



Fall Break Initial Proposal

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Filling the Need

- USC currently has the longest academic semester with the most instructional days out of all semester-system universities ranked in the Top 25 in the United States.
- During the stretch from Labor Day to Thanksgiving Break, USC students have 56 consecutive instructional days
- The university's counseling center has been known to be frequented at higher-than-normal rates from the 8th to 10th week of school
- The counseling center's evaluation of the Behavioral Health Measure shows a peak in mental health crisis from fall 2012- 2016, where students scored, on average, 2.58 out of 4. (Healthy is between 2.94-4.00)
- Data from Medical Services noticed a peak in appointments that spanned between weeks 10-14, and fell after Thanksgiving break

Purpose and Goals

- USG calls for a two-day (Monday, Tuesday) Fall Break during the 8th week of classes.
- We suggest to have Columbus Day and the following Tuesday off, thereby creating a two-day break in the middle of the academic semester.
- This break would give students the opportunity to rest, participate in mental health programming, and refocus on their studies.

Peer Institutions

- Universities with similar academic calendars such as Cornell University, Georgetown University, Washington University in St. Louis, Vanderbilt University, Emory University, Duke University, and Rice University all have at least two days off during respective midpoints of their semesters.

The Vision

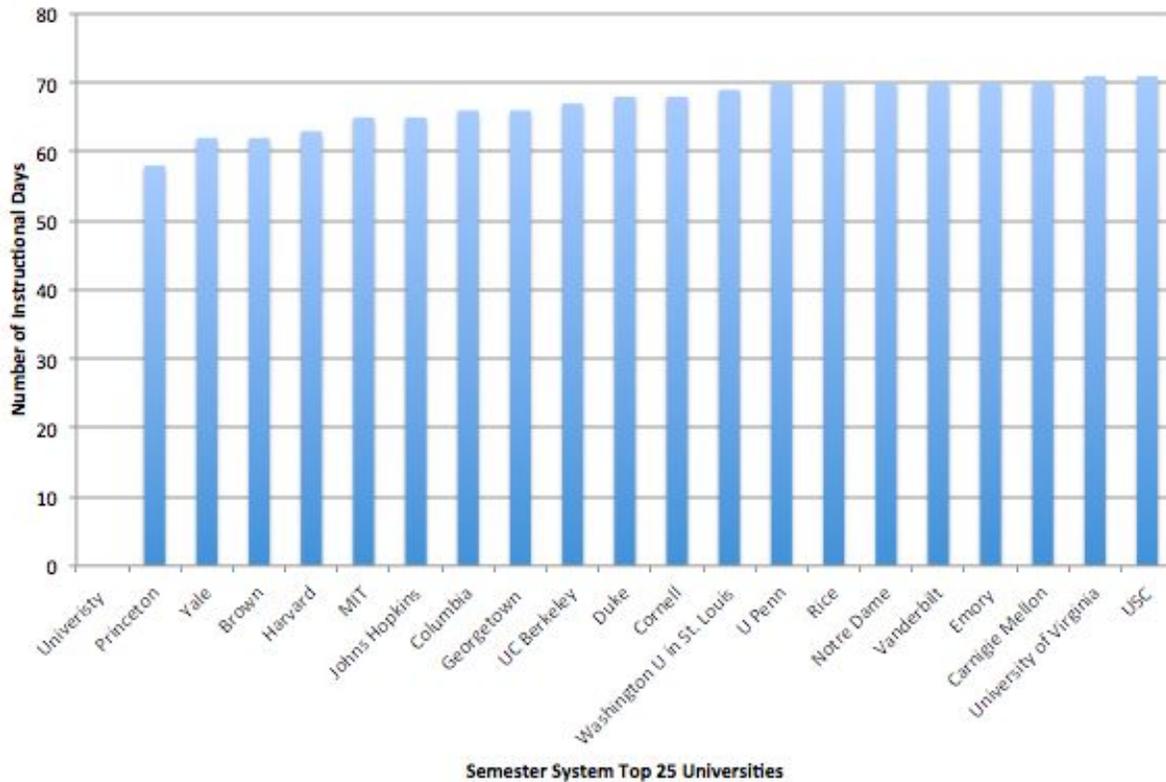
- The two day break can serve as an opportunity for USC to bring attention to and provide programming for mental health on campus. Amongst activities that can be implemented during this time are:
 - Mindful USC Programming
 - Freshman Seminars
 - Volunteering
 - Career Recruiting and Interviews
 - Residential Education Programming



Other Things to Consider

- The addition of a Fall Break will create an asymmetry issue in regards to an imbalance in instructional days between the fall and spring.
- A possible solution would be to eliminate one week of classes in the Spring semester. This change will even out both semesters with 69 instructional days in the Fall and 68 instructional days in the Spring

Number of Instructional Days Semester System Top 25 Universities



Ranking of Schools by number of continuous Instructional Days without a break

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| 1. MIT: 23 | 11. University of Pennsylvania: 33 (tie) |
| 2. Washington U St. Louis: 29 | 11. John Hopkins University: 33 (tie) |
| 3. Duke: 30(tie) | 11. Carnegie Mellon University: 33 (tie) |
| 3. Cornell: 30 (tie) | 14. University of Virginia: 35 (tie) |
| 5. Harvard: 31 (tie) | 14. Princeton University: 35 (tie) |
| 5. Yale: 31 (tie) | 16. Vanderbilt University: 36 |
| 5. Brown: 31 (tie) | 17. Notre Dame University: 40 |
| 5. Rice: 31 (tie) | 18. Columbia University: 44 |
| 5. Emory: 31 (tie) | 19. UC Berkeley: 48 |
| 10. Georgetown: 32 | 20. USC: 56 |

