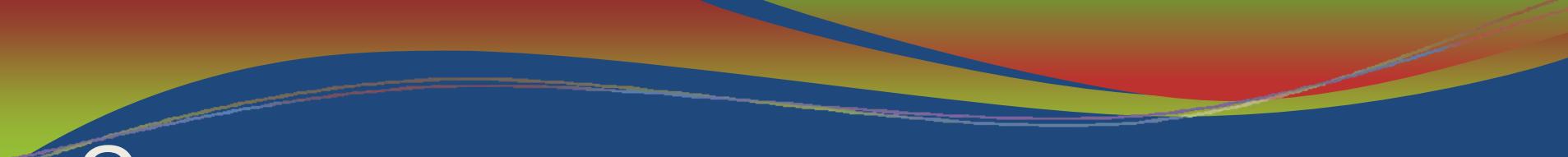# COMPRESSED ACADEMIC CALENDARS:
BEST PRACTICES
ACBO SPRING CONFERENCE
MAY 19, 2009

Randal Lawson
Executive Vice President, Santa Monica College

Elias Regalado
Specialist, Fiscal Services – CCC Chancellor's Office

OVERVIEW

➢ Focus on recent Addendum to the Student Attendance Accounting Manual (SAAM)—Rules Applicable to All Academic Calendars (Traditional, Compressed, and Quarter System)

➢ Why does "knowing the rules" matter?

➢ Why compress the academic calendar?

➢ History of the Compressed Calendar

➢ Regulation of Compressed Calendar/Block Scheduling Practices

➢ State Application Process

➢ The True Motivation in Starting the Compressed Calendar "Movement"
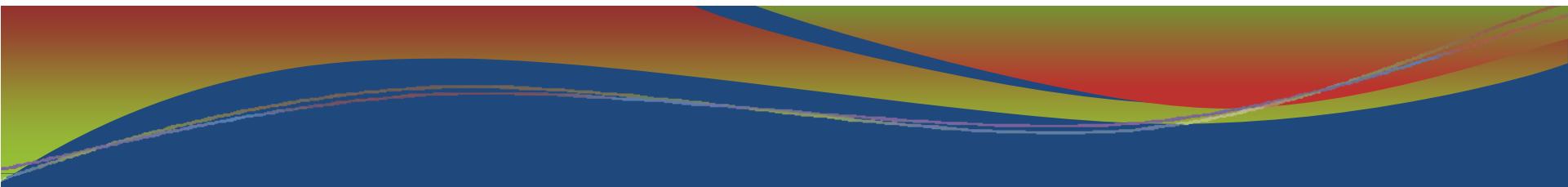
WHY DOES "KNOWING THE RULES" MATTER?

➢ To stay out of trouble

➢ To keep the System out of trouble (avoiding another concurrent enrollment debacle)

➢ To inform innovations to promote student achievement
  ➢ Need to know the rules in order to understand what is permissible
  ➢ Sometimes need to know the rules in order to understand what might need to be changed
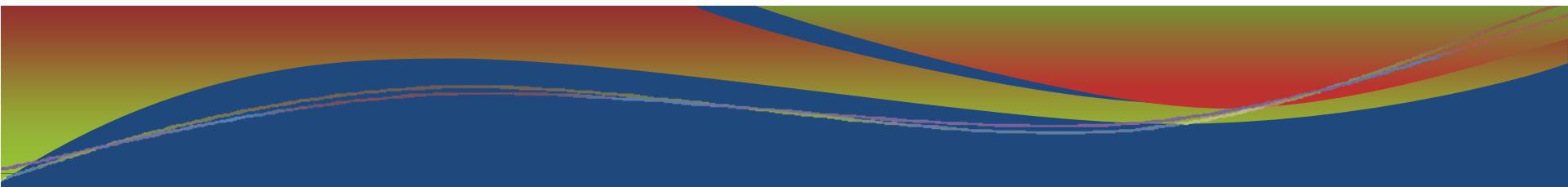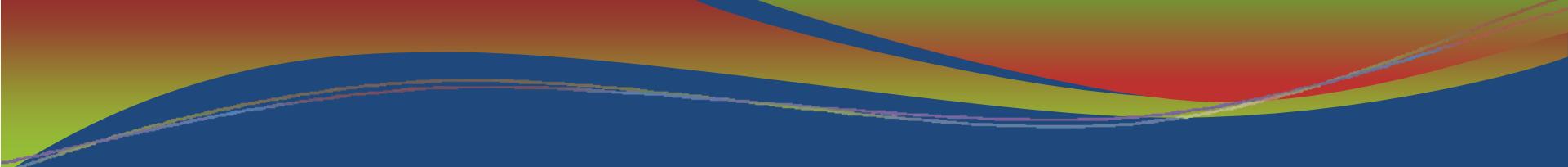
Compressed Calendar—Why?

