

Common Academic Calendar

CONVERSION GUIDE

**FALL 2017
TERM**

Sept. 5-Dec. 22

**SPRING 2018
TERM**

Jan. 2-April 27

**SUMMER 2018
TERM**

May 7-Aug. 24

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A Message From Gayle B. Ward



The common academic calendar.

It's the phrase we use to describe the process of converting Rush University's four colleges — Rush Medical College, College of Nursing, College of Health Sciences and the Graduate College — and 2,500 students to a common academic schedule starting in fall 2017. This calendar conversion guide will provide you with key information and details regarding the distinctive change in the way Rush University delivers education. It is a comprehensive resource to assist students, faculty and staff with navigating through a range of questions about the new common academic calendar and how it might affect you.

But first I would like to reflect on how the common academic calendar represents more than just an administrative change to our academic terms. It exemplifies who we are on a broader level. When I think of the word “common,” I do not think of the students and faculty of Rush University. You are anything but common — you are extraordinary!

Yet, regardless of your college affiliation or professional roles, you share many commonalities.

- A common passion for teaching and learning
- A common commitment to transform health care through innovation, research and education
- Common values that respect and honor diversity and inclusion
- A common drive for excellence, leadership and community service
- A common intellectual curiosity that breeds ideas and innovation

These commonalities are what brought us to Rush University. They define and bind members of our community and help us achieve our goals — both personal and professional.

This common academic calendar offers opportunities to complement and amplify these incredible qualities we all have in common. It will bring enhanced interprofessional learning and greater integrated co-curricular events.

We are committed to your success as we begin the One Calendar–One University transition. In addition to this guide, we will send regular communications with important details and update the common academic calendar web page with news and announcements.

With warmest regards,

Gayle B. Ward, JD
Senior Associate Provost, Educational Affairs

A Message From Brenda L. Weddington



Working on the Rush University common academic calendar initiative this past year has been quite rewarding, particularly due to the efforts of a phenomenal team that embraced Rush's ICARE values to ensure the project was a success. In my role as principal for the common academic calendar conversion, I have seen the entire University collaborate toward one calendar — one Rush University.

What has been accomplished — in a short period of time — is truly remarkable. The dedication from leadership, faculty and staff, with a focus on ONE GOAL, makes me proud to be part of this team.

The common academic calendar will enhance Rush University's culture in a dynamic way. Students from all four colleges will share common start and end of term dates and vacation breaks. Uniting the four colleges with a common academic calendar embodies our commitment to provide you with an exceptional, distinctive and inclusive experience.

The ONE CALENDAR initiative was fully realized because every department in the University came together to reach one common goal: to provide the best experience for our students. We intend to continue these efforts to support you throughout the transition.

This conversion guide was created to provide you with detailed information about changes that might influence you, from financial aid to registering for classes. It also includes comprehensive FAQs you can use to easily access important information. Please take a moment to review the guide.

We look forward to welcoming you in the fall! Congratulations, Rush University:
We are ONE.

Best regards,

Brenda L. Weddington
Chief Enrollment Management Officer and University Registrar

Common Academic Calendar

PLEDGE TO STUDENTS

Rush University will implement a common academic calendar effective Sept. 5, 2017 for all four colleges. This conversion guide provides essential common academic calendar information to students, faculty and other members of the Rush University community.

Rush University is committed to a successful conversion from four college-based calendars to one unified calendar, the common academic calendar for all Rush colleges (Rush Medical College, the College of Nursing, the College of Health Sciences and the Graduate College). The conversion to the common academic calendar will be practically seamless for many students. For others, the change will mean a different way of approaching their academic program, including a different method of earning credits: semester hours instead of quarter hours.

Rush encourages all students to consult with their appropriate faculty advisers prior to the calendar conversion in order to create educational plans that outline the specific requirements remaining to earn their degrees. Students who follow an approved degree plan under the common academic calendar can be assured of the following:

1. No loss of academic progress

If you work with an adviser to plan your degree, you will not lose any credit as a result of the calendar conversion. All applicable credit hours already earned will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements.

2. No delay to degree completion

If you are on track to complete your degree at the time of the calendar conversion and you earn the required credits after the conversion, you will not need additional time to complete your degree. However, degree completion may be delayed if you decide to change to part-time status, take a leave of absence or deviate from your degree plan, which is the case regardless of a calendar conversion.

3. No increased costs for degree completion

Student tuition and fees under the common academic calendar will not be greater than they would have been under the former calendars. As is regular practice, the University regularly reviews tuition rates and may implement annual increases as deemed necessary.

