

## Section Four: Unexpected Findings

- 1) WITF found that schools have become creative in order to deal with their compressed calendar and courses as well as reduced services.
  - a) Instead of starting WI on a Monday, some colleges begin on a Tuesday or Wednesday so staff have time to prepare for a new semester and students have time to get books, etc.
  - b) One college eliminated finals week, so faculty have an extra week for instruction. Finals are generally given on the last day of class or split over two days. This allows the college to have a week for spring break and still end spring semester in May.
  - c) To compensate for reduced cafeteria hours, the bookstore at one college put in a cold case and microwave and increased its offerings of “grab and go” items, which has proven to be quite profitable.
  - d) Antelope Valley College offers online student support services, such as counseling and tutoring.
  - e) Some hire temporary staff (retired former employees or a contract with an outside service provider) to help out with the crunch time between semesters.
- 2) Some colleges with a five-week WI reported successfully offering remedial courses in math, English, and reading as well as courses, such as chemistry or biology, that require a lab. They offered remedial courses in a five-day-a-week format, and classes with a lab offered split days, so students first have their lecture and then meet for labs.
- 3) Most of the community colleges visited used a WI to fill weeks previously not used for instruction. These were winter break weeks. Another interesting point to note is that while some of these colleges could offer a ten-week summer session or longer, some choose to have only eight-week or six-week summer sessions.
- 4) When looking for cohort colleges, the WITF discovered that many colleges across the state have a wide variety of class schedules that offer students a number of options to fit their learning styles and needs. The following are examples of how some colleges are making shorter, compressed classes a regular part of their fall and spring schedules and not just an option for a WI or summer term:
  - **Glendale CC** offers a five-week WI, and in fall and spring it also offers students a number of options for compressed classes. These are not “late start.” Instead, they make up Glendale’s schedule. Also, faculty teach these as part of their regular load and not as an overload. They offer two six-week sessions, 3/2 thru 4/11 and 4/20 thru 5/30. They also have two eight-week sessions, 2/17 thru 4/11 and 4/20 thru 6/10. Finally, there are 13-week semester classes offered 3/2 thru 6/10.
  - **Palomar CC** has a four-week WI and also offers what it calls “Fast Track” classes. These are two back-to-back eight-week sessions. Track one meets 1/20 thru 3/20 and track two meets 3/30 thru 5/22. It also offers four series of late start

classes that range from four-week to six-week offerings. Simultaneously, it has a traditional 16-week semester. Fast track courses are taught as part of a faculty member's regular load, not as overload.

- **Cerritos CC** does not have a compressed calendar. It has 18 weeks to schedule classes but does not offer 18-week classes. Instead, it offers two back-to-back nine-week offerings and a more traditional 15-week semester. All options are taught as part of faculties' regular load.
  - **San Joaquin Delta CC** does not have a WI, but it does have an interesting calendar for the 18 weeks it has available in a fall or spring semester. It offers five six-week sessions as follows: **1)** 1/12 to 2/21, 2/23 to 4/4, and 4/13 to 5/21. **2)** 1/26 to 3/7 and 3/16 to 5/2. It also offers back-to-back nine-week sessions: 1/12 thru 3/14 and 3/16 thru 5/21. It has two more options that have a more traditional timeline: **1)** a 12-week semester 2/23 to 5/21 and **2)** a 15-week semester 1/26 to 5/21. Again, faculty may choose to teach any combination of these as part of their regular load.
- 5) While the workload does increase for staff, most colleges reported that the increase was not as severe as expected. The first year proved difficult as each college worked out the glitches, but once the intersession was in place, it became easier to manage.
- 6) All schools combine registration periods so they have only two: winter/spring and summer/fall. This combination reduces the burden on counselors and the registrar's office. Counselors now use appointments to discuss both semesters, winter and spring, rather than set up separate appointments for each. Students have two registration periods as well. Also, since more students are registering online, this reduces time staff would need to spend with individual students.
- 7) Colleges visited reported that a WI made classroom maintenance difficult; most of the colleges previously had winter breaks with "down time" for maintenance, computer upgrades, etc. A WI eliminated these weeks, so staff have found it necessary to become creative in order to perform regular maintenance.