- Educationally Beneficial
  - Studies showing improved student success through shorter-term classes
  - Allows for calendar that resembles those of four-year institutions
  - Facilitates mid-year transfers for community college students
- Slight Financial Benefit
  - FTES "Bump" through use of 18-week semester base and "rounding up" to avoid FTES loss
- Allows for Additional Intersession
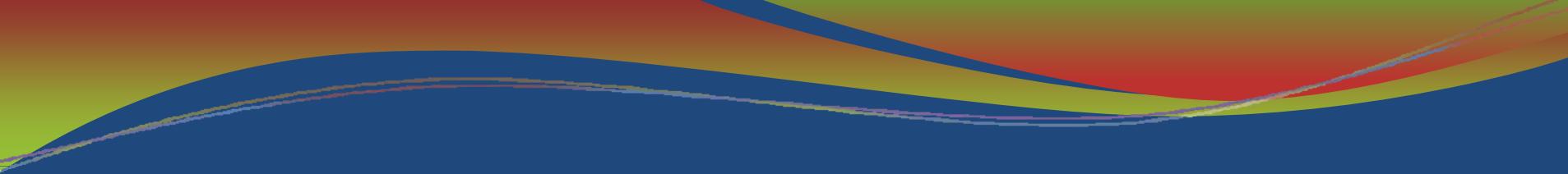
COMPRESSED CALENDAR—HISTORY

- 1991—Santa Monica College "Experiment"
- 1996—Title 5, **§ 58120 Revision**
  - Redefined Day of Instruction—*instruction must be offered for a minimum of three hours during the period of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m.*
  - Made Compressed Calendar possible for all community colleges
- 1998—Compressed Calendar (essentially identical to SMC calendar) adopted by Cabrillo College
- 2000—Pierce College Compressed Calendar Model
 - Eventually adopted by all nine Los Angeles Community Colleges

COMPRESSED CALENDAR—HISTORY (CONT.)

- 2001-2005—Proliferation of compressed calendar approvals statewide
  - Inconsistent Practices
  - Perceived Abuses (related to FTES Reporting)
- System Office Staffing Changes
  - Resulted in increased scrutiny in the calendar application approval process
  - Detailed Staff Review of Course Schedules
  - Established "hold" on new calendar approvals pending resolution of issues
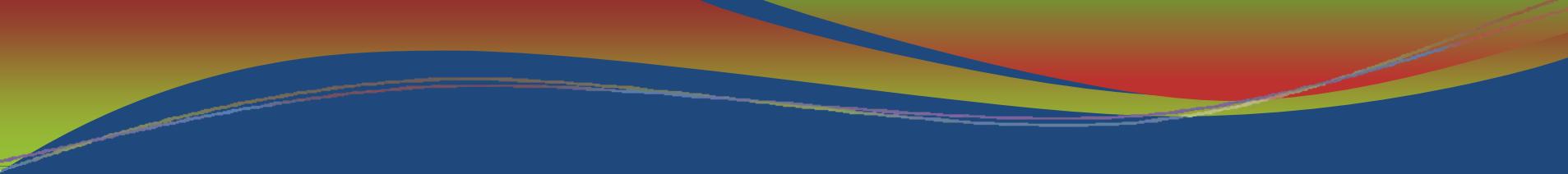
COMPRESSED CALENDAR—THE CONCEPT PAPER