For many students, the implementation of a common calendar will hardly be noticed, because it will be very similar to their current calendar. The College of Health Sciences and its students will likely feel the most impact since the college will be converting from a quarter-based academic calendar to a term-based academic calendar. Therefore, much of the information and many of the following frequently asked questions and answers greatly focus on these significant changes.

Please do not hesitate to email ru_common_calendar@rush.edu with any questions.

Introduction to the Common Calendar

All colleges will have three academic terms: fall, spring and summer. Following one calendar across the University will yield a number of immediate benefits for students, faculty and staff, including streamlining efficiencies.

Comparing current calendars and a term calendar

The quarter system divides the year into four 10- to 12-week periods in the fall, winter, spring and summer. The new common academic calendar has three relatively equal terms: fall, spring and summer. The term system divides the year into fall, spring terms and summer periods, each spanning roughly 15 to 16 weeks.

Benefits of the common academic calendar

The common academic calendar will benefit students, faculty and staff in several ways, including simplified scheduling of rooms and events, easier-to-administer financial aid packages, a more intuitive climate for fostering interprofessional education and streamlined reporting of student data. Due to the different calendars we currently use, staff need to repeat various administrative processes for each college at different times. Submitting enrollment reports to various agencies, billing, awarding financial aid, processing grades and many other processes are conducted at different times for each college. Following a common calendar will streamline such processes by decreasing the number of times processes need to be completed. With all four colleges using a common room scheduling grid, classroom use will be optimized.

Use of a term calendar brings the Rush curriculum in line with the large majority of colleges and universities in the U.S. One benefit of the calendar change is that it allowed the University's colleges to further examine their curricula and make modifications and improvements. Ultimately, students moving from quarter to semester hours will spend the same amount of time per week in the classroom, with the benefit of five additional weeks of class to cover the course. The change also gives all colleges a common fall start date and spring break.

Effect on the colleges and their students

Each college will be affected differently. The College of Nursing and the Graduate College will be affected the least since they already use a term calendar, and their credits are counted in semester credit hours. Rush Medical College also uses semester credit hours, but its calendar will change to conform to the common academic calendar. The College of Health Sciences will be affected the most since its curriculum has been on the quarter calendar and its coursework is measured in quarter hours. In addition, the College of Health Science curriculum will change significantly as a result of a curriculum redesign for most of the programs, and the courses will be converted from the quarter system to the common academic calendar and semester credit hours. Students in the College of Health Sciences will also be affected the most as their curriculum changes and their coursework is measured in semester hours instead of quarter hours.

Common Academic Calendar Dates and Schedules

- All classes for the 2017 fall term will begin on Sept. 5 and will end on Dec. 15 or Dec. 22, depending on the college.
- There will be a winter break in December, prior to the start of the 2018 spring term, and a spring break in late February.
- Classes will end in late April followed by commencement and a break before the 2018 summer term begins on May 7.

Rush Medical College will now have a summer term, and the College of Health Sciences will have three equal terms instead of four (fall, winter, spring and summer). (Complete schedule can be found on page 12).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How is class scheduling affected by the move to terms?

Rush University will use a more traditional class scheduling model. Classes will have common start times each day, and many will meet on a regular schedule of a combination of Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday, although some classes will still meet on an irregular schedule. This type of scheduling makes it easier for students to plan their schedules and makes classroom use much more efficient.

How are the dates for drop/add and course withdrawal affected?

Dates for transactions such as drop/add, pass/fail, withdraw from a course and refunds will be the same for all students in all colleges. This change alone makes the common academic calendar less confusing for students, faculty and staff.

How will registering for classes be different under the new calendar?

Registration for all students will take place at the same time, three times a year for the fall, spring and summer terms.

What will be the normal course load in a term?

The number of courses taken each term will not change, but the number of credits in each term may differ because of the change from quarter credit hours to semester credit hours.

How many credits per term are considered full-time or part-time?

All enrolled Rush Medical College students are considered full-time. Graduate students are considered full-time with 9 credits and half-time with 4.5 credits. Undergraduate students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits for full-time and 6-11 credits for half-time. PhD dissertation students are full-time with at least two credits and half-time with one credit.

Does the conversion from quarters to terms affect the number of times per week classes will meet?

Both the number of class meetings per week and the length of a class session may change for some classes. A more consistent weekly class meeting schedule is being introduced with the new calendar, which should make it easier for students to plan their schedules both on and off campus.

Will I have fewer clinical rotations under the new calendar?

Clinical rotations will remain the same unless changes are part of a new course curriculum.

