

### Academic Calendar – Spring/Intersession & Summer 2006
May – July

Spring Session UNB Saint John – details to be announced by UNB Saint John

May

1  Monday  Intersession UNB Fredericton begins
17-18 Wednesday-Thursday  The 176th Encaenia – UNB Fredericton
19  Friday  32nd Spring Convocation – UNB Saint John
       Last day to opt out of International Health Insurance for Intersession or Spring Session
22  Monday  Victoria Day – University Holiday – No classes*

June

3  Saturday  UNB Fredericton on-campus early registration for new students.
16  Friday  UNB Fredericton Intersession classes end
19-21 Monday-Wednesday  UNB Fredericton Intersession examination period

July

1  Saturday  Canada Day – University Holiday – No classes*
3  Monday  UNB Fredericton Summer Session begins
22  Friday  Last day to opt out of International Health Insurance for Summer Session.

August

7  Monday  New Brunswick Day – University Holiday – No classes*
9  Wednesday  UNB Fredericton Summer Session classes end
10-11 Thursday-Friday  UNB Fredericton Summer Session examinations

* Except for essential operations, most university offices will be closed on the dates indicated as “University Holiday”. Essential functions, for example, Security, Heating Plant and the Residences will be staged and operational. Physical Plant will have staff on call should they be needed. A few departments and facilities such as the libraries, computer labs, Financial Services, Registrar’s Offices may offer some services on certain holidays. Those wishing to use such services on any holiday are advised to check with the specific department about operations for that day.

---

Proposed 2005-2006 Academic Schedule

1. The following Senate guidelines are considered in the development of the schedule:
a. That the approved target of 65 teaching days each term is a maximum.

b. That the Christmas Holiday break should have a minimum of 14 days.

c. That the Winter Term should not start before January 3 and not on a Friday.

d. That there should be a full-week mid-term break beginning the first Monday in March.

e. That there be at least one reading day, including weekends and Easter, between the last day of classes and the beginning of examinations.

f. That there should be one working day between the end of Christmas examinations and the start of the Christmas Holiday period.

g. That Winter Term examinations must end by April 30.

2. The final examination period requires a minimum of 11 days, to include two Saturdays.

3. The Fall Term includes 63 teaching days and the Winter Term 62 teaching days.

4. The current policy regarding the last day to withdraw from term classes without academic penalty (November 12, 2003 and March 18, 2004) is subject to ongoing review by Senate.

5. The Academic Schedule for the Faculty of Law and the School of Graduate Studies are to be submitted separately by these academic units for approval.

Academic Calendar Issues:

It should be noted that the Labour Day holiday again falls at the start of the first full week of September and will continue in this manner for the next few years. This has a significant impact on the development of the Fall Term 2005 schedule. Based on the practice of classes starting the Monday following the holiday, classes for Fall Term 2005 would not start until September 12. The consequence of this later start of classes is that the final examination period cannot begin until Friday December 10 and cannot end until Wednesday December 22. It is anticipated that this will be a major point of concern for students as well as faculty. The draft schedule presented in this document is based on Fall Term classes commencing on Thursday September 8, 2005. There are two consequences of the alternative earlier start of classes. First, the final examination period would begin on Thursday December 8 and end on Tuesday December 20, which is comparable to the dates of the examination period for Fall Term 2004. Second, the Academic Programming and Orientation Week program would have to be significantly compressed or commence prior to Labour Day. In developing the draft schedule, priority was given to ensuring the maximum number of teaching days possible, 62.

The tradition of starting classes the first Monday in January is problematic. The first Monday falls immediately after the Christmas/New Year holiday period. This does not
allow any working days for both students and instructors before the start of classes. It has been recommended that the start of term be moved to Wednesday January 5, 2006. A start date of Monday, January 9, 2006 has been considered as well. With the later start date, the earliest the Winter Term could end is Monday, April 10, 2006. In order to meet exam scheduling requirements, we require 11 examination days to include 2 Saturdays. Based on the 11 day requirement, the examination period would extend from April 12 to April 27; examinations would not be scheduled April 14-17 as this is the Easter period. This schedule allows for the 11 examination days but includes only one Saturday. The two Saturdays are necessary to meet scheduling requirements for courses with evening lecture sections. In order to include a second Saturday, it appears that it would be necessary to extend the examination period to Saturday April 29. Instructors are advised that final grades are to be submitted 5 working days following the date of the final examination. The earliest we could then expect to have final grades submitted after the last day of final examinations would be May 3 and more realistically it would be May 5. This allows just over one week for the Registrar's Offices and Faculty Offices to complete the graduate audit; Faculty offices to determine all prizes including Faculty Silver Medals; Faculty offices to determine Honours program standings, distinctions and co-op; the listing posted to the web site for students to access and to Senators for approval at the meetings May 23/24. The final graduation list must also be prepared, proofed and sent to the printer by May 17 in order to be assured that the ceremony booklets are delivered by end of day May 23.

Clearly there are benefits to having the extra days at the start of the Winter term for student travel as well as advising and registration prior to the start of classes. However, the later start for Winter Term impacts the scheduling at end of term impacts the final graduation audits. Normally there are least 3 weeks from the end of examinations to the date the grad list is submitted to Senators and program printing. Shortening this period would have a negative impact on faculty, staff and ultimately the graduating students. Accordingly, it is recommended that the start date for Winter Term 2006 be Wednesday January 4.

Regards,

David J. Hinton        Tom Buckely
Registrar              Registrar
UNB Fredericton        UNB Saint John
djh/