- October 2005—CCCCIO Fall Conference
  - CIOs concerned that new calendar applications were "in limbo"
  - Established Subcommittee (Lawson, Nixon) to work with System Office Staff to seek resolution
- November 2005-March 2006—Meetings result in Compressed Calendar Concept Paper
- March 2006—Concept Paper Presented at Joint CIO/CSSO Spring Conference
- Concept Paper—became the standard for System Office calendar approval process
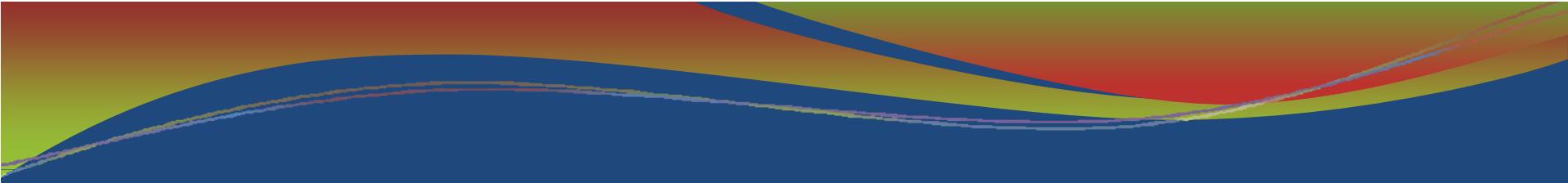
COMPRESSED CALENDAR—THE CONCEPT PAPER (CONT.)

- 2006-2008—Growing Concern over Perceived Abuses in Existing Calendars
  - Threaten the Viability of Compressed Calendars
- Spring 2008—Formation of *ad hoc* Consultation workgroup (CIOs, Academic Senate, System Office Staff)
  - Converted Concept Paper (with expanded scheduling examples) into Addendum to Student Attendance Accounting Manual
- August 2008—SAAM Addendum Supported by Consultation Council
- September 2008—SAAM Addendum Distributed to the Field
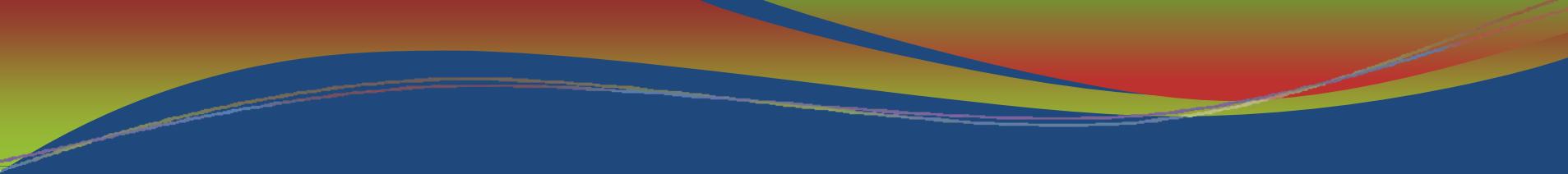
Calendar Issues and Guidelines

- Important to note that issues are not limited to compressed calendars and that guidelines apply to all calendars

- **Passing Time**
  - Issue—Colleges including passing time within schedule time patterns and therefore no passing time indicated between classes
  - Guideline— *The start and end of each class meeting must be explicitly stated in every published schedule of classes and addenda.*
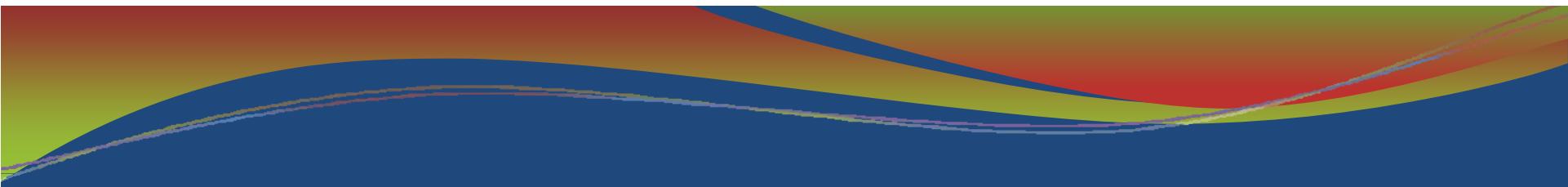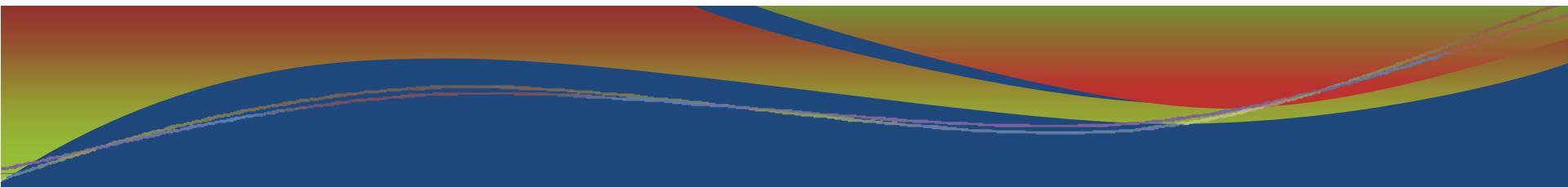
CALENDAR ISSUES AND GUIDELINES (CONT.)

