

Western Technical College

Academic Scheduling Handbook

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ACADEMIC SCHEDULING HANDBOOK

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**The wording in this document serves as a framework for the Academic Scheduling Handbook.
This framework was respectfully based upon information provided by
Grant McEwan University, Alberta Canada.**

ACADEMIC SCHEDULING POLICY - *pending Board approval*

Western Technical College strives to meet the growing demands for access to quality educational programs and services through the use of a learner-centered scheduling model. Scheduling will meet the needs of the learner while optimizing the efficient use of and access to facilities. A detailed Academic Scheduling Handbook provides guidelines for the academic scheduling roles and responsibilities, principles, parameters, priorities, guidelines, and the academic appeals process.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The timely completion of a satisfactory schedule is dependent on the manner in which Academic Divisions, the Scheduling Manager and the Scheduling Assistants discharge their responsibilities. However, College decisions are sometimes made at various stages throughout the schedule construction cycle, which may alter schedules and consequently impact scheduling.

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Program of study course information is created by the faculty and academic department chairs, approved by the appropriate Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Once these approvals have been received, the Student Information System will be updated by the ERP Academic Lead and Program Technical Lead to reflect the current program of study. The Student Information System is the sole source of all curriculum data used in the support of the scheduling process.

Academic Scheduling Team

The Academic Scheduling Team (reporting to the Academic Leadership Team) will be responsible for scheduling policy development and implementation. The team will address all issues related to scheduling, including revisions to the scheduling principles and equitable access to instructional rooms. The team will attempt to resolve college-wide issues. Recommendations on unresolved issues will be brought forward to the Academic Leadership Team. This will ensure academic and other needs are met, space utilization is maximized and equity exists among all College stakeholders wherever possible.

Scheduling Manager

The Scheduling Manager will prepare an annual critical path (scheduling deadlines), including dates, for the scheduling process and distribute it to all Divisions. The Scheduling Manager will notify relevant personnel at the start of each cycle to review the scheduling process and the critical dates for the upcoming term(s). The Manager will also post all procedures, timelines, Academic Scheduling Team activities, etc., on the College web portal to ensure that scheduling activities are visible and accessible to College leadership, faculty, and staff.

The Scheduling Assistants will prepare relevant forms with prior term data to assist the programs in the collection of their data. The data required for each term will be derived from the approved program of study maintained in the SIS. Academic Divisions (Dean/Associate Dean) will confirm specific data elements regarding course sections, faculty, room requirements, meeting patterns, delivery methods, etc. On receipt of compiled information, the Scheduling Manager will oversee the data entry process, creation and review of the schedule, and ensure the most effective draft schedules are distributed to Academic Deans/Associate Deans for review. During the review process, the Manager will follow the

College-approved scheduling change request procedure and respond to the requestor in a timely fashion. He/She will also ensure that the Schedule Office prepares and distributes final versions in accordance with the scheduling time line. As Chair of the Academic Scheduling Team, the Manager will participate in the regular evaluation of the process. The Manager will also provide annual data on room utilization, software utilization to the Academic Scheduling Team and College leadership as appropriate. Through all phases of the scheduling process, the Scheduling Manager will collaborate with the Academic Division Deans/Associate Deans and other parties, where appropriate, particularly during situations that may be at odds with the procedures and guidelines established here.

The Scheduling Manager will be responsible for convening all Academic Scheduling Team meetings, providing an agenda, chairing the meeting and issuing minutes. There will be a minimum of two team meetings per year. These will occur no later than four weeks after the start of a new term to allow for a review before the next cycle begins. Additional meetings can be held on an as needed basis (especially during the implementation phase). Agenda items can be added by any member of the team. The team should attempt to reach consensus and a decision, and dissenting opinions recorded. Recommendations from the team will be forwarded by the Scheduling Manager to the Academic Leadership Team. If issues cannot be resolved at the team level, then a request for assistance is to be sent through the Vice President of Academic Affairs or Vice President for Student Services/College Relations to the Academic Leadership Team.

Scheduling Office

Scheduling will be completed by a central office charged with the mandate of preparing the schedule based on input and requests from the division offices of the college. The Scheduling Office will adhere to the principles and guidelines established by assigning both times and rooms to optimize student, instructor and room timetables.

