By BILL FUREY

Rice students Wednesday overwhelmingly approved retaining a reading period in the academic calendar, and expressed their desire that the period consist of at least two classless days, excluding Sundays.

Opinion was divided, however, on the question of extending the period at the cost of shorter vacations or a lengthened school year.

OF THE 342 voting in a poll conducted by The Thresher, 91 per cent said that they benefited from study time provided by last semester’s reading period, and 95 per cent favored retaining the period. Over two-fifths were willing to lengthen the period at the cost of a longer school year or shorter vacations.

Of those students favoring the reading period, 57 per cent wanted two days, with Sunday not counted when dead week ends on a Saturday. Twenty-six per cent voted for a three-day period, eight per cent favored four days and eight per cent wanted more than four days.

The academic calendar for the current semester calls for Dead Week to end on a Thursday and for exams to start on Saturday. Only one per cent of those who favored a reading period wanted a single day.

WHEN ASKED for their opinion about a two-week period with no classes, in which students write a paper or solve a problem in each of their courses, as a review of the semester in preparation for exams, only 17 per cent indicated that they would try such a plan.

Among the comments received in the poll was the suggestion that dead week be made a period with no written assignments or lab reports, so that it could be used as a reading period. Reservations about a two-week period with papers to write apparently centered around the fear that such period would turn into heavy assignment of more course material.