- **Block Scheduling**
  - **Issues**
    - Classes Scheduled in 61-minute blocks (8:00 a.m. to 9:01 a.m. MWF)
    - "Over—scheduling" of classes through misunderstanding or misapplication of contact hour principles (1.5 DCH scheduled as 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. instead of the correct **8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.**)
  - **Guidelines**
    - *Individual class schedules must be based on five-minute increments for starting and ending times (e.g., 8:00 a.m to 9:25 a.m. or 8:00 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.).*
    - Examples of appropriate time patterns (for 1-6 hour-per-week classes) organized according to various term length multipliers are provided.
    - *Scheduling of courses must be consistent with the class hours indicated in the approved course outline for completion of the course.*

CALENDAR ISSUES AND GUIDELINES (CONT.)

- **Relationship of Flex Days to Term Length Multiplier**
    - Issue—Colleges first compressing instruction into 16 weeks and then using flex days "on top" to increase Term Length Multiplier
    - Guidelines:
        - *Compressed calendar districts that have approved flexible calendar programs should determine whether they are in compliance with the "in-lieu-of classroom instruction" provisions of Title 5 Section 55720.*
        - *Term length multipliers are inclusive of all days of instruction, final exam days, and approved flex days.*
        - Examples of appropriate time patterns (for 1-6 hour-per-week classes) organized according to various term length multipliers are provided.

CALENDAR ISSUES AND GUIDELINES (CONT.)

Calculating the Term Length Multiplier:

- For Exactly 16 Weeks in Both Fall and Spring Semesters:

  TLM=16.0

- To Calculate Additional "Fractional" Week:
  - Add 0.1 for Each Qualifying (Instruction, Final Exam, Approved Flex) Day Beyond 16 Weeks Within Both Fall and Spring Semesters
  - Example—Two 16-week Semesters + 2 Flex Days:

    TLM=16.2

COMPRESSED CALENDAR—SCHEDULING EXAMPLES

3-Hour Per Week Class (16.0-16.7 TLM)

In conversion to a compressed calendar, dividing 54 (3.0 WCH × 18 Weeks) total semester hours by these term length multipliers yields the following "target" weekly contact hours:

TLM	Target WCH	TLM	Target WCH
16.0	3.375	16.4	3.290
16.1	3.350	16.5	3.270
16.2	3.333	16.6	3.250
16.3	3.310	16.7	3.230

COMPRESSED CALENDAR—SCHEDULING EXAMPLES

3-Hour Per Week Class (16.0-16.7 TLM)

The closest appropriate and practical WCH for scheduling purposes would be **3.4**. This can be achieved through the following time patterns (1.7 contact hours per day × 2 days per week or 3.4 contact hours on one day per week):

8:00 a.m. to 9:25 a.m. MW

(includes no breaks; excludes passing time at the end of the class)

or

8:00 a.m. to 11:10 a.m. F

(includes two 10-minute breaks; excludes passing time at the end of the class)

COMPRESSED CALENDAR—SCHEDULING EXAMPLES

3-Hour Per Week Class (16.8-17.0 TLM)

In conversion to a compressed calendar, dividing 54 (3.0 WCH × 18 Weeks) total semester hours by these term length multipliers yields the following "target" weekly contact hours:

TLM	Target WCH
16.8	3.210
16.9	3.195
17.0	3.176

COMPRESSED CALENDAR—SCHEDULING EXAMPLES

3-Hour Per Week Class (16.8-17.0 TLM)

The closest appropriate and practical WCH for scheduling purposes would be **3.2** for classes that meet two days per week or **3.3** for classes that meet one day per week. This can be achieved through the following time patterns (1.6 contact hours per day × 2 days per week or 3.3 contact hours on one day per week):

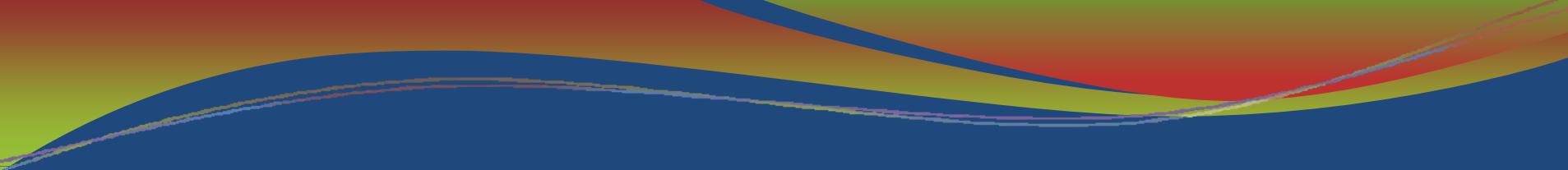### 8:00 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. MW

(includes no breaks; excludes passing time at the end of the class)

or

8:00 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. F

(includes two 10-minute breaks; excludes passing time at the end of the class)
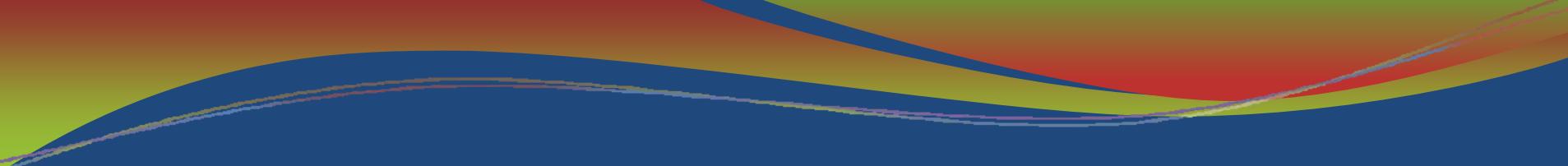
STATE APPLICATION PROCESS

- The Governing Board of a district must obtain approval from the State Chancellor's Office in advance of any academic year configuration change (T5, § 55724)

- Under no circumstances may a district adopt an academic year which provides less than 32 weeks of instruction (e.g., two 16-week primary terms) (T5, § 55701)
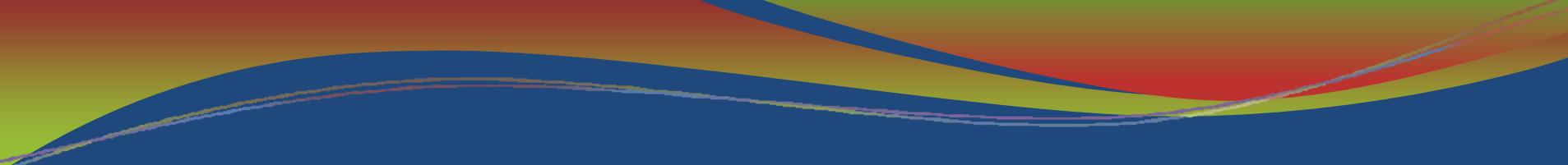
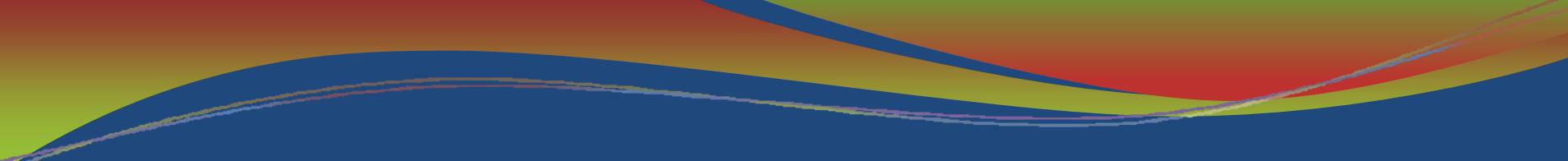# STATE APPLICATION PROCESS (CONT.)

