

Procedure Number : OP-B-3
Title : CSM Timetabling and Class Times Policy
Category : Teaching and Learning
Effective : 1 January 2009

1. POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to describe the Curtin Sarawak Campus policy for the development and management of the Campus timetable and outline the provision of Common Free Time.

2. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all staff and students of the Campus. All class timetabling is conducted centrally by Student Services.

3. EXCEPTIONS

Nil

4. DEFINITIONS

Class means any scheduled teaching activity involving face-to-face contact and includes, but is not limited to, lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions and seminars.

Common Free Time is the period from 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm each Friday during teaching weeks, during which classes or other compulsory student activities must not be scheduled or held.

A **Core Unit** is a compulsory unit specified in the course outline.

The **Draft Timetable** is a working document provided to Teaching areas prior to Timetable publication to be reviewed to ensure activities are in line with initial requests.

The **Final Timetable** is the final official version of the schedule of classes published to students and staff.

Non Standard Study Periods are those study periods other than the two (2) standard semesters as outlined in the Campus Academic Calendar.

Specialist Teaching Space is a teaching location designed for specific purposes eg a science laboratory, studio etc.

Students/Staff with a disability or medical condition are those people who may require reasonable adjustments arising from a disability or equity consideration.

A **Study Period** is a period of time in which a unit is available eg Semester 1, Semester 2, Trimester 1 etc.

Study Week is the week before the commencement of the centrally scheduled examinations period during which students are expected to prepare for examinations or practical assessments. **Teaching weeks** are weeks within a study period during which classes are scheduled.

A **Tuition Free Week** is a week within a study period during which classes and other compulsory student activities are not scheduled, unless specifically approved in accordance with section 10 of these Procedures.

A **Unit Outline** is a summary of essential information relating to the unit being studied.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 Timetabling Principles

In the development of the timetable, the Campus aims to recognise the needs and interests of all stakeholders. Therefore this policy is based on the following principles:

- 5.1.1 The timetable will be published in a timely manner allowing students to take account of the timetable when enrolling or changing their enrolment.
- 5.1.2 Changes to the final timetable will be kept to a minimum.
- 5.1.3 Class sizes will not exceed the capacity of the allocated venue.
- 5.1.4 Scheduling of classes will make efficient use of teaching space and resources.
- 5.1.5 Scheduling of classes and allocation of venues will endeavour to support the most effective teaching and learning practice.
- 5.1.6 As far as practical, students and staff are not required to be involved in more than four continuous hours of learning activities.
- 5.1.7 Authorised constraints will be taken into consideration regarding off campus teaching, cross-campus teaching, research, or fieldwork.

5.2 Timetabling Priorities

In developing the timetable priority will be given to the following:

- 5.2.1 Units taught across multiple courses.
- 5.2.2 Large planned class sizes in descending order of planned class size.
- 5.2.3 First year units timetabled where possible between 8am and 6pm.
- 5.2.4 Core units timetabled before elective units.
- 5.2.5 Regular teaching activities timetabled before ad hoc activities and non-teaching activities.

5.3 Commencement and Duration of Classes

- 5.3.1 Core timetabling hours are Monday to Friday between the hours of 8am to 6pm.
- 5.3.2 Classes may be scheduled in the evenings up until 8pm or on weekends where specifically requested by the Dean and by mutual agreement by the teaching staff involved.
- 5.3.3 Classes will normally start on the hour, however, in some circumstances may start on the half hour.
- 5.3.4 Where a class is formally shown as being of one hour's duration, in practice it shall be limited to 50 minutes in order to allow students time to get to the next class at the scheduled time.

5.3.5 Where classes exceed a one hour period, there shall be a ten minute break for each one hour of contact. The timing of the break shall be decided by agreement between students and staff in the class.

5.4 Common Free Time

5.4.1 During teaching weeks, the period from 12 noon to 2pm each Friday is designated as Common Free Time and shall be kept free from all classes and other compulsory student activities to the maximum extent possible.

5.4.2 Classes and other compulsory student activities may only be scheduled during Common Free Time in the following circumstances:

- where suitable venues or facilities for the class or other activity are not available or are difficult to schedule at other times and not using the Common Free Time period will disadvantage students; or
- where scheduling the class or other activity during Common Free Time is the most efficient or practical arrangement taking into account the scheduling of other compulsory student activities for the students affected on the day; or
- where scheduling the class or other activity during Common Free Time is required as a “one off” due to exceptional circumstances.

5.4.3 Where compulsory student activities are scheduled during Common Free Time, the following restrictions should be observed to the maximum extent possible:

- scheduling of classes or other activities during Common Free Time for first year students should be avoided;
- scheduling of classes or other activities during Common Free Time that cover the whole two-hour period should be avoided, and

5.5 Equity considerations

5.5.1 In accordance with the Campus policies in relation to work, life and family, ethics, equity, social justice and diversity and various anti-discrimination laws, the Campus will ensure that the timetabling process make reasonable accommodation for staff and students.

