

University may switch to semesters

Stories by GABRIEL BOEHMER
Of the Emerald

Olum approves recommendation

The University is considering a switch to a semester academic calendar in the fall of 1983.

University Pres. Paul Olum has given the recommendations of the ad hoc committee on semester conversion his stamp of approval and the proposal now goes before the faculty assembly for consideration in June.

University faculty and students will have a chance to voice an opinion on the semester plan at a public hearing slated for Wednesday, May 18, from 1 to 2:30 p.m.

A representative from the president's office explained the recommendation to the Student University Affairs Board Wednesday. A SUAB member said the board will complete an opinion survey of University department heads before the end of spring term.

The proposal also is being circulated among state system of higher education administrators, Olum says.

Olum favors the semester system because he believes it is an academically sounder method.

"We would favor a shift to a semester system," said Eric Sankey, Mount Hood Community College Associate Dean of College Relations.

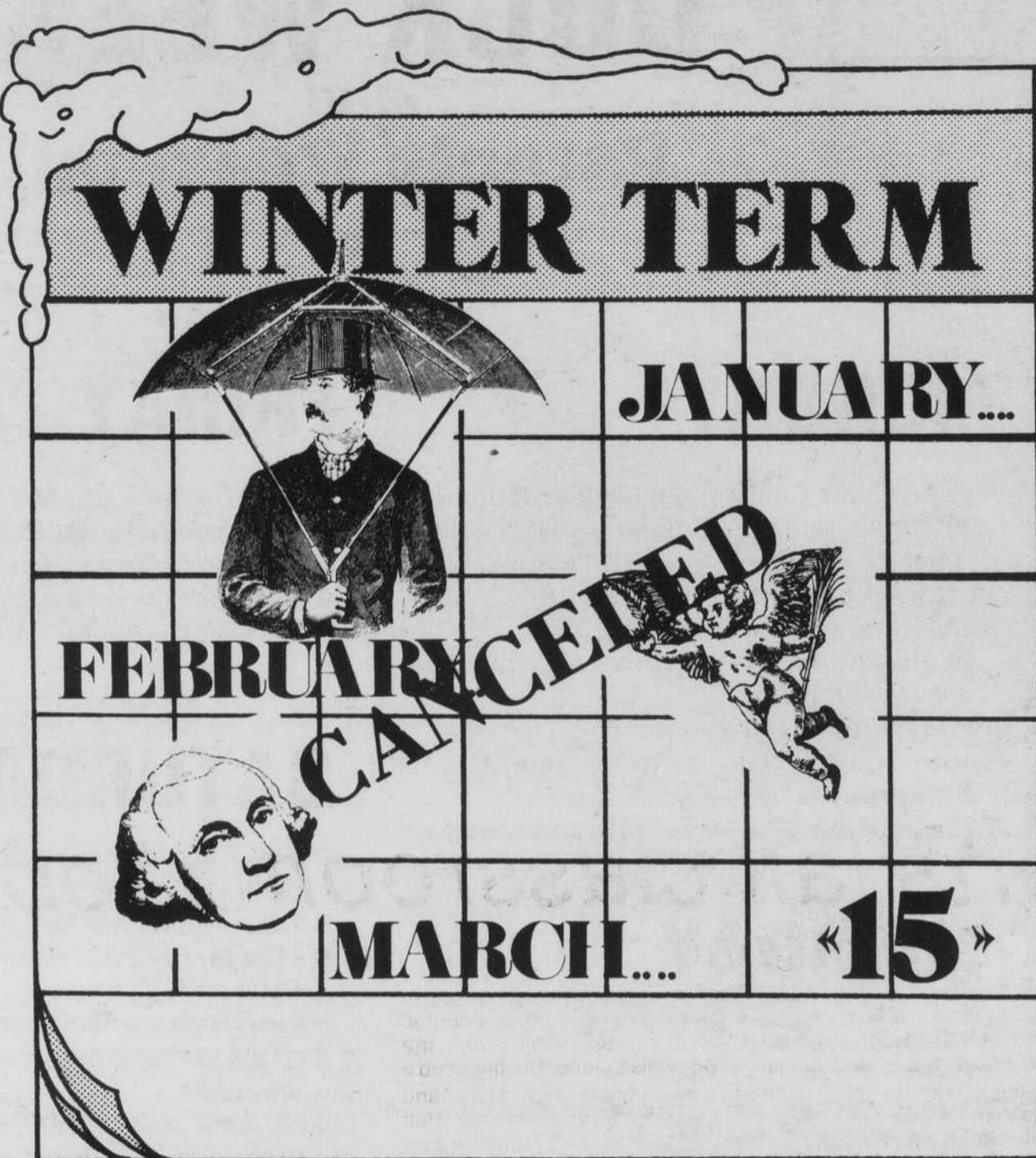
Unlike Olum, Sankey said the primary reason would be the financial savings of only going through the registration process two times a year instead of three.

