



Merced College Flexible Workweek/16-week Instructional Calendar Implementation 2025-2026

Merced College values the dedication and professionalism of its employees. The Flexible Workweek reflects our belief that employees can thrive when given opportunities to balance work responsibilities with personal needs.

Key principles:

- **Student and College Needs Come First:** Flexibility is encouraged as long as instructional, operational, and service needs are met. Students are our focus!
- **Accountability:** Employees must continue to meet their full workload, contractual hours, and performance expectations.
- **Approval:** Flexible schedules should be discussed and approved with supervisors to ensure appropriate coverage.
- **Professionalism:** Employees working remotely are expected to remain accessible, responsive, and engaged.
- **Consistency with Law and Policy:** All provisions of the California Education Code, collective bargaining agreements, and College policies remain fully in effect.

The Flexible Workweek is a partnership between employees, supervisors, and the College community. Please remember, Fridays – while flexible – are still workdays and students need to remain our focus. By balancing flexibility with responsibility, we can support employee well-being and maintain our shared commitment to excellence.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Definition of “Day” – How does the 16-week calendar impact the definition of a day?

A: The instructional calendar must be based on no less than 175 instructional days. Under the 18-week calendar, those instructional days mostly aligned to faculty assignments; though, some faculty were assigned to Saturdays even though the District did not count Saturdays in the 175-day instructional calendar. Under the condensed 16-week instructional calendar, some Saturdays are now included in the 175-day count as instructional days. That does not change the assignments of faculty who are not already

teaching/choose to teach on Saturdays as we have classes scheduled on Saturdays already. Saturday is not a standard nor a 'new' required workday.

In response to the conversion to the 16-week calendar, the parties negotiated a change to the definition of "Days" in the collective bargaining agreement ("cba"). The language is:

"Days" for the purposes of leaves refers to contract days.

A) "Day(s)" for full-time faculty would be their normal assigned load for an instructional day or a minimum of six hours for a staff development "flex" day.

B) "Day(s)" for a part-time faculty member would be their normal contract hours for an instructional day.

Q: Why is the workweek different for classified staff (as compared to faculty and managers)?

A: Faculty and managers are exempt employees under the law. Classified employees are non-exempt and must, under the law and the cba, have defined regular schedules.

Q: Does the workweek change under the 16-week semester?

A: The exempt status of full-time faculty **does not change with the conversion to a 16-week academic calendar nor with a flexible workweek.** That means that the 40-hour workweek is a standard, but working beyond 40 hours is part of being an exempt employee. Full-time faculty are not capped at 40 hours; rather, 40 hours is the standard obligation. Professional responsibilities (Article X,2. a-f) are obligations which are in addition to the faculty member's assigned load/hours, unless otherwise agreed upon.

Workweek is defined in the cba under Article X, Workload. It states that "A normal workweek for full-time faculty is forty (40) hours." For Instructional Faculty, that includes a minimum of 15 assignable units per semester. For Noninstructional Faculty, that includes a minimum of 33.75 assignable hours per week.

Q: What does an "Annualized Schedule" mean?

A: Noninstructional faculty may work an annualized load. The language in the cba, [Article X, Workload](#), is: "Assignment over a twelve-month period for noninstructional faculty may be requested by either party and will be mutually agreed upon before the succeeding academic year prior to convocation, and the faculty shall work the equivalent of 1080 yearly hours."

Q: What are the options for a flexible workweek?

A: Starting in Fall 2025, the College will offer limited services to students and will operate based on a "Hyflex" Friday schedule. This means that, with minor exceptions, no classes will be offered onsite on Fridays nor will meetings be scheduled to allow faculty the opportunity to work remotely on Friday, unless otherwise assigned. Please work with your immediate supervisor for your specific options for a flexible workweek.

Q: Under the 16-week semester, how will individual class times be affected?

A: Class times will be longer to ensure that the College provides consistent instructional rigor based on the unit load of the course and to meet the apportionment calculations of the Carnegie unit.

Conversion to a 16-week academic calendar requires a schedule of classes that replicates, as closely as possible, the same amount of instructional time for each course that we have under the current semester length.

Ex. If a three-unit class currently meets for 54 hours per semester (3 hours x 18 weeks = 54 hours), in the compressed schedule the class would still need to meet for 54 hours, but the schedule would require more instructional time per week.

Because each class meeting time will increase, the instructional day will also increase.

Q: Am I still required to perform committee work under the 16-week schedule?

A: Participation in “District committees, student activities, and business or community relations pertinent to their area of assignment” remains a required professional responsibility for faculty under Article X, Workload. Most shared governance committees will be scheduled later in the afternoon to allow for full-time faculty participation. The District understands that teaching schedules may not always align with the schedules for participatory governance committees. Faculty have additional opportunities to participate in other committees or activities aligned with their assignment area, including hiring committees, taskforce work, participation in FIGs, and various other ad hoc meetings and outreach opportunities.

Q: Has Finals Week changed?

A: Yes. Under the 16-week calendar, finals week is a part of the regular semester. Faculty need to plan to offer final exams within that teaching schedule.

Q: Has the timeline for faculty evaluations changed?

A: Yes, the evaluation timeline for faculty has changed to the following:

“A student evaluation will be conducted. Unless mutually agreed upon by the evaluatee and the immediate supervisor, student evaluations will be administered between the sixth and tenth weeks of the semester of the evaluation. (See form in Appendix K)”

Q: How does the 16-week calendar change summer/breaks?

A: Starting Summer 2026, the summer term will be longer.

Ex. [Summer 2025](#) starts on June 2 and runs through July 24. [Summer 2026](#) starts on May 18 and runs through August 6.

In order to offer students a true 16-week academic calendar and to have a longer continuous summer term/break, the College will not recognize spring break starting in the 2025/2026 Academic Year.