5.5.2 Students and staff requiring specialist timetable accommodation (ie related to disabilities, medical conditions, religious obligations, and/or family responsibilities) must request this in advance from the relevant Head of teaching area (or nominee) in the first instance and the Campus Counselling Service if the matter cannot be resolved.

5.5.3 Such requests must be forwarded to the Student Services Department in advance of the timetable being developed.

5.6 Timetable Publication

5.6.1 The draft Timetable will be published as follows:

- The semester timetable will be released 2 weeks before O week each semester.

5.6.2 A draft timetable will be prepared for staff to review at least two weeks prior to the final timetable. Teaching areas will review the Draft Timetable to ensure that:

- Activity requirements have been adequately provided for all unit offerings, and are in line with initial teaching area’s requests,
- All details of activities have been entered correctly, and
- Any clashes are reported to the Head of Department.

- 5.6.3 Changes to the Final Timetable will be kept to a minimum and must be approved, in writing, by the Head of the teaching area (or nominee). Changes will only be considered if:
- student enrolment numbers exceed the capacity of the scheduled venue, or otherwise require a change,
 - a unit is no longer deemed viable to run,
 - an allocated venue does not provide the requested specialist facilities,
 - staff availability necessitates a change,
 - a location is a safety or health hazard, or
 - there is a need to accommodate reasonable adjustments for students with a disability or medical condition.
- 5.6.4 Students shall be notified in a timely manner, of any changes to the Final Timetable by the Student Service via the website.
- 5.6.5 While the University attempts to accommodate student choices, the timetable may not allow for every student to attend their preferred combination of units. Optional or elective units will not be guaranteed clash-free.
- 5.6.6 The Head of Teaching Area (or nominee) will mediate any conflicts with the teaching areas concerned.

5.7 Rescheduling of classes in an emergency

Where a scheduled class must be cancelled due to an emergency, such as a power or lighting failure the University will endeavour to reschedule the class. The use of iLecture facilities should be considered or classes may be rescheduled to Common Free Time or Tuition Free Weeks. Where possible, the decision to reschedule or to not run the class will be made following consultation with the students affected. Such arrangements should not disadvantage students.

5.8 Rescheduling of classes where classes fall on a public holiday

Where a scheduled class cannot run due to a public holiday that is a Curtin holiday that falls within the prescribed academic calendar teaching weeks, the Campus may reschedule the class and the use of iLecture facilities should be considered. If the class is to be rescheduled, arrangements should be included in the Unit Outline.

5.9 Service Teaching

The service provider and the recipient teaching area will liaise with each other before requesting timetable changes. Requests must be made by the service provider teaching area.

5.10 Double Degrees

Where the Campus offers double degrees which require students to undertake degrees managed by different teaching areas, the teaching area named first is responsible for resolving any timetabling issues, in consultation with the partner teaching area, ensuring that students have sufficient teaching activities from which to choose.

6. LIST OF SCHEDULES

- All academic staff will be given a timetable allotment form (Appendix 1) to be completed and forwarded to Head of Department for approval, two weeks prior to end of every semester.
- Deans of Schools are the only people given priority in timetabling schedules.
- Academic staff are not allowed to make any changes to the timetable without formal approval from the Head of Department.
- Students will register for all tutorial classes through on-line registration. Late registrations will be handled by individual lecturers.
- A staff common free-time for R&D and T&L sessions will be provided for 2 pm to 4 pm every Friday. In cases where teaching must be scheduled during these time, academic staff who do not attend these sessions in the previous semesters will be allotted first.
- GCTT / Foundation program will be allotted time on Wednesdays 2 pm to 4 pm.
- Student clashes of timetable will only be entertained if there is a case which involves more than 10 students in a particular class and time.
- Academic staff who wish to attend GCTT / Foundation Programs and Researchers' meeting as scheduled by the T&L and R&D office will be exempted from having class at the said time. However, their participation in these Professional Development activities will be essential.
- Cross-over electives will be allowed for interested students but any clashes on the timetable will not be entertained.
- Wherever applicable, the lecturer who is the unit leader should be given the first tutorial so that any matters arising from the tutorial could be handled appropriately and proper guidance given to other lecturers who are tutoring the unit.

7. APPROVAL AUTHORITY

This policy may only be amended with the approval of the Steering Committee. Schedules to this policy may be amended by the Teaching and Learning Committee and the updating of position titles, where there have been approved changes, may be amended by the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor.

8. FORMS, WORK INSTRUCTIONS AND SCHEDULES

Appendix 1: Timetable Allotment

| RESPONSIBILITIES (all sections required) | |
|---|--|
| Responsible University Officer : | Dean (Academic and Teaching and Learning) |
| Contact Officer : | Associate Professor Dr Joan Gribble |
| Telephone : | 085-443800 |
| Email : | j.gribble@curtin.edu.my |
| Responsible Office : | Teaching and Learning |
| Approval Authority : | Steering Committee |
| Review Date : | 3 years from date policy approved |

REVISION HISTORY: Required (to be completed by Responsible University Officer)

| Revision Ref. No. | Approved/ Rescinded | Date | Committee/ Board | Resolution Number | Document Reference |
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