

ASU DEANS & DIRECTORS ACTION FORM

DATE: 9/27/16

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COUNCIL SPONSOR: Chair Council and University College

PROJECT/PROPOSAL TITLE: Shortening registration period once classes have begun

ABSTRACT:

Fall registration was closed on September 9, 2016, three weeks after classes began. We recommend shortening this period to two weeks, for the following reasons:

1. **Academic quality:** Registering 3 weeks after classes have begun puts students at a decided disadvantage because they have already missed 3 weeks of instruction. On their first day of class, that is, they have already missed 20% of class meetings, while Alcorn's policy states that students can miss no more than 25% of class meetings (whether or not the absence is excused) to be eligible for a passing grade. It is not in their best interest to enroll them in classes at such a disadvantage. Even worse, they interpret the university's allowing them to register so late to mean that they do have a good chance at passing the course. Finally, it is also very disruptive for existing classes, especially those who utilize peer groups as an instructional strategy, to have the composition of the class change regularly for 3 full weeks.
2. **Messaging:** When we allow students to enroll 3 weeks after classes have started, we send the wrong message: that the first 3 weeks of instruction are not important. This has negative effects on at least 3 audiences: the students who wait until the last week to register and attend class, simply because they can; the students who have attended class from the first week; and instructors, who know they will have to replicate the first 3-weeks of instruction once the rolls are finalized. The university has already vastly improved the culture in which, at one time, students felt free to start attending class after Labor Day. We believe this is a next step in encouraging students to pre-register and take responsibility for their educations.
3. **Other Mississippi 4-year Public Institutions:** This will align our practice more closely with the practices at most of the other Mississippi 4-year public institutions, which show the following registration periods for the fall 2016 semester:

Institution	Classes Start	Registration Ends	# Business Days
Alcorn State	August 22	September 9	14
Delta State	August 22	August 30	7
Jackson State	August 22	September 2	10
Mississippi State	August 16	August 23	6
Mississippi University for Women	August 25	August 31	5
Mississippi Valley State	August 18	September 8	15
University of Mississippi	August 22	September 2	10
University of Southern Mississippi	August 25	August 31	5

Other considerations:

1. **Exceptions:** If there are students who legitimately cannot register within the first 2 weeks, we can still make exceptions, just as we now do for students who legitimately cannot register within the first 3 weeks. For example, perhaps this policy should not apply to graduate students.
2. **Financial Aid:** The most common reason students give for registering in the last week is financial aid problems. If this is the case, perhaps we can streamline the financial aid process somewhat. This is outside of our expertise.
3. **Incremental Implementation:** If shortening the period by 1 week would create too many problems, perhaps we can implement the change incrementally. For example, we could use the spring 2017 semester as a pilot semester, shortening the registration time by 1 or 2 days. Then we could review the results and decide how long the Fall 2017 registration period should be.

COSTS:

INITIAL/START DATE:

DISCUSSION:

COUNCIL ACTION: APPROVED: **YES** **NO**

TABLED/POSTPONED: _____

DATE: 10/21/2016

PROVOST SIGNATURE: *Stacy Lee*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____