

Proposal for “X-Period” Implementation into University Schedule
Xavier Parker- Student Government Association
Angela Hunter - Academic Calendar and Schedules Committee
Date: 9/08/2025

Introduction

Student Engagement is essential to creating a holistic college experience. This can take the form of participating in club activities, volunteer opportunities and university events. Currently, scheduling for events like these is very difficult as there is no set time students are able to meet because there is no break in the school class schedule. This results in low attendance, less social events and, for some students, not even enough time to grab lunch. To address this, the Student Government Association proposes implementing an “X-Period” in the university schedule which is a block of time in which no classes are to be held. These changes would allow the UA Little Rock to foster a more active and engaged community. Setting aside a time like this throughout the week would give students the opportunity to and even encourage them to be more involved with UA Little Rock student life.

Purpose and Goals

1. Enhance Campus Life: Create a time for students to attend organized events, meetings or social gatherings.
2. Strengthen Mental Well-Being: Provide a time for faculty and students alike to decompress before or after class.
3. Uplift Community and Spread Awareness: Given an opportunity for students to foster social connections and learn about opportunities the university has to offer.

Specifics

1. The term “X-Period” is a temporary name and does not have to be the name given the block of time when implemented in the UA Little Rock schedule. Senator Parker is open to suggestions.
2. The exact days the “X-Period” would occupy has yet to be determined. SGA intends to work closely with the Campus Relations Team and the Division of Student Affairs to obtain the student body’s opinion on when to best implement the “X-Period.” UCA and St. John Hopkins, both of which have comparable free periods, have applied this block of time to only two days out of the week.
3. The exact time and length the “X-Period” would occupy has yet to be determined; however, the most beneficial placement of this time would be in the middle of the day, likely around lunch time. A block of time at the end of the day, when most students have already left campus, will fail to draw in attendees and will only have minimal effects on engagement. Also, if offered around lunch time, it would give students the opportunity to have lunch if needed. The block would likely last anywhere from 50 minutes to a little

more than an hour. The intent is to give students enough time to meet, attend events and enjoy themselves without taking important time from class and studies. SGA still fully intends to work with the Campus Relations Team and the Division of Student Affairs to obtain the student body's opinion.

4. While open to the possibility of implementing this "X-Period" on every UA Little Rock campus and to undergraduate and graduate students alike, it may be advantageous to start by just applying the "X-Period" to undergraduate classes on only the main campus.

Justification

Currently, many students and staff around campus have faced difficulty in scheduling events because of the nature of UA Little Rock's current class schedule. Right now, class blocks are held immediately in succession leaving no time for other events, meetings or socializing. This creates a problem for the people of UA Little Rock. The student body isn't given the opportunity to attend university events, even if they wanted to, because if a class is during that time then attending the class is, and should be, the priority. This leads to a reduced number of students that engage with the UA Little Rock's robust selection of clubs and social gatherings. In turn, this hurts the UA Little Rock's community that organizations like RSO's, the Student Activities Board and the Athletics Department are so desperately trying to bolster. With the addition of an "X-Period," or a block of time in the middle of the day in which no classes are to be held, we can set aside time for the students of the university to explore the great things that the university has to offer them that does not conflict with class. Consequently, students will engage more with other students, with various UA Little Rock institutions and even provide a mental break or lunch break to the students who need it. Right now, the school has all of the necessary components for a vibrant and social college campus and community and this proposal could be the final step in allowing our students to actually engage with each other and with what our campus has to offer.

There are other Universities that have already implemented a period like this. For instance, the University of Central Arkansas has imposed an "X-Period" which has been successful in encouraging campus involvement and community. One UCA senior says it's perfect for club meetings as there is a guaranteed time members of her club can meet as one. While UCA shares many similarities with UA Little Rock one of them is not the percentage of students that commute to school. St John's University however, shares this commonality with UALR and has also implemented an "X-Period" of their own which they call "Common Hour" with the goal to "promote involvement in the community life of the University. It gives students, faculty, administrators and staff a chance to hold meetings, lectures, events and activities." This is worth mentioning because more than 70 percent of students that attend St. John Hopkins commute to campus everyday. By implementing an "X-Period" here at UA Little Rock, we can follow the lead of other universities around the nation that are putting their students first by valuing the college experience. This could especially help students that commute to school, like St. John Hopkins has done, as it may be harder to make connections and have the traditional college

experience without a designated time where students are encouraged to engage with the community.