

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities
Memorandum

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Chair, SCUP
Vice President, Academic

RE: Course Scheduling Policy
(SCUP 08-17)

DATE: May 14, 2008

At its May 14, 2008 meeting SCUP reviewed and approved the revised Course Scheduling Policy T 30.01.

Motion

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, the revised Course Scheduling Policy T 30.01.

encl.

c: K. Ross, R. MacLeod

Course Scheduling Policy

Overview of Changes from Old Policy to New Policy

This overview of changes is provided as the format for the policy has changed. While there are substantive changes much of the old policy remains. The document is highlighted where changes have been made. The changes included in this overview are as follows:

- The Preamble and Purpose sections are a combination of the old Preamble, Purpose and Scope, and Goals sections except for the highlighted statement in the new preamble section.
- The definitions section is new.
- The Standard Day Meeting Patterns section (3.2) is new including the tables.
- 3.3.3 is new under Scheduling Guidelines.
- 3.3.4 is new under Scheduling Guidelines.
- 3.3.8 in the Scheduling Guidelines section now requires the approval of the VP Academic instead of the Dean for non-standard meeting patterns.
- Section 5 of the new policy refers to the Registrar instead of the President for interpretation of the policy.
- Old Policy Section 6 – Scheduling Priority: Academic Courses has been removed except 6.4 and 6.5 have been kept and are found Scheduling Guidelines section (3.3).



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Date

Number

Policies and Procedures

November 7, 2005

T 30.01

Revision Date

Revision No.

April 21, 2008

DRAFT 1.3

Subject: Course Scheduling

Preamble:

An effective course schedule is one that facilitates learning, maximizes access for students within the constraints of classroom space and the number of instructional hours available, and accommodates a range of pedagogies. In developing the course schedule for students and instructors, the following goals must be balanced:

- Classes should be scheduled to make the best possible use of teaching resources and classroom facilities.
- Students should be able to take courses needed to graduate in their program in a timely manner.
- Classes should be scheduled to allow students as much choice as possible and to avoid as many course conflicts as possible.
- Instructors should be able to obtain schedules that permit them to integrate their professional duties of teaching, research and service in a reasonable way.
- Classes that are jointly offered as undergraduate and graduate courses will be subject to this policy
- In scheduling classes, the University must, if requested to do so, make accommodations under the provincial Human Rights legislation.¹
- Demand for courses should be measured, and courses and course sections should be scheduled, to reflect that demand.
- Pathway courses and service courses should be scheduled during days and at times that provide greatest access across disciplines.

1.0 Purpose:

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. define university practice as to the use and management of classroom space;
- b. define university practice as to the development of class and final examination timetables;

- c. establish and enumerate guidelines for allocating classroom space; and
- d. encourage the university community to make efficient and coordinated use of classroom space.

1.2 This policy recognizes that appropriate pedagogy may require different class durations, meeting patterns, tutorial structures and facilities depending on the discipline and level at which a particular course is taught.

2.0 Definitions

“Instructional hours” are defined as Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 22:30.

“Daytime hours” are defined as 8:30 to 16:29.

“Evening hours” are defined as 16:30 to 22:30.

“Saturday hours” are defined as 8:30 to 18:00

“Courses” are defined as a lecture and/or seminar.

“Tutorials” are defined as a component of a course.

“Lower division courses” are identified by course numbers at the 100 and 200 level and are principally taken by first and second year students.

“Upper division courses” are identified by course numbers at the 300 and 400 level and are normally taken by third and fourth year students.

“Evening classes” are defined as those that start at 4:30pm (16:30 hours) or later.

“Pathway courses” are defined as those that provide key pre-requisites needed for students to progress from lower-division to upper-division courses.

“Service courses” are defined as large lower-division courses taken by students from many faculties.

“Cohort programs” are defined as those that provide a group of students with a defined set of courses for a particular duration.

“Prime time” is defined as the period between 10:30am and 2:30pm (14:30 hours).

“Events” are defined as university-related activities for which course credit cannot be earned.

3.0 Policy:

3.1 Classroom Space

3.1.1 Centrally-scheduled classroom space is a university resource allocated to and managed by the Scheduling Section of Student Services. All academic units share access to these centrally-scheduled classroom spaces to teach credit courses.

3.1.2 Classrooms will not normally be removed from the centrally-scheduled classroom pool without replacement in kind as soon as practicable. Requests to remove one or more classrooms from the central pool must present a business case, supported by a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis, to the Associate Vice-President, Academic. The Associate Vice-President, Academic will decide whether the classroom space will be converted to other uses as proposed in the business case.

3.1.3 Classroom space that is specialized in nature (e.g., language, science or computer labs, dance studios) is normally controlled and managed by the specific academic unit using the space for its instructional activities. Such space is not typically available for use by other academic units.

