

Date: March 1, 2013

To: Kenneth Swalagin

From: Richard L. Edwards, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Subject: Proposed Executive Committee Agenda Item: Fall 2013 Add/Drop Period

As you know, in January 2012 the University Senate accepted the recommendations of its Academic Standards, Regulations and Admissions Committee (ASRAC) to permanently extend the add/drop period to an eight-day to drop, nine-day to add course schedule. Part of the rationale for this change was related to when classes began in relation to Labor Day and the desire to allow students the opportunity to attend at least one class meeting before making their decision to drop or add a particular course. So in accordance with the fall 2013 academic calendar adopted by the University Senate in April 2012, in fall 2013 classes begin on Tuesday September 3, the last day to drop a course is Tuesday September 10, and the last day to add a course is Wednesday September 11.

The Registrar, the Scheduling Office and several academic advising offices have already begun receiving calls related to the fall 2013 academic calendar. These calls are related to the unusually early celebration of Rosh Hashanah in 2013, beginning at sundown on Wednesday September 4 and extending through Friday September 6. The concern voiced is that observant students would be unable to attend classes offered only during the latter part of the week before having to make their decisions about whether to drop or add those courses. While University Policy 10.2.7 regarding course attendance indicates that religious obligation is recognized as a legitimate reason for course absence, the university no longer publishes a lengthy list of recognized religious holidays and does not cancel classes that fall on those days. Arrangements for such absences are expected to be worked out between student and instructor on a case-by-case basis.

Our concern about the fall 2013 add/drop period is based on the number of inquiries already received and the large number of Rutgers faculty and students who celebrate Rosh Hashanah. We suspect that the resulting number of requests for exception or special handling will be so large as to prohibit the administration from processing them efficiently. For this reason we are requesting that the Executive Committee ask ASRAC

to revisit the add/drop period for fall 2013. We are asking that they consider either: extending the add/drop period to the end of the second week of classes, such that the deadline for both dropping and adding classes would be Friday September 13; or, extending one or more of these deadlines to the Monday or Tuesday of the following week (September 16/17). If there are other options that address the issues raised that the committee would prefer, we would of course be open to those as well.

Thank you for considering this administrative request.

c: Robert L. Barchi, President
Kenneth Iuso, Registrar
Gregory Jackson, Interim Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Christopher Morett, Director of Scheduling
Wendell Pritchett, Chancellor, Camden Campus
Philip Yeagle, Interim Chancellor, Newark Campus