

University Policy on Class Scheduling

Version: 1.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Effective Date: March 1, 2016

1.0 Introduction

The Office of the University Registrar is charged by the Provost to ensure that all class schedules achieve the following, presented in priority order:

1. Appropriate Space for Specific Educational Needs
 - ensuring appropriate room size, equipment (lab/studio/etc.), materials, technology, and other pedagogy-specific considerations
 - ensuring needed accommodations for students with documented disabilities
 - ensuring appropriate final exam scheduling
2. Optimal student access to needed courses (which needs to account for travel between the North and South/Medical Center campuses)
3. Optimal use of academic facilities and equipment
4. Faculty scheduling preferences

This policy is the codification of the Office of the University Registrar's governance responsibility for the achievement of these priorities via the schedule of classes, and is effective immediately upon adoption by the VPAA/Provost.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy governs the scheduling of all undergraduate and post-baccalaureate classes scheduled on the St. Louis campus (excluding only Scott Hall) between 8:00am and 10:00pm, Monday-Friday, for all Fall and Spring terms.

3.0 "Ownership" and Allocation of Academic Space

The Provost, with the assistance of the deans/directors and University Registrar, oversees the use of all academic space, and formally designates particular spaces as classrooms, laboratories, offices, conference/meeting rooms, etc. All classroom and laboratory space so designated by the Provost can be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar for academic use by any academic unit, although preferences for scheduling priority for certain spaces can be designated by the Provost upon request from the respective dean/director. *Note: Departmental/unit "meeting/conference rooms" are **not** considered classrooms, and therefore will not be scheduled by the University Registrar; this will free that space for meetings and other regular/ad hoc departmental uses.*

All academic space is considered University space, allocated for appropriate academic use according to the priorities, preferences, and exceptions established by the Provost. No academic space, including that

funded by and/or named for a unit-related donor, is “owned” by any individual academic unit; no academic space may be “controlled by” or scheduled by any individual academic unit without written consent for such exception by the Provost. A current list of such exceptions will be maintained by the Provost and the University Registrar.

4.0 University Credit Hour Policy and Contact Hour Guidelines

To comply with requirements of both the U.S. Department of Education and our institutional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, SLU adopted the following “Credit Hour Policy” that complements and informs this “Class Scheduling Policy”:

In full accordance with federal regulations as defined under 34 CFR 600.2, Saint Louis University defines a semester hour (typically referred to as a “credit hour”) as the unit of academic credit awarded for the attainment of intended learning outcomes verified by evidence of student achievement, and as represented on official University academic records by the successful completion of an amount of student work as detailed below.

For classroom and/or direct faculty instruction (regardless of delivery mode):

One semester hour of credit is awarded for the attainment of intended learning outcomes resulting from **both**:

1. Student engagement in a reasonable equivalent of one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction each week (typically 50 minutes) for approximately 15 weeks (or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time)
2. Student completion of a reasonable equivalent of a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks (or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time).

For experiential learning (laboratory work, studio work, internships, practica, and related educational experiences/environments):

One semester hour of credit is awarded for the attainment of intended learning outcomes resulting from student engagement in a reasonable equivalent of three hours of educational activity/experience each week (typically 2.5 clock hours) for approximately 15 weeks (or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time)

Note: Pedagogical and other methodological distinctions among academic disciplines may result in requirements for amounts of student work that exceed – but may not fall short of – the minimums established in this definition.

Adherence to this Credit Hour Policy requires class schedule alignment with the following table of in-class (“contact hour”) and out-of-class time equivalencies, which are premised on a 15-week academic term:

	1 Credit	2 Credits	3 Credits	4 Credits	5 Credits
Required “In Class” Time Per Week	50 min	100 min	150 min	200 min	250 min
Required “Out of Class” Time Per Week	100 min	200 min	300 min	400 min	500 min

5.0 Standard Classroom Meeting Times/Slots and Cycles

All Courses

All courses must begin at one of the start times identified in the “Standard Schedule Times/Slots” below.

Three-Credit Courses

All three-credit courses requiring only classrooms (non-laboratory, non-studio) must be scheduled at one of the standard schedule times/slots (see chart below) on either a standard Monday-Wednesday-Friday, Tuesday-Thursday, Monday-Wednesday, or one night per week cycle.

