

Winter (January) or J-Session Pilot Proposal - FAQ

Excerpt from Faculty Senate Academic Programs & Planning Feedback 9/19/24:

Overall, committee members were generally supportive of a pilot project to explore offering a Winter session, noting that many students express interest in such a program. Members noted that many students express their interest in taking courses in a winter session for various reasons, including speeding up completion of the degree, to lessen the courseload burden in the regular semesters and to repeat courses they have attempted unsuccessfully. It was also observed that since many of our peer institutions offer winter session(s), we would be at a competitive disadvantage if we do not. *These sentiments were repeated at the Full Senate meeting on 9/20/24.*

| Preceptor Questions | Answers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| When are the J-session dates and modalities? | Winter 1 = December 18 – January 17 (5 weeks ONL only) Winter 2 = January 2 – January 17 (2 weeks Any: HYB, F2F, ONL) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| When are J-session drop/add withdrawal (W) dates? | <p>Session 100% Add/Drop 50% Late Withdrawal (W)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">Session</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Session Begins</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Drop Add Begin</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Drop Add End</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Deadline for 100% Refund</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Deadline for 50% Refund</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Deadline for Withdrawal grade</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Winter 1</td> <td>12/18/2024</td> <td>12/18/2024</td> <td>12/20/2024</td> <td>12/20/2024</td> <td>12/26/2024</td> <td>1/12/2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Winter 2</td> <td>1/2/2025</td> <td>1/2/2025</td> <td>1/4/2025</td> <td>1/4/2025</td> <td>1/9/2025</td> <td>1/12/2025</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Session | Session Begins | Drop Add Begin | Drop Add End | Deadline for 100% Refund | Deadline for 50% Refund | Deadline for Withdrawal grade | Winter 1 | 12/18/2024 | 12/18/2024 | 12/20/2024 | 12/20/2024 | 12/26/2024 | 1/12/2025 | Winter 2 | 1/2/2025 | 1/2/2025 | 1/4/2025 | 1/4/2025 | 1/9/2025 | 1/12/2025 |
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| Winter 2 | 1/2/2025 | 1/2/2025 | 1/4/2025 | 1/4/2025 | 1/9/2025 | 1/12/2025 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What are the limits on J-session enrollments? | <p>Students must be in good standing (as noted on their unofficial transcript or in Degree Works) and may only enroll in a maximum of 4 credits during J-session.</p> <p>The Office of Student Records will scan enrollments for greater than 4 credits and alert the student and Assistant Deans by 100% drop date.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| How does J-session impact student billing/credit loads? | Winter sessions are part of Spring 2025, so those 4 credits count towards total Spring flat rate and/or overage. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| How does J-session impact FAFSA/ Financial Aid? | <p>As part of Spring 2025 aid packaging, J-sessions are not separate aid terms; no additional aid will be awarded.</p> <p>Students with enough anticipated aid posted for Spring 2025 to cover their entire (flat rate) balance for the Spring semester and the Winter Session will not incur additional billing.</p> <p>Students will need to plan accordingly for purchasing textbooks for the Winter Session. See note below for faculty who plan to teach.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What courses will be available in J-session? | Based on faculty feedback for this pilot, full-time faculty will be proposing J-session courses to a Sharepoint list for Chairs and Assistant Deans to review and respond to faculty before building the final schedule. Preview: J-Session Proposed Pilot Courses.xlsx | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| What are the modules for the J-sessions? | <p>Regulatory requirements for typical 4-credit classes include 3000 minutes of instruction, so synchronous modules MTWRF can be</p> <p>Winter 1 = December 18 – January 17 (5 weeks ONL only): 21 weekdays</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>(excluding 12/25 & 1/1): 3000 minutes/21 days= 143 minutes (2 hours 23 mins per day) (online Sync Async or blended): MTWRF 8:30 – 11:23 am 11:30 am – 2:23 pm 2:30 – 5:23 pm 5:30 – 8:23 pm</p> <p>Winter 2 = January 2 – January 17 (2 weeks Any: HYB, F2F, ONL): 12 weekdays M-F 3000 minutes/12 days= 250 minutes (4 hours 10 mins per day) (F2F, HYB, online Sync Async or blended): MTWRF 8:30 – 12:40 pm 1:00 pm – 5:10 pm 5:30 – 9:40 pm</p> |
| What advice should preceptors offer to students for J-session? | J-session courses are not for everyone. Students should refrain from re-attempting in 5 weeks, for example, any 15-week course during which they struggled with deadlines and workload. |
| Faculty/AD Questions | Answers |
| Who is eligible to teach in the J-session pilot? | Based on Faculty Senate feedback, the pilot is restricted to full-time faculty members who feel confident that their proposed course will lend itself to the compressed time frames in J-session. |
| What feedback did Faculty Senate have to offer that may help faculty decide to propose a J-session course? | <p>A full summary of the feedback shared at Faculty Senate appears at the end of this Frequently Asked Questions document.</p> <p>Importantly, faculty shared thoughts about adapting to the compressed time frame, and expressed support for the J-sessions to enhance experiences like faculty-led tours and/or lab research projects.</p> <p>In addition, we collected samples from our sister institutions in this folder.</p> |
| How does faculty load work? | Master Agreement (and Local Workload 2008-09) apply for in-load and overload. For the pilot, only full-time faculty will be eligible to offer J-session courses. Provost and deans will consider running lower-than-usually-enrolled section sizes. |
| How soon can full-time faculty propose a course to ADs? | Now! Winter 1 must be ONL because of holiday closures: no meal plans, library, tutoring, ITS Help Desk, Advising, etc. Faculty-led travel, credit-bearing internships and/or experiential learning may work best in expedited Winter 2. As noted above, ADs will collect proposals on J-Session Proposed Pilot Courses.xlsx |
| How will academic engagement and mid-semester progress work in J-session? | <p>Academic engagement (formerly roster verification) is a vital component of this very compressed time period. Considered part of spring term, J-session attendance will impact financial aid eligibility, so faculty members must be attentive to verifying engagement as soon as the requests arrive.</p> <p>Mid-semester progress will not be part of the first J-session pilot.</p> |

