



## Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System Procedures Chapter 3 – Educational Policies

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### Procedures 3.34.1 Official Academic Semester Start Dates

**Part 1. Official academic semester start dates.** The official academic semester start dates shall be established at least one year (12 months) prior to implementation.

**Part 2. General provisions for establishing academic semester start dates.** The following criteria shall be considered when establishing academic semester start dates:

1. Fall semester start date will allow for the student contact time necessary to complete the semester, including exams, prior to December 24.
2. A winter break (of approximately three weeks) will be established between the official fall and spring academic semesters.
3. Spring semester start date will accommodate the winter break and attempt to avoid starting on a Thursday or Friday.

**Part 3. Academic calendar notification process.** Each president shall notify the chancellor of the dates of the college or university academic calendar dates at least four (4) months in advance of the official system established fall semester start date. This information shall be used to develop and post a master schedule of systemwide college and university operating dates. This notification shall include the following:

1. official system academic semester start dates,
2. legal holidays,
3. end date for each academic semester,
4. breaks within each semester,
5. final date for official course withdrawal,
6. final exam dates,
7. faculty professional development days,
8. college and university wide employee professional development days, and
9. a list of special (or alternate) academic semester schedules with the target audience and the beginning and end dates identified.

**Subpart A. Final date for official course withdrawal.** The final date for official course withdrawal is the last day on which students may officially terminate their enrollment in a course, and shall be the date on which eighty percent (80%) of the days in the academic semester have elapsed. For courses not on a standard academic semester schedule, the final date for official course withdrawal shall be established as the date on which eighty percent (80%) of the instructional days for the course have elapsed.

**Part 4. Exceptions to the official academic semester start date.**

**Subpart A. Exception request submission.** Any exception to the official academic semester start dates shall be requested by the president in writing, shall include the justification for the exception request, and shall be submitted to the chancellor no later than three weeks after the formal system announcement of the official start date.

**Subpart B. Chancellor decision on the exception request.** The vice chancellor for academic and student affairs shall recommend to the chancellor a decision regarding the exception request. The chancellor shall inform the requesting college or university of his/her decision regarding the exception request within six (6) weeks of the request submission. A copy of the decision notification shall be provided to the Board of Trustees, college and university presidents, the state faculty union presidents, the state president of other employee unions, and the state student association presidents.

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*Approval Date: 08/13/06,*

*Effective Date: Required for the 2008-2009 academic year for all colleges and universities.*

*Optional for the 2007-2008 academic year,*

*Date and Subject of Revision:*

*2/02/12 - Amended Part 3 to include "final date for official course withdrawal."*