Four Credit Courses

All four-credit courses requiring only classrooms (non-laboratory, non-studio) must be scheduled at one of the following standard three-credit schedule times/slots (see chart below) but utilize a fourth day, creating either MTWF or MWRF slots; alternatively, such courses can be scheduled on a one night per week cycle. If a unit offers any one-credit courses as well as four-credit courses, each one-credit course should be scheduled in the “open” slot of a four-credit course; for example, a MWRF at 11:00am course has an “open” slot on Tuesdays at 11:00 that should, if possible, but filled by a one-credit course.

One and Two Credit Courses

All one and two credit courses should be scheduled in the standard cycles below. However, each unit scheduling more than one such course (of similar enrollment and room type) must stagger the courses to fill unused days of an already used cycle. For example, if a unit scheduling three distinct one credit courses schedules one of them on Mondays in the 9:00am-9:50am slot of a MWF cycle, that unit should schedule the second course on Wednesdays at 9:00am – 9:50am, and the third such course on Fridays at 9:00am – 9:50am; this ensures optimal use of classroom space.

Standard Schedule Times/Slots		
<p>Monday-Wednesday-Friday (MWF) Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8:00am – 8:50am ▪ 9:00am – 9:50am ▪ 10:00am – 10:50am ▪ 11:00am – 11:50am ▪ 12:00pm – 12:50pm ▪ 1:10pm – 2:00pm ▪ 2:10pm – 3:00pm ▪ 3:10pm – 4:00pm ▪ 4:10pm – 5:00pm ▪ 5:10pm – 6:00pm 	<p>Tuesday-Thursday (TR) Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8:00am – 9:15am ▪ 9:30am – 10:45am ▪ 11:00am – 12:15pm ▪ 12:45pm – 2:00pm ▪ 2:15pm – 3:30pm ▪ 3:45pm – 5:00pm ▪ 5:30pm – 6:45pm ▪ 7:00pm – 8:15pm ▪ 8:30pm – 9:45pm <p>Monday-Wednesday (MW) Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3:10pm – 4:25pm ▪ 4:35pm – 5:50pm ▪ 6:15pm – 7:30pm ▪ 7:45pm – 9:00pm 	<p>One Night Per Week</p> <p><i>Each of these slots includes 15 minutes of break within the published time span</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4:15pm – 7:00pm ▪ 7:15pm – 10:00pm ▪ 6:00pm – 8:45pm ▪ 7:00pm – 9:45pm ▪ 6:00pm – 9:45pm <i>(for 4-credit courses only)</i> <p>One Night Per Week (8-WK Schedule ONLY)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5:30pm – 9:30pm

Courses Requiring One-Day/Week Extended Meeting Times (e.g. labs, studios)

The nature of some courses – including but not limited to some science laboratory or art studio courses/course sub-components – require regular, one-session-per-week class periods longer than those provided in the standard MWF or TR slots detailed above. All such courses should, if at all possible be scheduled in concert with similar courses with like enrollment to collectively fill consecutive standard slots (and in the same rooms, if possible).

For example, a three-hour, one-day per week Biology lab section might be scheduled on Mondays from 8:00am to 10:50am; accordingly, the Biology department should schedule other three-hour labs in the Wednesday 8:00-10:50am and Friday 8:00-10:50am slots (and in the same room, if educationally appropriate). Likewise, an art studio section scheduled on Tuesdays from 12:45pm to 3:30pm should be complemented by another art studio section scheduled on Thursdays from 12:45-3:30pm (again, preferably in the same room, if appropriate).

Note: Units that utilize a “large lecture/multiple smaller discussion section” format for some courses should contact the University Registrar for guidance. This policy cannot address every schedule permutation, and the University Registrar is charged to collaborate with units to fulfill the spirit of this policy.

