

## Scheduling Courses and Other Academic Activities

As a residential, liberal arts institution, Southwestern University is committed to providing students with a rich and robust learning environment. While the center of the learning environment is the academic program and the work that occurs in the classroom, we also acknowledge that a great deal of student learning and growth occurs in the myriad of other activities in which students engage, including athletics, artistic performances, cultural events, field trips, lectures, programming provided by Student Life, internships, and employment opportunities.

So that students may take the fullest advantage of the learning Southwestern has to offer, the faculty are committed to continuing our tradition of scheduling classes and activities in a manner that maximizes the opportunities that students have to engage in these experiences and that allows them to plan in advance when developing their daily schedules. To this end, regular academic courses will be scheduled in the time slots indicated in the Course Time Grid. Exceptions to course scheduling must be approved by the appropriate academic Dean and the Registrar in advance of scheduling the course.

The Southwestern University course grid is designed to give faculty a variety of options for scheduling class times, including variable lengths of class meeting times. When scheduling courses, faculty should, where feasible, schedule classes with sufficient contact hours to ensure that all required class meetings, events, and activities, including tutorial sessions, can be scheduled during these hours. Classes and labs should end at the publicized hours, and a student who must leave on time, whether it is to attend another class or an extracurricular activity, should never be put at a disadvantage. If course activities are scheduled outside of class, faculty must follow the *Policies for Scheduling Course Activities*, below.

The All-Campus Time (TH 4:00-5:00) is a time in which most faculty and students should be free to participate in campus wide activities. It is designed to provide a space in the week for academically supportive events (outside lectures, panels, student presentations of work, film showings, etc.). In addition, the first All-Campus Time of each month is reserved for Student Town Hall, a Priority Event. Although the All-Campus Time is intended for academically-supportive activities, any one student may have multiple activities that s/he would like to participate in during that time; therefore, faculty should not treat the All-Campus Time as a time in which a required course activity may be added to a course without following the policies below.

Since there may be situations that warrant consideration, requests for exceptions to this policy will be handled by the Provost.

### **Policies for Scheduling Course Activities:**

#### *Class Field Trips Outside of Class Time*

Faculty whose courses require field trips that fall outside the scheduled time for the course, should include the requirement in the on-line course description. The exact dates and times of the field trip must be included in the course syllabus and presented to the students on the first day of class to allow students time to resolve schedule conflicts or drop/add courses, if necessary. Faculty and students should adhere to the excused absence policy outlined in the *Faculty Handbook* when scheduling field trips.

#### *Exams Outside of Class Time*

Exams can be scheduled outside of the regular course time, provided that students with reasonable conflicts are provided an alternate time that does not conflict with their other

activities. Reasonable conflicts include, but are not limited to, other courses, events required by other courses, athletic practices and events, rehearsals and performances, and work schedules. The syllabus will indicate the method students use to request an alternative exam time. So that students can make informed decisions about taking the course, faculty are expected to state their use of outside of class exams in the on-line listing for the course prior to registration and include the exam dates and times in the course syllabus presented to students on the first day of class. Exams should not be scheduled during the All-Campus Time or Priority Events.

#### *Tutorial and Other Study Sessions*

All students should have access to any tutorial and study sessions conducted by the faculty member for a course. If faculty include tutorial or other study sessions as regular elements of their courses, they should schedule their courses in the time slots that provide sufficient contact time to include these sessions in the allotted class time. If a tutorial or study session is scheduled outside of the regular class period, students with scheduling conflicts must be provided with an alternative time for an equivalent tutorial or study session. This could include a group review session during scheduled office hours.

#### *Capstone Presentations*

As the culminating experience in a student's academic program, capstone presentations hold special significance within the Southwestern educational experience. While faculty should make every effort to schedule capstone presentations within the Course Time Grid, faculty may require attendance outside of regular class time for students presenting their capstone work if students are given adequate notice of the date and time to allow them to adjust their schedules as necessary.

#### *Other Class Meetings and Events Outside Regular Hours*

Normally, class meetings and required class activities will be held within times reserved for the class. However, as a liberal arts college with an emphasis on engaged student learning, we recognize that some important class activities, such as attendance at evening performances or certain Priority Events such as Brown Symposium, cannot be scheduled during class, lab, or exam times. Events held outside the regular course times can be tied to a course if (a) the activity is a Priority Event, (b) the attendance at the event is optional (i.e. the student's grade will not be adversely affected if they miss the event – either by penalty or the inability to gain extra credit), or (c) when students have flexibility choosing among several evening or special events, some of which must be outside the Non-Scheduled times, or are given other alternatives. When meetings and events outside regular class hours cannot reasonably fit within this policy, faculty should contact the Provost to discuss an exemption to this policy.

#### *To-Be-Arranged Course Times*

To-Be-Arranged (TBA) course times and activities (independent studies, applied music, research, etc.) may be scheduled at any time that is mutually agreeable between the faculty member and student(s); however, faculty should be considerate of students' academic and non-academic schedules when working with their students to create a TBA schedule.

Scheduling a required class related activity without following the policies outlined above or without prior approval of the Provost will constitute a violation of the stated Academic Rights for Students (*Faculty Handbook*, page 88) and will be considered valid grounds for a grade appeal.