

Strategic Class Scheduling Policies/Guidelines

Overview

Effective class scheduling and room utilization is critical to the academic mission of the University. Having established parameters for scheduling ensures the University is optimizing resources while meeting the needs of students, faculty and the institution. Strategic scheduling has a direct impact on University funding and most importantly our shared goal of retaining students and assisting them to progress and obtain a degree from USFSP.

As a University committed to student learning and degree obtainment, it is crucial that all areas of the University participate in reaching the targeted goals listed below.

Guidelines/Target Goals (Eventually finalize as policy)

- 1000-2000 Level Courses
 - A maximum of 50% of your subject course offerings may be scheduled in any one-time block.
 - May only be offered in 2 day or 4-day meeting patterns
 - If utilizing two-day a week meeting pattern (MW, MF, WF, TR) degree programs need to distribute offerings across the day options.

- All Undergraduate Courses
 - All academic areas should strive to distribute offerings throughout the day and week, particularly being cognizant of scheduling away from peak times of 11-2.
 - Courses with multiple sections should be scheduled across time blocks and meeting patterns.
 - Required courses within a major/degree program must be scheduled to avoid conflicts. This requirement applies both within and across disciplines.

Exceptions to these guidelines should be reviewed by the Dean's Office prior to scheduling the course sections.

Rationale:

- Revised times
 - Recognized that mornings were underutilized.
 - Provides for a consistent 45 minute to 1 hour mid-day break most days for most students
 - Provides for a consistent 45 minute evening break
 - Recognizes needs of the varied student populations we serve
 - Continues to provide time blocks to address various pedagogical needs
 - Provides for time periods that comply with SACS and Federal guidelines for contact hours.

- Defined Meeting Patterns
 - Key to effective scheduling includes distribution within a day and across a week.
 - Without defined meeting patterns, too many diverse patterns were present in prior schedules.
 - A three-day a week pattern was utilized for a small percentage of courses, but was contributing to scheduling conflicts with particularly two-day a week meeting patterns.
 - Therefore, these are not part of the newly defined patterns.
 - Faculty also have voiced this concern in the past.
 - Added a two-day a week meeting pattern for the evenings.
 - To address pedagogical needs without eliminating student options to complete two courses within two evenings.

- Defined Requirements and Guidelines for Progression to Degree Completion
 - Maximizes scheduling options.
 - Enhances student learning based on academic research.
 - 52% of our class lectures and labs were being offered in a 1 day format. Research finds that students learn better when courses are not offered in lengthy time formats.
 - Provides a structure to increase opportunities for inter-disciplinary degree programs.
 - Maximizes space utilization and enhances our ability to meet pedagogical needs.