

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Space and Remodeling Policies Committee

Classroom Scheduling Policies

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I. SCOPE

Space classified as a "classroom" is subject to the scheduling policies contained herein. This includes rooms or spaces designated on the Space Management Room Inventory File as a classroom, seminar room, or lecture hall. Not included are other types of meeting spaces such as conference rooms, meeting rooms, outreach rooms, or instructional laboratories.

Changes in space use classification (from or to the classroom category), will be carefully reviewed by the Office of the Registrar (Curricular Services) and the Space Management Office to ensure the designated space use is substantiated and justified and the intent of the scheduling and utilization objectives for classrooms are clearly understood.

The objectives and classroom utilization expectations apply to all UW-Madison classroom space. This includes academic departments and other offices in schools and colleges with scheduling jurisdiction over classroom space.

The specific scheduling practices contained herein (use of campus standard class hours) do not apply to certain professional schools (Medical School, Veterinary School, Law School, and School of Nursing). These schools have unique curricular requirements or instructional periods, a distinct student body, and classrooms located in self-contained facilities, which preclude consistent application of the scheduling practices.

II. OBJECTIVES

Provide sufficient classroom resources to meet credit instruction requirements.

Apply scheduling policies in a consistent and equitable manner.

Achieve campus utilization standards for each classroom of 30 daytime hours per week and 67% station occupancy when in use. By definition, only official credit instruction hours and enrollments are included in these calculations.

Match special academic requirements with available classroom facilities (e.g., a specific classroom furniture configuration, multimedia equipment, access to specialized department instructional aids).

Maximize student scheduling options and reduce overall classroom demand by utilizing standard class hours and encouraging more even hour spreading.

Ensure equal access to all individuals.

III. POLICIES

A. Standard Class Hours and Distribution of Classes.

Classroom scheduling practices are greatly enhanced with the use of standard hour and day patterns, and with the distribution of both the number of classes and class capacity ranges (enrollments) taught at each hour and each day of the week. Courses using non-standard class hours or courses in departments oversubscribing an hour or class capacity range receive a lower priority in the room assignment process.

B. Hours Spreading Calculation.

Daytime classroom hours (i.e., both general assignment and non-general assignment classroom requests) are counted in the hours spreading calculation for use in the general assignment classroom prioritization process.

C. Special Facilities or Requirements.

Special academic requirements and curricular content/methodology for certain types of classrooms, classroom equipment, or other special considerations are appropriate as special facility requests and will be given priority in the classroom assignment process. Courses that require specialized equipment (i.e., equipment ordinarily not available in most classrooms which is needed for a substantial portion of a course's curriculum) and which follow the scheduling practices (see Section IV below) will receive a higher priority than geographical location preference in the room assignment process.

D. Geographical Location.

To the extent appropriate classroom facilities are available and scheduling practices are followed (see Section IV below), courses will be assigned classrooms in the academic department's home building or in buildings geographically close to the home building. [Please be aware classroom assignment is not based on historical assignment.]

E. Open/Available Hours in Department Classrooms.

Departments with scheduling jurisdiction over classrooms have an obligation to schedule other credit instruction in these rooms when open hours are available. As part of the university's official schedule of classes preparation process each semester, Curricular Services will send a list of these classrooms to all academic departments. Requests for an assignment in a department-scheduled classroom should be made directly with the controlling department to confirm the availability and assignment of the classroom.

F. Departments with Jurisdiction over Classrooms Requesting General Assignment Classrooms.

Departments which schedule their own classroom space are eligible to request general assignment classroom space. However, their space requests will receive low priority until their departmentally scheduled classrooms (in similar seating capacity ranges) achieve at least 20 hours of formal credit instruction per room, per week.

G. Limited Classroom Resources.

While every attempt will be made to assign classrooms as requested, Curricular Services cannot guarantee assignments due to conflicting requests and limited classroom resources. In the event a general assignment classroom space is permanently converted to an alternate department or school/college use, efforts will be made to identify a comparable departmentally controlled classroom space for a shift to general assignment status to offset the loss in general assignment classroom pool.