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| Should faculty consider Open Educational Resources (OER)? | Definitely. Students aid may not be disbursed in time for Winter sessions. Paying for textbooks and resources may be a challenge. Visit Stockton University's extensive OER resources for more info. |
| Which of the two J-sessions are more appropriate for full 4-credit courses? | The longer, 5-week Winter 1 term that spans December 18-January 17 is more appropriate for a full 4-credit course. The shorter, 2-week Winter 2 term that spans January 2-January 17 is more appropriate for shorter experiential activities like a lab experiment or 1-credit research project or faculty-led study excursion. |

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| Additional Feedback from Faculty Senate (addressed in FAQ, above) |
| It would be helpful to hear from each school which courses they believe would be feasible to offer in this winter session. In addition, polling faculty to get a sense of whether faculty are willing to teach during these winter sessions would be helpful to know before moving forward with a pilot (because if faculty are not interested in teaching during these sessions, then all of these discussions could be futile). |
| Furthermore, it would be helpful to know the rationale for why a course should be offered in the winter session because there could be several reasons that need to be considered prior to attaching policies to these courses (policies such as who can take these courses, how many courses will students be limited to during these sessions, etc.) |
| For example, are students taking an algebra course in the winter session to “catch up” in their math sequence? Are students that failed Quantitative Reasoning trying to retake the course to “catch up” in their math sequence? Or perhaps students want to try to take a G course during the winter session to lighten their load in the spring for when they have to take a science class (such as chemistry, biology, or physics). Or perhaps students are attempting to graduate in less than 4 years? All of these possible reasons may change our perspective of what the policies regarding these winter sessions should be, as well as change our perception of what kinds of students (e.g., high- achievers, repeaters, etc...) would be trying to complete these courses. |
| The offering could be based on the discipline and the type of the course as the time and modality might not be a good match for every course to be taught in a short Winter session. |
| A two-week session perceived as inadequate for proper instruction, especially for a 4-credit course and likely disapproved by accreditation bodies like the AACSB for the School of Business. |
| Only one session from the end of the Fall semester to the beginning of the Spring Semester can be offered. Possibly, an extended session of 8 or so weeks, overlapping with either the Fall or the Spring semester, could be considered, including beginning with Saturday only classes for a few weeks in November. |
| Concern was expressed that students less prepared for the rigors of short sessions would enroll in courses in the session, perhaps to repeat courses they were unsuccessful in during the regular session, and flounder. In effect, then, the Winter session may set them up for failure. |
| A limit should be placed on the number of credits a student can register for in the winter session- confined to 4-8 credits, perhaps linked to GPA achieved, the decision taken at the program-level. |
| It may be required that students work closely with their preceptors and take courses in the Winter session with their approval. |
| The week the university is closed between Christmas and Thanksgiving, students would not be able to get institutional support, including IT tech support, access to library resources, advising, etc. |
| Only two-credit courses could be offered, perhaps three-credit courses during the winter session. Possibility of internship courses or study-tours, etc. |
| More research needs to be done to explore best practice in Winter session offerings by peer institutions including the duration of the session(s), the type of courses offered (introductory, advanced, graduate, classroom-based, lab-based, etc..) and modality (face-to-face, online, hybrid etc.). |