Working With Your Adviser: Degree Completion

For some colleges, the new calendar will change graduation requirements because courses will be measured in semester credits. In some cases, there will be no change in graduation requirements. That is why it is very important for all students to meet with their advisers:

- All currently enrolled students will work with their advisers to create a transition plan that is program-specific and tailored to each student since it is possible that some individual degree-completion plans will require special attention.
- Advisers will keep students up-to-date on degree-completion requirements.
- It is very important that all students affected by the calendar change meet with their advisers to create a graduation plan under the common academic calendar.
- Students who do not meet with their academic advisers to review their plan of study as it relates to the common academic calendar conversion may delay their anticipated graduation.
- If students are nearing graduation, we recommend trying to complete their degrees prior to the term conversion.
- If students cannot finish under the quarter system, they should make every attempt to complete all sequences of courses on the quarter system or delay beginning sequences until the conversion has taken place.
- Transition students will be required to connect with their advisers to discuss their program plan of study.

ACADEMIC CONVERSION

Because a semester course lasts up to 50 percent longer than a quarter course, a term credit hour counts more heavily than a quarter credit hour. The formula used to convert quarter credit hours to semester credit hours is as follows:

Number of quarter hours/1.50 = number of semester hours	
Quarter Hours	Term Hours
1	0.67
2	1.34
3	2.00
4	2.67
5	3.34
6	4.00
7	4.67
8	5.34
9	6.00
10	6.67
11	7.34
12	8.00
45	30.00
120	80.00

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will the courses taken under the quarter system count toward my degree under the term system?

Yes. All earned quarter credits will be converted to semester credits. All coursework currently applied to degree requirements will continue to be applicable after the conversion to the common academic calendar.

Will I still be able to graduate on time?

Yes. Students will not need additional time to complete their degree if they maintain the required rate of credit accumulation. As always, graduation terms will be adjusted for those students who change their program, stop-out or do not complete their course work.

Will the change to terms change the length my program?

No. The program length will remain the same.

Who are “transition students”?

“Transition students” began their degree program under the quarter system but will finish under the semester system. Students expected to graduate before fall 2017 are not transition students.

How do the courses I’ve taken in the quarter system equate to the common academic calendar conversion?

Courses already taken under the quarter hour system will be converted to credit hours for continuing students. The total number of quarter hours at the start of fall 2017 will be converted to semester hours on the transcript. The new curriculum will then be in place for those transition students who have course requirements remaining. Many of the courses will remain the same; the credits will just change from quarter hours to semester hours. The new courses will be introduced as the new requirements are put into place.

If a quarter system course is phased out or is no longer required under the common academic calendar system, will the credits earned in that course still count toward graduation?

Yes. Students will receive credit for all courses taken on the quarter system and for the completion of requirements that existed in the quarter system.

Can I choose to take courses under the old quarter-based system instead of the new term-based model?

As of fall 2017, quarter-based courses will not be offered. All students will complete their degrees within the semester credit hour system starting at the beginning of the fall 2017 term.

If I am currently on the quarter system but will end on the term system, will I lose any credits?

Students will not lose credits. All the credits earned on the quarter system will be converted to their semester credit equivalent, and those courses will continue to satisfy degree requirements.

Will I have to repeat any courses taken under the quarter calendar because of the change to a common academic calendar?

No. Students will not have to repeat any courses in which they earned a passing grade.

Will I lose transfer credit during the conversion process?

No. Degree-applicable credit earned on the quarter system, including transfer credit, will apply under the semester credit system. In addition, class, laboratory and clinic quarter credit hours approved for transfer will all be converted into semester credit hours.

Is my GPA affected by the conversion?

The semester credit hour conversion will not affect GPA; it will remain identical to the quarter system average. Rush University's student information system, Colleague, will convert quarter GPAs to an identical semester GPA. After fall 2017, GPAs will be calculated in semester credit hours.

How will the change of calendars be noted on my transcript?

The University's student information system, Colleague, will note the change in credits from quarter to semester on each student's transcript and will show the new converted credits for College of Health Sciences students. For the other colleges, no change will be noted. The actual format of the transcript will not change, nor will the production time for transcripts be affected.

Common Calendar Tuition and Financial Aid

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will tuition increase under the common academic calendar?

The change in calendars has no effect on the tuition charges for the academic year.

Am I paying more tuition under the new system?

Tuition rates typically change each year, but students will be paying no more under the new academic calendar than you would have paid under the old academic calendar.

Will the billing for each term change?

For the College of Health Sciences, billing will shift from four times per year to three times per year. Because of the change from four to three, the total for each bill will be higher, but the aggregate is the same. The other colleges will remain at three times per year.

Will the term conversion affect my financial aid eligibility?

Adopting the common academic calendar does not affect the availability of, or eligibility for, financial aid or the annual amount of financial aid a student may receive. Likewise, veteran benefits are not affected.