The Scheduling Assistants, reporting to the Scheduling Manager, are responsible for the collection of all pertinent academic information needed in the preparation of program, room and faculty schedules. The Scheduling Assistants are responsible for the course master schedule by utilizing scheduling software and the College Student Information System. Manual scheduling may occur on a limited basis and then only when approved according to scheduling policies. The Scheduling Assistants maintain and publish all schedules during and after the scheduling timetabling and room scheduling processes, including the maintenance of data on the SIS once the data upload has been completed. The Scheduling Assistants are responsible for solving short term space problems caused by unforeseen unavailability of a room, or a last minute request brought forward by a Dean to accommodate a special circumstance.

Academic Division Offices

The Academic Division Offices are responsible for and are required to submit accurate, complete and timely scheduling data by the specified deadline. During the schedule preparation phase, the division offices are responsible for the review of the schedules to ensure accuracy, to identify errors and omissions, and to report them to the Scheduling Assistant. The Academic Division Offices are the appropriate channels for the communication of scheduling requests by faculty and students. The Academic Dean/Associate Dean will advise the Scheduling Assistants as soon as possible if any changes are due to medical illness or professional development. The Scheduling Assistants will verify that appropriate forms are on file with Human Resources for such releases.

The Academic Division Office is responsible for faculty assignment to sections and workload. Faculty are to meet with the Academic Dean/Associate Dean should they wish to discuss and pursue an adjustment to a schedule through the approved appeal process. Under no circumstances should faculty contact the Scheduling Assistants.

Registrar's Office

Once all data is uploaded to the SIS, the process of registering students will commence. Changes to the course master schedule will not be permitted once registration begins. Class sections will be added/deleted by the Scheduling Office as needed by the Academic Divisions. Scheduling errors or conflicts discovered during the registration process will be corrected by the Scheduling Office.

Information Network Media Services

Information Network Media Services (INMS) will maintain the custom scripts for the scheduling system. INMS will ensure the hardware, where the scheduling software is installed, is maintained with the appropriate upgrades, perform necessary backups, and all necessary maintenance. INMS works with the Academic Divisions to install and maintain appropriate hardware and software utilized in classrooms.

Facilities

The Physical Plant Department is responsible for providing timely and accurate updates to the room inventory prior to the commencement of the scheduling process for each term. Updates include changes to room configuration and number of student stations. Academic Divisions responsible for special use areas will ensure the equipment in those facilities is adequately maintained.

SCHEDULING PRINCIPLES

College Mission/Goals

Academic scheduling contributes to achieving college mission and goals in that the process is student centered, collaborative, entrepreneurial, responsive, and a reflection of quality initiatives. Planning for classrooms and labs is an integral part of program and project planning.

Learner- Centered

Scheduling of learning activities is designed to meet the needs of the learner and supports the teaching/learning process

Optimization of Access

Academic Scheduling recognizes that space is owned by the College as a whole and classrooms and labs are assigned through cooperation and collaboration. The physical facilities of the college are scheduled to optimize access to the College's educational opportunities. The college ensures that space is used to its best advantage and used efficiently by:

- minimizing duplication
- maximizing resource utilization

- optimizing automation
- providing timely information to students, faculty and staff

Facilities Zone Usage

Minimizing HVAC zones being used and "packing" the times in which HVAC zones are needed can greatly reduce energy usage. HVAC zone awareness factors the following issues into schedule development automatically: opportunity analysis, zone packing and interfacing with automated HVAC systems.

Institutions publish a schedule wherein all the buildings are generally considered "open for business." Opportunity analysis determines if any buildings or HVAC zones are not needed for part of the institution's scheduling week. This is accomplished by determining the extent to which scheduling density and alternative uses of space (office hours, computer labs, etc.) impact the minimum operational hours of a building or HVAC zone within a larger building. Space that is required for course sections or other scheduled events for the entire scheduling week must not be considered in HVAC zone optimization. The remaining buildings or HVAC zones are then targeted to be shut down for blocks of time within the scheduling week.

Zone packing capitalizes on opportunities discovered in the opportunity analysis to reduce the overall hours that space is conditioned. The transition time needed to change the temperature in a building or HVAC zone must be considered in the packing process. Therefore, it is important to not only minimize the hours that a desired temperature must be maintained (hours that space is in use) but also the hours that space is being cooled down or heated up. If a building or HVAC zone is needed for 25% of a scheduling week, zone packing will attempt to assign times to course sections so that scheduling is limited to two or three days per week with minimal gaps in usage.