3.1.4 Some general classroom space also is controlled and managed by specific academic units. This space should be used efficiently and made available for use by other groups within the university community when not in use by the unit managing it. To this end it will revert, as required, to the central pool for scheduling 6 weeks before registration begins for the following semester.

3.2. Standard Day Meeting Patterns

The general principle for timetabling is the use of the following standard meeting patterns for courses:

- 3.2.1 50-minute classes meeting MWF, three times a week. (Table A)
- 3.2.2 50-minute classes meeting twice per week. (Table B)
- 3.2.3 110-minute classes meeting once per week. (Table C)
- 3.2.4 110-minute class plus a 50-minute class meeting per week. (Table D1 & D2)
- 3.2.5 80-minute classes meeting MW, MF, WF, twice a week. (Table E)
- 3.2.6 110-minute classes meeting twice per week. (Table F)
- 3.2.7 170-minute classes meeting once per week – lower division courses. (Table G.1)
- 3.2.8 170-minute classes meeting once per week – upper division courses. (Table G.2)
- 3.2.9 230-minute classes meeting once per week – upper division courses. (Table H)
- 3.2.10 Tutorials associated with courses can meet on any day. They must begin on the half hour.
- 3.2.11 The schedule for evening and Saturday classes is unrestricted. (Table I)

3.3 Scheduling Guidelines

- 3.3.2 Priority scheduling will be given to larger courses which are service courses or pathway courses to allow students to progress to timely degree completion and to cohort programs. These courses, including tutorials, will be given priority for prime time scheduling.
- 3.3.3 No more than 50% of courses and tutorials within a department can be scheduled within prime time.
- 3.3.4 Departmental space is first used by the department to schedule departmental priorities and classes and then, if required, unscheduled space reverts to the central classroom pool to maximize its use. Departmental space bookings must conform to standard meeting patterns as listed above.

- 3.3.5 Classes may be held on Saturday or Sunday if so requested by an academic unit.
- 3.3.6 Final examinations each semester will normally be scheduled Monday through Saturday and may be scheduled on Sunday.
- 3.3.7 The Office of the Registrar reserves the rights to ask departments to change times of classes as room scheduling difficulties warrant.
- 3.3.8 Requests for non-standard timetabling patterns must be approved by the Vice President Academic or designate.
- 3.3.9 Academic units are strongly encouraged to use fixed-scheduling practices for large enrolment first- and second-year courses. This allows for better course access for students and an exam schedule that minimizes conflicts and maximizes intervals between exams.
- 3.3.10 Students must take courses across disciplines to complete degree requirements. Academic units are expected to co-ordinate their offerings so as to avoid substantial timetable conflicts with related units.

3.4 Course Scheduling Priority

The following prioritized (but not exhaustive) list identifies criteria that can affect scheduling priority:

- 3.4.1 Credit courses will receive priority over events for classrooms;
- 3.4.2 The need to accommodate the disability of an instructor or a student;
- 3.4.3 A large class will have priority for a given classroom (to the upper limit of classroom capacity) over a smaller class, regardless of requests for permanent (installed in the room) technical equipment;
- 3.4.4 Requests by departments that make full use of the teaching week may be given priority over requests made by departments that cluster their courses during periods of high utilization.

3.5 Publication of the Timetable and Course Offerings

- 3.5.1 The timetable for any given semester will be available at least two weeks before registration for that semester begins.
- 3.5.2 In addition to the schedule of courses for the upcoming semester, the timetable will include a listing of the courses to be offered in the subsequent two semesters.

3.6 Changes to the Timetable

- 3.6.1 Changes to the timetable after publication must be kept to a minimum to provide certainty to students. Normally, changes to the days and/or times when a course is offered will not be permitted.
- 3.6.2 Changes to assigned classrooms may be made when:

- a. enrolment increases beyond the capacity of the classroom assigned and a larger classroom is available;
- b. the assigned classroom does not have all or some of the room facilities (technical or other) requested and a classroom with the facilities is available;
- c. the number of students enrolled in a course can be accommodated in a smaller classroom, allowing another course with more students to use the larger classroom.

4.0 Scope:

4.1 This policy applies to all S.F.U. campuses, but must be responsive to the distinct scheduling needs of each.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities:

5.1 Questions of interpretation or application of this policy should be referred to the Registrar.

6.0 Authority:

This policy is administered under the authority of the Associate Vice President, Academic.

¹ See GP 18 Human Rights Policy.

² See Appendix II and GP 36 Use of University Space

Procedure (separate linked document)

Appendix I

Classroom Management

1. Classroom Technology Assistance (CTA) in the Learning and Instructional Development Centre (LIDC) at Burnaby campus and Client and Research Services (CaRS) at the Surrey campus are responsible for providing and maintaining technical equipment in centrally scheduled classrooms.
2. Facilities Management is responsible for maintaining, renovating, cleaning and furnishing centrally scheduled classrooms.
3. Campus Security is responsible for the security of centrally scheduled classrooms.
4. A committee, appointed by and reporting to the Associate Vice-President, Academic, will be established to ensure that centrally scheduled classroom space is maintained, suitably furnished and equipped with appropriate technical facilities on an ongoing basis. The committee will tour all classrooms

annually and submit a report on their condition to the Associate Vice-President, Academic. The committee will consist of one member each from Schedules, LIDC, Facilities Management, as well as one member from each of the Faculties and a student representative.

