



Resolution Number:	F-12-07	Sponsored By:	Vice President of Educational Affairs, Kathleen Carlson
Introduced On:	11-29-2012		
Voted On:	12-06-2012		
Result:	Carried		
Vote Count:	Majority		

A RESOLUTION TO: Advocate for the implementation of a two day Fall Break following midterm examinations at Grand Valley State University.

Recognizing, “Grand Valley provides a student-centered liberal education experience that fosters academic success”¹;

Whereas, “The emotional health of college freshmen [...] has declined to the lowest level since an annual survey of incoming students started collecting data 25 years ago”²;

Whereas, Grand Valley State University’s (GVSU) 2011 freshman retention rate, an indicator of student satisfaction, is 83.8 percent³, a number that University officials are not satisfied with and are constantly striving to increase⁴;

Recognizing, The majority of GVSU students report experiencing a noticeable increase in stress/anxiety in the weeks directly prior to and during the week of final examinations⁵;

Recognizing, Wayne Kinzie Ph.D., Associate Director & Interim Director of Clinical Services of the GVSU Counseling and Career Development Center (CCDC) states that GVSU student visits to the CCDC begin to sharply increase in early to mid-October, coinciding with midterm examinations⁶;

Recognizing, The economic downturn has led to an increased pressure to succeed among college students, ultimately causing an increase in stress and thus contributing to the steepest one-year drop in emotional health during the history of the 45 year, annually run “American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2010” survey⁷;

Recognizing, A 2012 study by the American College Counseling Association found that

¹Grand Valley State University Strategic Plan, 2013 <http://www.gvsu.edu/strategicplanning/>

² Lewin, Tamar. "Record Level of Stress Found in College Freshmen." *The New York Times* 26 Jan. 2011: A1. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

³ Grand Valley State University Academic Life." *U.S. News* 2011. Web. 13 Nov. 2012.

⁴ Frederick Antczak, Interview with Vice President Kathleen Carlson; October 25, 2012

⁵ Carlson, Kathleen. “GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Student.” Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

⁶ Wayne Kinzie, Interview with Senator Craig Flora; October 31, 2012.

⁷ Grasgreen, Allie. "Stressed, Yet Hopeful." *Inside Higher Ed.* 27 Jan. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.



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37.4% of college students seeking help have severe psychological problems, an increase of 16% since 2000, mainly attributed to an increased stress load⁸;

Recognizing, Rest, relaxation, and stress reduction are essential to people's well-being and health, and can be accomplished by taking time off from daily routines⁹;

Recognizing, A majority of GVSU students¹⁰ and faculty¹¹ believe that a two day Fall Break after midterm examinations would help to ease stress/anxiety levels;

Recognizing, Wayne Kinzie states that a short fall break could ease stress loads in GVSU students, thus improving their overall mental health¹²;

Recognizing, According to primary care physician Natasha Withers of One Medical Group, "The mind is very powerful and can help with healing, so a rested, relaxed mind is able to help the body heal better"¹³;

Recognizing, According to Francine Lederer, a stress management specialist, "the impact that taking a vacation has on one's mental health is profound. Most people have better life perspective and are more motivated to achieve their goals after a vacation, even if it is a 24-hour time-out"¹⁴;

Recognizing, Wayne Kinzie is in support of the implementation of a short fall break after midterm examinations, as he believes that it has the potential to improve the overall mental health of GVSU students¹⁵;

⁸ Gallagher, Robert P. "National Survey of College Counseling 2012." *The International Association of Counseling Services*(2012): 4-10. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

⁹ Quigley, Patricia. "Vacations Help Job and Health, But Americans Skip Them." *abcnews.go.com. anc NEWS*, 13 Aug. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

¹⁰ Carlson, Kathleen. "GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Student." Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

¹¹ Carlson, Kathleen. "GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Faculty." Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

¹² Wayne Kinzie, Interview with Senator Craig Flora; October 31, 2012.

¹³ Quigley, Patricia. "Vacations Help Job and Health, But Americans Skip Them." *abcnews.go.com. anc NEWS*, 13 Aug. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

¹⁴ Ibid.



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Recognizing, Flu viruses surface and spread in late October, at a time when students’ immune systems are most vulnerable due to sleep deprivation and increased stress levels, both of which can be attributed to high-stress situations such as imminent midterm examinations¹⁶;

Recognizing, Students living in close quarters such as dorms or shared apartments have an increased risk of all respiratory illnesses, and sleep deprivation and stress (both of which were reported by GVSU students¹⁷) can exponentially add to this risk¹⁸;

Recognizing, According to clinical psychologist Deborah Mulhern, “it is only when we are safe from external stresses that our bodies can relax enough to activate restoration”¹⁹;

Recognizing, A majority of GVSU students²⁰ and faculty²¹ believe that a short Fall Break after midterm examinations would award them sufficient time to catch up on sleep/rest that would be otherwise compromised;

Whereas, GVSU prides itself on being a nationally competitive public liberal arts University yet remains behind other public Midwest universities on the implementation of a fall break;

Recognizing, Colleges such as the University of Michigan²², Northern Michigan University²³,

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Quigley, Patricia. "Vacations Help Job and Health, But Americans Skip Them." *abcnews.go.com*. anc NEWS, 13 Aug. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

¹⁷ Carlson, Kathleen. "GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Student." Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

¹⁸ DiBlasio, Natalie. "College students can't make time for sickness, or vaccines." *USA Today* 8 Nov. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

¹⁹ Ibid..

²⁰ Carlson, Kathleen. "GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Student." Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

²¹ Carlson, Kathleen. "GVSU Student Senate Fall Break Survey – Faculty." Survey Monkey. 6 November, 2012.

²² University of Michigan 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.ro.umich.edu/calendar/fa12.php>

²³ Northern Michigan University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.wmich.edu/~registra/calendars/AC-2011-12.html>



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Bowling Green State University²⁴, the University of Toledo²⁵, and the University of Dayton²⁶ are all Midwest universities that currently observe some type of fall break;

Whereas, Universities such as Eastern Michigan University²⁷, Central Michigan University²⁸, Western Michigan University²⁹, Wayne State University³⁰, and Saginaw Valley State University³¹ are all currently in the process of researching or implementing such a break;

Recognizing, 2013 will be the first year that GVSU classes are not in session on Martin Luther King Day, causing GVSU's current academic calendar to allow for an uneven distribution of class days; the implementation of a Fall Break may require similar restructuring.

Let It Be Resolved: The Grand Valley State University Student Senate supports the implementation of a two day Fall Break following midterm examinations at Grand Valley State University.

²⁴ Bowling Green State University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://choose.bgsu.edu/academics/calendar/?year=2012>

²⁵ University of Toledo 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.utoledo.edu/facilities/transit/NoServiceDates.html>

²⁶ University of Dayton 2012-2013 Academic Calendar;

http://www.udayton.edu/flyersfirst/resources/files/registrar/academic_calendar/2012-13_academic_calendar.pdf

²⁷ Eastern Michigan University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.emich.edu/housing/housingDTL.php?f=calendar>

²⁸ Central Michigan University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; http://www.cmich.edu/academics/Pages/Academic_Calendar.aspx

²⁹ Western Michigan University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.wmich.edu/~registra/calendars/AC-2011-12.html>

³⁰ Wayne State University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://reg.wayne.edu/students/calendar12-13.php>

³¹ Saginaw Valley State University 2012-2013 Academic Calendar; <http://www.svsu.edu/academicaffairs/academiccalendar/>