Interfacing updated scheduling information to automated HVAC systems allows those systems to proactively manage the temperatures in spaces used by course sections or scheduled events. Since HVAC systems will be programmed to run based on the utilization schedule, spaces will no longer run heating or cooling (HVAC) unless they are scheduled for use according to the room scheduling system (Infosilem

Security

Academic Scheduling contributes to the overall security of facilities and people by allowing for optimization of space and securing of unused facilities. For the overall safety and security of students, instructors, and staff, classes are to be held in the designated classroom and no unapproved changes or room switches will be permitted. In situations where a room needs to be changed for one class meeting only due to an unforeseen circumstance, the division/instructor will notify Security of the room change.

SCHEDULING PARAMETERS

- The Western Employee Handbook will be used to determine parameters.
- Western Technical College regular faculty assignments are based on a 40 hour work week (FLSA exempt employee professional status).
- Depending on programs, student and community needs classes may be scheduled between the hours of 7a.m. – 10 p.m. including weekends.
- Weekend Schedules - The District may, at its sole discretion, schedule instructors for weekend (Saturday/Sunday) assignments where the needs of the program and/or students would require such scheduling. In the event more than one (1) instructor is assigned to a program involving weekend assignments, an equitable rotation system for weekend assignments will be established by the Division Dean or Associate Dean for the assigned instructors. Should an instructor be assigned to a schedule which includes weekends on a regular basis throughout a semester, the instructor's work week will consist of no more than five (5) workdays, of any calendar week.
- Division Scheduling Parameters - When scheduling classes, factors to be taken into consideration include, but are not limited to: student headcount; number of preps; first time teaching the course; a newly developed course; accreditation requirements; and total number of contact hours (A, B, C or D, E)

Professional Development Blockoff

Professional Development Blockoff may be allowed for instructors provided the following circumstances are met:

- Participation in a discipline related, professional organization in which the participation will enhance the instructor's job and training and is specific to the program they teach.
- The external organization is dictating the dates, times and place for their meetings.
- Participation is not necessarily an enhancement to the instructor's job but the external organization requires participation (for example: HSC Academic Team and HSC Management Group require participation by representation of any program held at the HSC).

A maximum of three instructors in a given program will be allowed to blockoff their schedule for participation in organization activities. A rotation basis is recommended and must be agreed upon between the department and their supervisor.

Professional Development Blockoff is allowed for students to participate in an external organization if it is a program requirement and therefore tied to a specific course.

Accreditation Meeting Blockoff is allowed for a group of instructors in a specific program that are required to hold regularly scheduled meetings for Accreditation purposes. When the volume of instructors is too large to commonly find a time around their teaching schedules, this blockoff can be used.

The Dean or Associate Dean must provide the instructor's name and external organization information to the Academic Scheduling Office prior to the start of scheduling for a given term.

SCHEDULING PRIORITIES

- Student and faculty schedules will be developed in accordance with scheduling principles and priorities supporting the learning/teaching process.
- Instructional activity will have priority access to classroom and lab facilities.
- Priority or sole access to special purpose rooms may be allocated to a particular program(s). Such allocations are subject to review by the Academic Scheduling Team and approval of the Standing Committee on Facilities Use.
- When there is insufficient space to accommodate all instructional activities, prioritization will be given in the following order:

Credit Programs and Certificates

GOAL Instruction

Business and Industry Offerings

Lifelong Learning/Professional Development

College-related activities

SCHEDULING GUIDELINES

- Program requirement sheets will serve as the basis for building academic blocks.
- Academic blocks should be educationally sound.
- The scheduling constraints for academic blocks and instructors will be reviewed and updated annually by the Academic Scheduling Team.
- A major goal is to build academic communities while utilizing facilities in an optimal manner.