"Not long after state universities and colleges switch to the semester system, community colleges would follow," Sankey adds.

Transfer students from quarter-system schools should not stop the University from adopting the plan, Sankey says.

"The only problem is students who don't plan ahead to transfer to four-year institutions," Sankey says.

Portland State University administration representative



Graphic by Sioux Anderson

Mark Howard said results of a public opinion poll at PSU this fall showed students were overwhelmingly in favor of the present quarter system.

"If a similar poll was taken among the faculty today," Howard said, "I would expect similar results."

Howard said the semester calendar wouldn't work well at PSU due to the nature of the student body. PSU serves many part-time and community education students who don't start school directly after Labor Day.

"The characteristics of the

student population here are different, and I perceive their needs as different," Howard says.

If the University converted to a semester calendar, Howard doesn't think other state colleges and universities would necessarily follow.

"I don't think there is any overwhelming urge by faculty or students to move that direction," he says.

University admissions director Jim Buch does not think converting to the semester calendar would create any major problems for students transferring from community colleges.

"Transfer problems would not be related to the switch."

Transfer students' main concern should be meeting course requirements at their college or university, and not what calendar the school operates on, Buch believes.

"A switch to the semester system in the long run would not lead to a decrease in enrollment," Buch says.

Initially the change would mean more work for the admissions office, Buch says.

"We would be old dogs learning a new trick."

"An advantage is that once again the University of Oregon would be showing leadership in the state. We would be in the forefront of change."

Buch disputes Howard's claim that PSU students are better suited to the quarter system.

"A larger percentage of city colleges are on the semester system," Buch says. "You have to hustle to find people on quarters."

Comments from community college administrators concerning potential transfer problems will carry the most weight, Olum says.

More than 50 percent of colleges and universities nationally in 1979-80 used the early-semester calendar, according to the University committee report.

The University law school moved from the quarter system to the early-semester system in fall of 1973.

"Every study has shown students have liked it better after the switch," says semester conversion committee chairer Maradel Gale — art and architecture associate dean.

Proposed calendar creates two 16-week terms

If the early-semester calendar is approved by the University assembly and the State Board of Higher Education, the academic year would be composed of two 16-week semesters, each including one week of final examinations.

The calendar provides for an academic year of at least 160 days of classes to meet State Board of Higher Education requirements.

Summer session would continue to be an in-

dependent session, instead of a full third semester. An early summer session would begin shortly after spring semester ends. Another session would begin later in the term for students not on the early-semester system.

The committee's proposal intends time between fall and spring semester to be used a vacation for students and preparation time for faculty. No formal interim session between fall and spring semesters is included in the committee's recommendation.

Proposed Early Semester Calendar for 1983-4

Registration	Aug. 29-30
Fall classes begin	Aug. 31
Thanksgiving vacation	Nov. 23-5
Fall semester finals week	Dec. 14-20
Winter vacation	Dec. 21-Jan. 15
Spring semester registration	Jan. 16
Spring classes begin	Jan. 17
Spring vacation	March 10-18
Spring semester finals	May 4-11

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