5. The Schedules Section of Student Services will set up and maintain a clear description of centrally scheduled classroom space, which includes room capacity, facilities, design features and disability access. This description will be available to the university community on the web.

6. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning will prepare an annual report on classroom utilization which will be distributed to the Associate Vice-President, Academic, Senate, Deans, Chairs and Departmental Assistants, in addition to being posted on the web.

Appendix II

Event Bookings

1. Event bookings at campuses other than SFU Vancouver are made in accordance with the following guidelines:

1.1 A limited number of event bookings may be allocated space in advance of credit courses. For example, because of the associated noise problem, pipe band and junior pipe band practices are normally assigned to classrooms before rooms are assigned to credit courses. These bookings normally occur during the evenings and/or weekends.

1.2 Sets of rooms may be allocated in advance of credit-course bookings to groups such as Conference Services, Field Schools, Exchange Programs, and various on-campus groups offering camps during the summer semester.

1.3. Event requests for non-classroom space (such as Maggie Benston Centre) can be processed at any time.

1.4. Event requests for classrooms can be processed anytime if the event is held during a semester break or the event is held on a weekend (excluding final exam periods).

1.5. Event requests for classrooms during exam periods can be processed after Week 7, Day 5 of the same semester except events requiring smaller classrooms (capacity less than 50 at Burnaby and less than 30 at Surrey), which may be processed after Week 3, Day 5.

1.6. Event requests for classrooms for future semesters (excluding final exam periods) will be processed only after enrollment for that semester has been underway for 5 weeks.

2. Events at SFU Vancouver may receive higher priority than credit courses during designated timeframes. SFU Vancouver operates on a cost recovery model that allows for the planning of events years in advance and provides the necessary dynamic required for a multi-use facility. Event bookings at SFU Vancouver are made in accordance with the SFU Vancouver Event Booking Policy, which uses a block booking system designed to maximize utilization of space by the various constituent groups defined in that policy.

Table A: meeting 50 minutes 3 times per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30	1		1		1
9:30	2		2		2
10:30	3		3		3
11:30	4		4		4
12:30	5		5		5
13:30	6		6		6
14:30	7		7		7
15:30	8		8		8
16:30					

Table B: meeting 50 minutes twice per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30	1		1 2		2 3
9:30	4		4 5		5 6
10:30	7				7
11:30	8 9		8		9
12:30	10 12		10 11		11 12
13:30	13		14		13 14
14:30	15 17		15 16		16 17
15:30	18 20		18 19		19 20
16:30					

Table C: meeting 110 minutes once per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
9:30	1	2		3	4
10:30					
11:30	5	6		7	8
12:30					
13:30	9	10		11	12
14:30					
15:30	13	14		15	16
16:30					

Table D.1: meeting 110 minutes plus 50 minutes per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30	1		1		2
9:30			2		
10:30	3		3		4
11:30			4		
12:30	5		5		6
13:30			6		
14:30	7		7		8
15:30			8		
16:30					

Table D.2: meeting 110 minutes plus 50 minutes per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30	2	1		2	1
9:30					
10:30	4	3		4	3
11:30					
12:30	6	5		6	5
13:30					
14:30	8	7		8	7
15:30					
16:30					

Table E: 80 minutes meeting 2 times per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:00	1				1
9:30					
15:30	2		2		3
	4		3		4
16:30					

Table F: meeting 110 minutes twice per week

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
9:30		1	2	1	2
10:30					
11:30		3	4	3	4
12:30					
13:30		5	6	5	6
14:30					
15:30		7	8	7	8
16:30					

Table G.1: meeting 170 minutes per week for lower division courses

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
9:30					
10:30					
11:30					
12:30					
13:30					
14:30					
15:30	1	2	3	4	5
16:30					
17:30					

Table G.2: meeting 170 minutes per week for upper division courses

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
9:30		2		4	
10:30	1		3		5
11:30					
12:30		6		7	
13:30					
14:30					
15:30	8	9	10	11	12
16:30					
17:30					

Table H: meeting 230 minutes per week for upper division courses

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
9:30					
10:30		2		4	
11:30	1		3		5
12:30					
13:30					
14:30					
15:30	6	7	8	9	10
16:30					
17:30					

Table I: meeting after 16:30

	M	T	W	R	F
8:30					
16:30					
17:30					
18:30					
19:30					
20:30					
21:30					
22:30					

On or after 16:30, almost anything goes!
Your class can meet for 50 minutes,
110 minutes, 170 minutes, 180 minutes, etc.