



Office of Academic Affairs

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To: Deans, Directors, and Department Heads
From: Anne Alexander, Associate VP, Undergraduate Education
David Jones, VP, Academic Affairs
Date: October 26, 2015
Re: Undergraduate class scheduling policies

The Office of Academic Affairs has been tasked by the Board of Trustees with developing several initiatives to boost our graduation rates and manage our increased freshmen class size in the context of a deteriorating fiscal environment. One internal barrier we often find students facing is that many of our courses are scheduled to meet during a very small window of hours during any given weekday. At present, 64% of our undergraduate courses are scheduled between 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.; 73% are scheduled between 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. This often means our students are unable to take courses required in their major programs in the appropriate sequence because multiple required courses are being offered on the same dates and times. This delays their path to graduation.

As you put together your undergraduate course schedules going forward, at least 20% of your lecture courses should be scheduled before 10 a.m.; at least another 20% should be scheduled after 2 p.m., and no more than 60% should be scheduled between 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. This 20-60-20 rule will allow us to reduce course bottlenecks as our undergraduate student population grows. We understand that science labs and discussion sections, language courses, and studio courses will require flexibility in this area. These types of exceptions can be easily justified as needed by your Dean.

We also ask that you consider alternating undergraduate course times and days each semester if a course is offered both Fall and Spring. For example, if a course is offered before noon in the Fall, consider offering it in the afternoon in the Spring semester. For courses that are less lock-step, this will allow students to minimize time conflicts.