6.0 Schedule Distribution Requirements for 3-Credit Classes

To ensure maximum scheduling flexibility for students, all units (at the department or equivalent level) must abide by the following requirements for distributing their classes throughout the standard meeting times (excluding one-night per week and one-day per week courses):

1. There are nine standard MWF time slots. There are six standard TR time slots. Accordingly, all academic units must ensure that the proportion of MWF-to-TR cycles used is approximately 3-to-2, every term.
2. The standard meeting time slots have been grouped into three clusters. No more than 50% of an academic unit’s sections may be scheduled in a given cluster. Additionally, no more than 10% of an academic unit’s sections at any single time slot. See chart below:

MWF (and MW) (60% of courses)	Distribution Limits	TR (40% of courses)
8:00am – 8:50am 9:00am – 9:50am	No more than 50% of sections collectively, and no more than 10% at any single slot	8:00am – 9:15am 9:30am – 10:45am
10:00am – 10:50am 11:00am –11:50am 12:00pm – 12:50pm 1:10pm – 2:00pm	No more than 50% of sections collectively, and no more than 10% at any single slot	11:00am - 12:15pm 12:45pm – 2:00pm
2:10pm – 3:00pm 3:10pm – 4:00pm 3:10pm – 4:25pm (MW)	No more than 50% of sections collectively, and no more than 10% at any single slot	2:15pm – 3:30pm 3:45pm – 5:00pm

4:35pm – 5:50pm (MW)		
4:10pm – 5:00pm		

The Office of the Registrar is charged with ensuring academic unit adherence to these distribution requirements, and will review academic unit schedules accordingly. Units not adhering to these requirements will be required to amend their schedules prior to their publication to the University community.

7.0 Course Capacities

Regularly-updated, educationally-appropriate course capacities facilitate optimal learning environments, optimal student enrollment, and optimal use of space. All course capacities will be automatically updated in Banner by the University Registrar according to the following rules:

Rule #1: Course caps should be set at the most recent rolling, three-term average of each course’s census enrollment, rounded to the nearest even number.

- For example, if Course A had census enrollments of 22, 24, and 27 in Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014, respectively (and the course was not offered in any other terms during that period), the three-term average enrollment would be 24.3; after rounding that to the nearest number, the cap would be automatically set at 24.

Rule #2: If any one year census enrollment number in that three term review cycle was more than 10% greater than the updated and rounded three-year average (per Rule #1 above), then the cap will be automatically set at the highest census enrollment number of that three-year cycle.

- For example, if Course B had census-captured enrollments of 18, 24, and 27 in Fall 2012, Fall 2013, and Fall 2014, respectively, the new cap would be automatically set at 27 because the Fall 2014 enrollment of 27 was greater than 10% of the three-term census enrollment average of 23.

8.0 Calendar for Developing and Modifying Class Schedules

Term-by-Term Schedule Building Deadlines

The following deadlines ensure that the class schedule is finalized prior to the start of the formal academic advising period.

	Summer	Fall	Spring
“Rolled” Class Schedule Available for Scheduling	December 1 (Prior year)	February 1	
Course Section Schedule Due	January 15	February 15	
Special Room Accommodations Due	March 1	February 15	October 1
Schedule Locked	January 31	February 28/29	
Class Schedule Goes “Live” & Advising Begins	February 1	March 1	
Room Assignments Locked	March 1	March 15	October 15
Registration Begins	March 24	April 1	November 1

9.0 Final Exam Scheduling

When a course requires a time for a final exam, that exam will be scheduled by the University Registrar per the following rules:

- Final exams must be held at the date and time outlined on the Final Exam Schedule maintained by the Office of the University Registrar.
- The Final Exam Schedule is based on the course start times listed in the “Standard Schedule Times/Slots” above.
- For classes with both lectures and labs/discussions, the time of the lecture determines the exam period.
- All exams, except common exams, will be held in the same room assigned by the Registrar for regular class meetings.

10.0 Exceptions

As noted above, the Provost can make exceptions to this policy. The Provost will maintain an updated record of active policy exemptions, and will direct the University Registrar and academic units to abide by those exemptions while active.

11.0 APPROVALS

This policy was:

1. Approved by CADD: *February 24, 2016*
2. Adopted without amendment by Provost Nancy Brickhouse: *February 24, 2016*
3. Minor revisions approved by CADD and Provost Nancy Brickhouse: *February 22, 2017*

Special thanks to our colleagues at Marquette University for sharing their course scheduling policy, on which this policy is modeled.