H. Classroom Use.

For these calculations, the campus is required to define official credit instruction hours as the unit to be counted toward campus utilization standards. In a learning community like the UW-Madison, we recognize that course use frequently extends beyond official class hours, particularly in some types of courses and for some types of instruction or preparation. Departmentally controlled classrooms are also

used regularly for non-credit activities such as brown bag discussion series, recruitment interviews, job market "practice" sessions, special lectures, and thesis defense. The intent of these policies is to balance the need for scarce resources, not available with regular scheduling practices, with effective educational practices that may not "fit" the scheduling standards and definitions.

I. Classroom Utilization and Alternate Uses.

Classroom utilization statistics will be reported to the Space and Remodeling Policies Committee each semester to identify those rooms not achieving established standards. Classrooms scheduled fewer than 20 hours per week for three consecutive semesters (starting Fall 2000) should be considered for alternate uses. The Space Management Office, Curricular Services and the deans' and directors' offices should consult to determine the best alternate use of these classrooms.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

The following standard class hours, distribution of class hours, and distribution of class size (e.g., enrollment) are effective for fall and spring semesters. It should be noted these policies do not apply to the summer semesters. It is recognized there may be academic and pedagogical reasons for scheduling classes at non-standard hours and/or days. However, departments should review these instances to assure a continued need for use of non-standard hours.

A. Standard Class Hours

50 minute classes

- 50 minute class standard time and day patterns are as follows:

7:45 a.m. 8:50 a.m. 9:55 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 12:05 p.m. 1:20 p.m. 2:25 p.m.
3:30 p.m. 4:35 p.m.

- MWF for classes meeting three days a week

- TR, MW, MF, or WF for classes meeting two days a week

- Discussion sections meeting for 50 minutes, one day a week are expected to heavily utilize non-prime class hours (i.e. 7:45, 3:30 & 4:35).

75 minute classes

- 75 minute classes scheduled on a TR, T, or R day pattern are expected to use one of the following hours:

8:00-9:15 9:30 10:45 11:00-12:15 1:00-2:15 2:30-3:45 4:00-5:15 Evening

- 75 minute classes may also be scheduled on a MW, MF, WF, or M, W, F day pattern at the following hours:

8:00-9:15 2:30-3:45 4:00-5:15 Evening

- Additional restriction for 75 minute undergraduate lectures: classes scheduled on 75 minute classes scheduled on MW, MF, WF, or M, W, F at 9:30-10:45, 11:00-12:15, or 1:00-2:15 must receive Dean's recommendation and Provost's approval to be taught.

NOTE: If approved, these sections and any 75 minute sections not starting at the specified begin times are considered non-standard and will receive a lower priority in the room assignment process.

2 hour classes

- 2 hour classes meeting once a week are expected to use one of the following hours:

7:45 - 9:40 a.m. 1:20 - 3:15 p.m. 3:30 - 5:25 p.m. Evenings

Classes more than 2 hours

- Classes meeting once a week for more than two class hours are expected to use one of the following hours:

7:45 - 10:45 a.m. 2:25 - 5:25 p.m. Evenings

B. Distribution of Class Hours

Departments are expected to schedule an equal share of early morning and late afternoon classes throughout the day. To achieve this 1/7th, or approximately 14% of a department's classes should be scheduled at each of the six prime time hours: 8:50, 9:55, 11:00, 12:05, 1:20, and 2:25. The remaining 1/7th should be scheduled using a combination of the 7:45, 3:30, and 4:35 class hours. Sections in excess of the distribution of class hours guidelines will receive a lower assignment priority.

C. Distribution of Day Patterns

Departments are expected to distribute the MWF and TR day patterns throughout the week. If, for example, most classes met on Tuesdays and Thursdays, classroom demand would quickly exceed supply and student scheduling options would be very limited. Sections in excess of the distribution of day patterns guideline will receive a lower assignment priority.

D. Distribution of Enrollments

Departments are expected to distribute enrollments throughout the day (i.e., across class hours) and throughout the week (i.e., by day pattern). If most requests for large classrooms were on the same day(s) and/or hour slot, the supply of classrooms would not be sufficient to support credit instruction needs. Sections in excess of the distribution of enrollment guideline will receive a lower assignment priority.

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