

Portland State University
Classroom Scheduling Protocols

July 7, 2001

Introduction

Ten consecutive years of increasing enrollment at Portland State coupled with current expectations for continued enrollment growth require that classroom scheduling practice and protocols be examined and adjusted to maximize classroom space utilization. In the short term, an evaluation of classroom assignments is needed to ensure that sufficient sections will be offered to meet 2001-02 demand.

The Office of Admissions & Records is responsible for classroom assignment and scheduling for academic courses in fall, winter and spring terms. The School of Extended Studies is responsible for summer session assignment and scheduling. Both departments employ the same electronic tools and methods for facilities assignment. These offices, in consultation with the scheduling software manufacturer, have recommended new protocols that are designed to ensure efficient and equitable scheduling to meet space demand of the entire University. These protocols have been shaped by recent directives from the Office of Academic Affairs, 2001 student survey data concerning class meeting day/time preferences, recognition of facilities' limitations, and the recognition of a need to define and apply consistent and fair methods for classroom assignment.

The adjustments made to classroom protocol will guide academic scheduling beginning winter term, 2002. Noteworthy are changes made to current practice relating to room control and priority scheduling, employment of an enhanced University standard time grid, assignment policies for large rooms (having capacity of 80 or more) and rooms with special technology features. In addition, procedures are identified for handling room change requests once assignments have been made.

Scheduling Process

An annual calendar establishing the tentative production dates and deadlines for each quarterly *Schedule of Classes* is provided and updated quarterly by the Office of Admissions & Records. Academic departments will each identify a scheduling coordinator to interact with the Office of Admissions & Records and the Office of Extended Studies. The departmental scheduling coordinators will work with the Office of Admissions & Records scheduling officer and the Office of Extended Studies.

The deadlines for schedule material will give departments as much lead time as possible allowing the minimum amount of time to produce and print the *Schedule of Classes* in advance of registration periods. Drafts and Technology/Large Room request forms will be provided quarterly for departmental projections and coordination. Departments that miss schedule deadlines may not have their schedule viewable on the online Schedule of Classes until it has been processed.

The department scheduling coordinator will facilitate requests made by faculty, instructors, GTAs, GRAs for classrooms or changes to room assignments. In addition, these staff members

will be responsible for reporting course cancellations, departmental changes in classroom assignments, and changes to the TBA listings as they occur. Changes to instructor assignments should be submitted as soon as they are made but no later than the end of the second week of classes. Such system-wide changes will be recorded in the BANNER scheduling system for all rooms, even if they are departmentally controlled.

Academic departments are responsible for notifying students of room or time changes made after the *Schedule of Classes* is published. This requires posting classroom notices and may include direct communication with the enrolled students.

Departments with dedicated classrooms and seminar rooms are expected to schedule these rooms for classes before requesting room assignments from the general pool.

Course Meeting Times (Standard Time-Grid)

Included in the scheduling materials is an outline of the standard course meeting times that will be used to guide scheduling of general pool classrooms. Courses having standard classroom meeting times will receive scheduling priority. That is, courses having non-standard meeting times will be roomed after courses that fit into the standard time-grid have been roomed. General classrooms will not be assigned in out-of-grid times unless departments have fully utilized their controlled classroom/seminar space.

Room Assignment Priorities

Classes offered for academic credit will have scheduling priority over other, not-for-credit events. Non-credit events, study groups, break out sections, etc. will be scheduled according to space availability after all credit classes have been assigned a room.

Beginning winter term, enrollment history for each course will be used as a standard to establish classroom capacity. Due to a scarcity of large classrooms, departments should carefully review the actual enrollment numbers during the corresponding term for the previous year before setting enrollment expectations. Projected section increases greater than 10% must be approved in writing by the department chair.

Classroom Priorities (three types of classrooms)

1. General Pool Classrooms

The general pool classrooms are scheduled by the Office of Admissions & Records and the Office of Extended Studies. These will be scheduled using software to establish the “best fit” for size and availability. General pool classrooms will be assigned on a priority basis to those sections requesting standard, in-grid meeting times. For departments that have departmentally-controlled classroom space, general pool rooms will not be assigned to out-of-grid times unless the departmentally-controlled space is fully utilized by academic classes.

Those general pool classrooms which are considered “High-Technology” or “Large” (80 cap or more), will be pre-assigned (i.e. manually, not via scheduling software) based on the submission of a special request form. These classrooms will be assigned in a way that optimizes their

utilization, based on the needs identified for capacity and/or special technology features. Classroom requests will be reviewed for historical enrollments and will be scheduled according to the standard time-grid.

2. General Pool/Shared Classrooms

General Pool/Shared classrooms are those scheduled by the Office of Admissions & Records and Office of Extended Studies with priority pre-assignment made for designated departments. Shared classrooms, like all general pool classrooms, must follow the standard time grid. After the drafts are received assigned shared rooms become part of the general pool for other assignment.

3. Departmentally Controlled Classrooms

These classrooms may be scheduled and pre-assigned by academic departments for the exclusive use of the controlling academic department's courses until the priority scheduling deadline. After the draft scheduling deadline, departmentally controlled classrooms become available for use by other academic departments and may be scheduled, as needed, by the Office of Admissions & Records for other departments' academic courses.

The Office of Admissions & Records and Extended Studies will notify the department whenever classroom assignments have been made in their controlled space. At the end of the second week of the term, room control reverts back to the controlling department for non-class use, if needed.

Changes in Classroom Assignments

All schedule changes, even in departmentally-controlled rooms, which affect class meeting days/times or classroom assignment must be requested in writing on a Course Section Maintenance (CSM) form and submitted by the departmental scheduling coordinator.

It is important that such changes be input into the BANNER scheduling system in order to avoid double booking of space, so that classes may be located in event of an emergency, and so that buildings and doors may be opened on weekends.

After a class has been assigned to a general pool room, requests to change a room assignment (meeting times stay the same), will be made if appropriate space is available. Admissions & Records will not move other classes to accommodate such requests unless the department scheduling coordinator has negotiated a room exchange. Such changes must be confirmed to Admissions & Records by submitting CSM forms.

In the event of an emergency evacuation of a classroom or building, Admissions & Records or Extended Studies will attempt to relocate classes to temporary meeting rooms if needed.

Accommodations for Disabled Students and Instructors

Classroom assignments may be changed when a room is determined to be inadequate for a disabled student or instructor. Admissions & Records works closely with the Coordinator of

Disability Resource Center and will make every effort to relocate the class to an appropriate classroom.

Room Size & Configuration

Seating capacity for each classroom is determined by Facilities in accordance with the state and city fire and safety regulations. Departments or faculty may not over-enroll students beyond the maximum classroom size. Before the instructor accepts additional enrollment beyond the scheduled room capacity, the departmental scheduling coordinator should contact the Office of Admissions & Records to determine if alternate space is available.

Classroom Maintenance

Facilities is responsible for routine maintenance of classrooms. Reports of damaged lighting or seating, requests for lecterns, podiums, or additional tables, and concerns about cleanliness, chalk, markers, and erasers should be addressed to Facilities Department at 725-3738.

Instruction and Research Services is responsible for maintenance and repair of non-operating overhead projectors, VCRs, monitors, projection and other instructional equipment. Contact IRS at 725-9100 for assistance.

Furniture and equipment such as overheads, chairs, and tables should not be removed or, exchange from one room to another. If a room does not have enough seating to meet the scheduled maximum enrollment, contact Facilities at 725-3738 for additional seating.