Academic Block Scheduling Guidelines	Timetabling Guidelines
Maximum # of Periods in a Row*	3 periods preferred; 6 periods maximum
Minimum required time following Maximum # of Periods in a Row	1 period preferred; 1 period limit
Maximum # Class Periods/Day*	6 periods preferred; 8 periods maximum
Minimum time allowed following the end of an evening class and the beginning of the first class the next day	11 hours preferred; 10 hours minimum
Maximum # of periods/day from start of first class to the end of the last class	7 periods preferred; 9 periods maximum
Minimum Lunch Time	0 preferred; 0 limit
Reasonableness Checks After Timetabling is Completed	
Limit time gaps between courses on academic blocks to	1 period preferred; 2 periods maximum
Minimum number of course periods in a day (if scheduled)	2 periods

Instructor Scheduling Guidelines	Timetabling Guidelines	
Maximum # of Periods in a Row	3 periods preferred; 6 periods maximum	
Minimum required time following Maximum # of Periods in a Row	2 periods preferred; 1 hour minimum	
Maximum # Class Periods/Day*	5 periods preferred; 6 periods maximum	
Teaching Load Assignment Weekly: Full-time Instructor	18 periods teaching minimum; 24 periods teaching maximum	
Days per week – including weekends: Full-time Instructor	5 days/week maximum including weekends	
Minimum time allowed following the end of an evening class and the beginning of the first class the next day	12 periods minimum	
Maximum # of periods/day from start of first class to the end of the last class	8 periods preferred; 9 periods maximum	
Minimum lunch time required	1 hour preferred; 1 hour minimum	
Adjunct Teaching Load Assignment	FY 12-13 13 contact hours	FY 13-14 13 contact hours
Basic Skills individual instruction (Phase 2)	480 hours/2 semesters; 720 hours/3 semesters	450 hours/2 semesters; 675 hours/3 semesters
Short-term instructional academies, institutes, etc.	720 hours/2 semesters	675 hours/3 semesters
Business and Industry Services (Phase 2)	720 hours/2 semesters	675 hours/3 semesters

*Exceptions will be made for specialized courses.

ACADEMIC SCHEDULING APPEALS PROCESS

The following appeals process has been established to ensure an equitable, timely, and educationally sound resolution to conflicts associated with the course master schedule. Appeals may be submitted by full-time faculty or academic leadership and must follow the process below.

Issues related to administrative, union, legal and contractual obligations are not to be submitted under this process. The Scheduling Manager will verify that the appropriate forms are on file with the Human Resources Office for adjustments approved under this provision.

- Step 1: The person requesting an appeal meets with the Academic Division Dean/Associate Dean and completes and submits a scheduling appeal form electronically to the Scheduling Manager. The appeals form is available on the Scheduling website.
- Step 2: The Scheduling Manager schedules an appeals hearing within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the appeal and notifies all parties of the hearing date. Exceptions to this timeline may be granted by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Individuals invited to the meet with the Academic Scheduling Appeal Committee hearing are the person filing the appeal, his/her department/program chair, his/her educational supervisor.
- Step 3: The Appeal hearing is held. The Scheduling Appeal Committee submits their decision in writing within 3-5 working days. Findings are distributed to the Academic Scheduling Team and individuals present at the hearing.

The committee will take into consideration the following criteria when evaluating an appeal and rendering a decision. Additional criteria may be considered.

- The request is educationally sound. It may either improve or maintain learning experiences for the students.
- There should be no significant negative impact on any course or department.
- Additional cost to accommodating this request must be considered.
- Potential negative impacts on any of the students in the course(s) being adjusted must be considered.
- The request promotes better use of facilities and equipment

The Scheduling Appeals Committee is chosen from the full Academic Scheduling Team based on availability and will consist of two leadership and two faculty. Decisions are made on majority vote, with all decisions of the Scheduling Appeals Committee final. If a decision cannot be made, the Vice President of Academic Affairs or Student Services/College Relations will make the final decision. Copies of all appeals and decisions are maintained in the Scheduling Office. Copies of all approved appeals will be posted on the Scheduling website.

ACADEMIC SCHEDULING APPEAL FORM

Please complete the information below when requesting a scheduling appeal. Forward the completed form to Scheduling Manager for submission to the Scheduling Appeals Committee. The Committee will identify a time to meet with you, your department/program chair, and your educational supervisor to discuss the details of the appeal. A decision will be forthcoming within 3-5 working days of that meeting.

Requestor: _____

Date of Request: _____

Describe the schedule that you are appealing:

Course #: _____

Course Title: _____

Semester: _____

School Year: _____

Current Room #: _____

Current Building: _____

Current Course Timetable (Time of day and day(s) of week: _____

Is this request for the semester indicated above or intended for all future semesters?

This semester only This semester & all future semesters

Does this request require a schedule change for any other course, instructor, or room?

Yes No

If yes, describe:

What is the impact on student schedules or student registration?

Rationale for the request (please be as complete as possible):

Submit