

## Proposed Changes and Additions to the Academic Calendar Guidelines - Spring Semester

### ST OLAF PROPOSED academic calendar DRAFT 2A – 03.06.24 – Spring Semester

2025 to 2026

Feb 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Mar 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Apr 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Jun 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Jul 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
S2 ENDS AUGUST 19						

#### KEY:

Holidays

No Class Days

Reading Days

Finals Days

First Day and Last Day of Terms (bolded)

### No Changes to J-Term are being proposed.

- First Day of Class - Thursday, February 5, 2026
- Spring Break/No Classes - Saturday, March 14 - Sunday, March 22, 2026
- April Rest Break/No Classes - Wednesday, April 15, 2026 (during Advising Week)
- Last Day of Class - Wednesday, May 13, 2026
- Reading Day - Thursday, May 14, 2026
- Final Exams - Friday, May 15 - Tuesday, May 19, 2026 (no finals on Sunday)
- Commencement - Saturday, May 23, 2026

### Proposed Changes to Spring Semester:

Earlier Spring Break - Change to the academic guidelines

- Original text: Breaks in spring semester to total at least six weekdays; include Monday through Friday; if the Easter holiday is not part of spring break, then it will be observed on campus without additional break days.
- Proposed text: Spring break will occur during the third week of March and will include at least five weekdays, Monday through Friday. If the Easter holiday is not part of spring break, then it will be observed on campus without additional break days.

#### Quiet Day during Advising Week - Addition to the Academic Guidelines

- Proposed text: Advising Week includes one Quiet Day when classes are not in session but where all other activities, including advising appointments, may occur.
- *Note: We are recommending a name change from “Quiet Week for Advising” to “Advising Week” to avoid confusion with the addition of a “Quiet Day” within this week.*

#### 4 Days of Finals - Addition to the Academic Guidelines

- Proposed text: Final exams are scheduled over four days.  
*Note: With our ten standard day class times, we would arrange them into twelve 2-hour time slots over those 4 days with no evening times assigned. All exams would be scheduled between 8 am and 4 pm except for evening classes, which would still hold their final exam in the evenings.*

#### **Rationale:**

The Academic Calendar Review and Revision Committee identified the following rationales for the proposed calendar for Spring semester:

- Moving Spring Break earlier to balance out the term. (Will also better accommodate Spring athletics competition schedules.)
- Adding an additional day with no classes during Quiet Week for Advising, which will be renamed to Advising Week (no classes, but all other activities, including advising, could still occur), with a parallel rest day in Fall.
- Reducing from five to four days of finals to preserve at least two days between the end of finals and Commencement activities, which would begin on Friday (May 22 in the above schedule). No additional finals would be held in the evenings.
- In some years, this timing would allow Commencement to occur the Saturday before Memorial Day weekend, avoiding expensive holiday travel for graduating students/families and allowing more faculty and staff to take the holiday off.

In a survey to the community, we saw general support for these calendar changes, with the majority of student, staff, and faculty respondents in favor of the proposed guidelines above.

### **Financial Implications:**

We consulted several areas about any significant financial implications that would result from the proposed changes in this resolution. Overall, there were no significant concerns from Athletics, Budget and Auxiliary Operations, Events/Camps & Conferences, Libraries, PLT, Smith Center, or Student Life.

### **Additional Information:**

In September 2023, the Academic Calendar Review and Revision Committee was [charged](#) with reviewing and recommending changes to St. Olaf's academic calendar (the Committee's charge did *not* include recommending changes at this time to the daily class schedule or the number of credits required for graduation). As part of this process, members of the committee met with [30 different groups](#) across campus to solicit ideas and feedback on potential changes. Because most changes to the academic calendar require a faculty vote, and because the structure of the academic calendar significantly impacts the work of faculty and many staff, the Committee felt this targeted outreach was necessary to understand the feasibility of potential calendar revisions before seeking broader community input.

Our Committee sought to address the following main goals:

- Adding/lengthening breaks between and/or during terms to provide the campus community with more rest periods, support student mental health, and give faculty and staff more time for grading and/or preparation between terms.
- Reducing holiday travel days for students and families by shifting the start/end of terms accordingly; specifically, starting earlier in the Fall and ensuring January term starts after the observed New Year's holiday.

After the first round of outreach, the Committee drafted a proposed calendar that addressed several of the suggestions collected from the 30 groups. This model was then circulated for further feedback, and the Committee made a few additional changes. We presented the proposed calendar for all students, staff, and faculty to share their input.

*Note: The Committee also considered additional, more substantial changes to the academic calendar. These included starting Fall term three weeks earlier and ending at Thanksgiving*

*(similar to the schedule implemented for 2020-21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic), shifting January term to an optional May term, or shortening January term to 3 weeks. Given the significant challenges these changes posed for several departments and offices consulted, the Committee decided not to pursue these proposals.*