- Strongly recommended that applications for academic year configuration change be submitted at least a year in advance of anticipated year of implementation

- District should designate a single contact person for resolving any follow-up issues

- Applications are submitted to the attention of Fred Harris, Assistant Vice Chancellor – College Finance and Facilities Planning Division

STATE APPLICATION PROCESS (CONT.)

Application must document compliance with the following:

- 175-Day Rule (T5, § 58142)

- Continued delivery of quality education (educational implications, positive and negative, of the proposed change must be submitted with application) (T5, § 55702)

- Accurate Contact Hour computation (T5, § 58023)

STATE APPLICATION PROCESS (CONT.)

Application must document compliance with the following (Continued)

- SAAM Adherence (T5, § 58003.4)

- Flexible Calendar and "in-lieu-of classroom" instructions Provisions   (T5, § 55724)

- In addition to demonstrating compliance with the above areas, supporting documentation should also be submitted (e.g., surveys, studies, etc.)
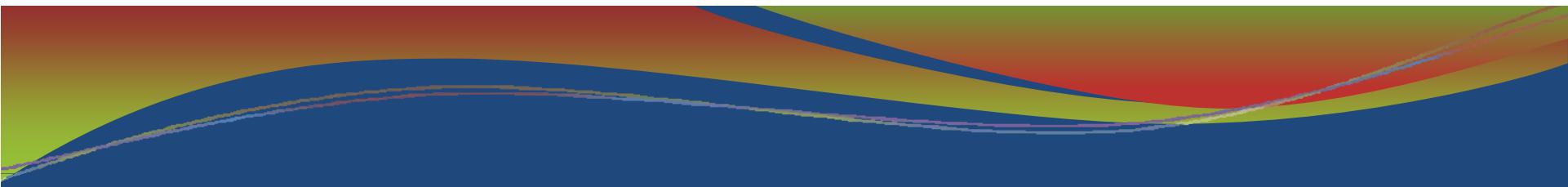
COMPRESSED CALENDAR—BACK TO ITS ORIGIN

- Santa Monica College 1991 "Experiment"
  - Motivation—strictly to improve educational process, not to "exploit the System"
    - Enrollments Capped at the Time
    - Compression Mechanism Developed to Ensure **No FTES Loss**, not for FTES Gain
    - Winter Intersession Developed as "Safety Valve" (In Case the Same Number of Fall/Spring Sections Could Not Be Scheduled)
  - Studies Conducted to Ensure No Compromise of Student Success (Slight Improvements for All Measures)
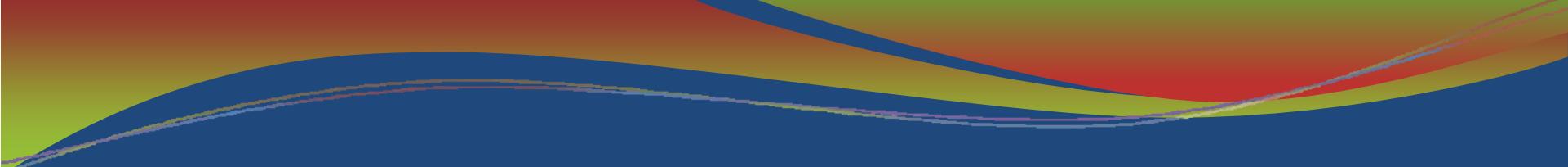
Online References and Resources

➢ **Student Attendance Accounting Manual**:

http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/cffp/fiscal/allocations/
links/manuals/saa_manual.htm

➢ **Student Attendance Accounting Manual Addendum**:

http://www.cccco.edu/Portals/4/CFFP/Fiscal/Allocations/
manuals/SAAM_Compressed_Calendar_and_Course
Scheduling_Addendum_FINAL_9-18-08.pdf

[Divisions/Fiscal Services Unit/Manuals and
Publications]