Will the term conversion affect my Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?

No. Students must continue to maintain SAP to receive financial aid. The academic records of all undergraduate and graduate students who are receiving or applying for federal financial aid are reviewed at the end of each term. Records of medical students are reviewed at the end of each spring term.

Will the change to terms affect my maximum time for financial aid eligibility?

No. Students are still eligible for financial aid for attempting up to 150 percent of the credits it normally takes to complete a program.

Will students who meet all eligibility criteria be eligible for financial aid for three terms a year?

Yes. Financial aid will continue to be available for each term.

Am I able to borrow additional funds through the federal loan program under a term-based system?

Student loan limits remain the same for the length of the student's program. The amount borrowed is not affected by a change in calendar.

Will the calendar conversion impact my loan repayment?

As long as the student maintains continuous enrollment, loan repayment dates are not affected.

Who can I talk to about how the common academic calendar conversion will affect my financial aid?

Any member of the Office of Student Financial Aid will be pleased to meet with students for a consultation. The office is located in Armour Academic Center, Suite 440.

What if I have more questions?

Send questions or concerns to ru_common_calendar@rush.edu.

2017-18 and 2018-19 Academic Calendars

ORIENTATION	2017	2018
College of Health Sciences		
Physician Assistant Studies	June 12	TBA
All other CHS programs	Aug. 28-29	TBA
College of Nursing		
MSN (GEM and CNL)	Aug. 14	TBA
DNP, PhD, certificates	Dates vary; refer to adviser letter	TBA
Rush Medical College	Aug. 30	TBA
The Graduate College	Aug. 31	TBA
FALL TERM	2017	2018
Labor Day (no classes)	Sept. 4	Sept. 3
Classes begin for all students	Sept. 5	Sept. 4
Last day for late registration	Sept. 8	Sept. 7
Spring preregistration begins	Oct. 16	Oct. 15
Thanksgiving recess	Nov. 23-24	Nov. 22-23
Classes resume	Nov. 27	Nov. 26
Classes end (College of Nursing and College of Health Sciences)	Dec. 8	Dec. 7
Classes end (Rush Medical College and the Graduate College)	Dec. 15	Dec. 14
Final exam period (CON and CHS)	Dec. 11-15	Dec. 10-14
Final exam period (RMC and GC)	Dec. 18-22	Dec. 17-21
Grades due (CON, CHS and graduating students)	Dec. 19	Dec. 18
End of term for all students	Dec. 22	Dec. 21
Conferral of fall degrees	Dec. 23	Dec. 22
Winter break	Dec. 24-Jan. 1	Dec. 23-Jan. 1
Grades due (RMC and GC)	Dec. 28	Dec. 27

SPRING TERM	2018	2019
Classes begin for all students	Jan. 2	Jan. 2
Last day for late registration	Jan. 5	Jan. 4
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (no classes)	Jan. 15	Jan. 21
Spring break	Feb. 26-March 2	Feb. 25-March 1
Classes resume	March 5	March 4
Summer preregistration begins	March 5	March 4
Classes end (CON and CHS)	April 13	April 12
Classes end (RMC and GC)	April 20	April 19
Final exam period (CON and CHS)	April 16-20	April 15-19
Final exam period (RMC and GC)	April 23-27	April 22-26
Grades due (CON, CHS and graduating students)	April 24	April 23
End of term for all students	April 27	April 26
University spring commencement	April 28	April 27
Conferral of spring degrees	April 28	April 27
Grades due (RMC and GC)	May 3	May 2
Break	April 29-May 6	April 28-May 5

SUMMER TERM	2018	2019
Classes begin for all students	May 7	May 6
Last day for late registration	May 11	May 10
Fall preregistration begins	May 25	May 24
Memorial Day (no classes)	May 28	May 27
Final exam period for eight-week term (RMC-M1)	June 25-29	June 24-28
Classes end for eight-week term (RMC-M1)	June 29	June 28
Fourth of July (no classes)	July 4	July 4
Classes end (CON and CHS	Aug. 10	Aug. 9
Classes end (RMC and GC)	Aug. 17	Aug. 16
Final exam (CON and CHS	Aug. 13-17	Aug. 12-16
Final exam period (RMC and GC)	Aug. 20-24	Aug. 19-23
Grades due (CON, CHS and graduating students)	Aug. 21	Aug. 20
End of term for all students	Aug. 24	Aug. 23
Conferral of summer degrees	Aug. 25	Aug. 24
Grades due (RMC and GC)	Aug. 30	Aug. 29
Summer break	Aug. 26-Sept. 3	Aug. 25-Sept. 2

