Faculty Colleagues:

At the February 2014 Faculty Senate meeting we discussed the idea of an additional holiday closure fall term for Veterans Day, which is a state and federal holiday that OSU does not currently celebrate. Currently, faculty can request the day off and use accumulated leave and classified employees can swap that day with the December 24 holiday. Three points emerged from our discussions. First, wide support was expressed for the idea of acknowledging OSU veterans in some way (holiday closure, special event, etc.), with about half of the Senators supporting a holiday closure. Second, there was broad concern regarding the impact of another fall term holiday on delivery of our academic programs. Fall term is already problematic because some students leave for the Thanksgiving holidays on Wednesday or even earlier. Third, the impact of an additional holiday could be ameliorated by modifications in modality of instruction and assignments, or by adding additional days to the start of fall term. After we reported our discussion to President Ray, he asked us to explore the options more carefully. We will use a four-question straw poll to gauge your support and concerns regarding a Veterans Day closure and an early start for fall term. Please provide us your input by April 18—it should not take more than a minute.

Register your responses via the straw poll.

Additional Information: Even if there is broad support of this concept, because there are many other details to consider, any implementation would not occur before Fall term 2015. Among other details, the classified union contract may need to be renegotiated to accommodate a new closure, CONNECT Week and residence hall move-in dates would need to be adjusted, other OUS institutions and Oregon community colleges need to be given advanced notice of calendar changes, and the OSU Board of Trustees would need to approve the new calendar, among other details.

I appreciate your time and interest in this matter, please let us know what you think.

Dan Edge
President, Faculty Senate