



UBC Vancouver Academic Course Scheduling Operational Procedures

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Background & Purpose

The following operational procedures have been developed to create an academic course schedule that supports the pedagogical needs of courses and programs across the University by providing innovative, flexible, and future-proof scheduling solutions to support transformative teaching and learning. For more information, please visit the Scheduling Services [website](#).

These operational procedures apply only to credit course offerings (i.e. UBC degree and diploma courses approved by Senate) scheduled in General Teaching Space (GTS) and available to be used by all academic units. They work in tandem with the [UBC Vancouver Booking Guidelines for General Teaching Space](#), which specifically elaborates on the ad-hoc bookings priorities and procedures.

These operational procedures do not cover the administration of the bookings for non-teaching space or research, administrative and ancillary space as defined in [Policy UP 9 Booking and Rental of UBC Space \(i.e. under the Procedures section, 1.1\)](#)

1. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Provost's Office

- a) Provides stewardship for all instructional space and is responsible for ensuring University space supports the academic mission of the University. Exceptional space considerations will be reviewed and approved by Provost's Office.

1.2 Scheduling Services, Enrolment Services

- a) Administers the booking of all UBC GTS and is the primary contact for individuals wishing to book space for course sections.
- b) Responsible for academic course schedule publications for students and staff.
- c) Establishes and publishes course scheduling timelines for both winter and summer sessions.
- d) In collaboration with Academic IT Support Services, manages and provides support for the Scientia scheduling system.
- e) Responsible for booking all GTS for course sections.

1.3 Faculties/Departments/Schools

- a) Provide designated point(s) of contact to collaborate with Scheduling Services in support of producing the academic course schedule.
- b) Determine and submit course offerings (days and times) and room requirement information to Scheduling Services in accordance with the established scheduling production timelines and procedures.
- c) Involved in the resolution of conflicts over assigned GTS after the draft timetable is published.



- d) Responsible for ensuring core course sections are conflict-free.
- e) Responsible for submitting credit course section information to Scheduling Services within the designated [timeline](#).
- f) Responsible for scheduling credit course sections into Restricted Teaching Space (RTS).
- g) Submit accessibility requests to Scheduling Services at the earliest opportunity.
- h) Provide accurate course information to Scheduling Services (e.g. best estimation of sections size).

1.4 Infrastructure Development with direction from the Provost's Office

- a) Manages the UBC Space Inventory. Determines and designates space categories including GTS.
- b) Manages the GTS classrooms, including maintenance, renovations and upgrades.
- c) Consults with Scheduling Services and IT AV on projects affecting GTS inventory.

2. Principles for Academic Course Scheduling

GTS is a finite university resource that serves to facilitate teaching and learning. With significant demand for these spaces, allocation of GTS requires prioritization. The following principles have been developed to aid in effective governance of GTS and to enable effective decision making for the best use of a limited resource.

- a) Universal Resource: GTS belongs to the University as a whole and will be allocated in a transparent manner.
- b) Alignment to UBC Strategic Priorities: Allocation of GTS will favor credit course section activities as the priority.
- c) Effective Use: GTS will be allocated in a manner that aims to utilize space based on the teaching requirements of the course sections (such as pedagogy, room amenities, and Departmental Zone Room Allocation model) while aiming to meet the target seat alignment rate.
- d) Collaboration and Flexibility: Scheduling Services, Faculties, Schools, and Departments will work together in a collaborative and flexible manner to effectively optimize usage of GTS.

3. Academic Course Teaching Hours and Scheduling Pattern

- a) The University's classes will be scheduled between the hours of 8:00 am and 10:00 pm. Any section scheduled 5:00 p.m. or later is considered an evening section. These procedures apply to daytime teaching hours, taking place Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:59 pm. Evening and weekend sections are not required to adhere to standard days and times. Both summer and winter sessions should adhere to these daytime blocks as much as possible. If exceptions exist, please contact Scheduling Services via email at schedulingservices@students.ubc.ca.



b) **Scheduling Pattern (standard times):** The following times are to be used when scheduling course sections. The bolded start times listed below represent blocks that fall within Prime-Time.

Section Duration	Section Meetings	Days	Start Times
1 hr	3	MTR	8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 13:00 , 14:00, 15:00, 16:00
	3	MWF	8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 13:00 , 14:00, 15:00, 16:00
	3	TRF	8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 13:00 , 14:00, 15:00, 16:00
1.5 hrs	2	MW	8:00, 9:30, 11:00, 12:30 , 14:00, 15:30
	2	TR	8:00, 9:30, 11:00, 12:30 , 14:00, 15:30
	2	WF	8:00, 9:30, 11:00, 12:30 , 14:00, 15:30
	2	MF	8:00, 9:30, 11:00, 12:30 , 14:00, 15:30
2 hrs	1	M	8:00, 10:00, 12:00 , 14:00, 16:00
	1	T	8:00, 10:00, 12:00 , 14:00, 16:00
	1	W	8:00, 10:00, 12:00 , 14:00, 16:00
	1	R	8:00, 10:00, 12:00 , 14:00, 16:00
	1	F	8:00, 10:00, 12:00 , 14:00, 16:00
3 hrs	1	M	8:00, 11:00 , 14:00
	1	T	8:00, 11:00 , 14:00
	1	W	8:00, 11:00 , 14:00
	1	R	8:00, 11:00 , 14:00
	1	F	8:00, 11:00 , 14:00



- c) **Off Pattern (non-standard times):** Due to specific program requirements, some sections need to be scheduled outside of the above standard blocks. These programs must inform Scheduling Services before the scheduling cycle begins. Collaboration will occur in order to facilitate optimal space utilization while meeting the needs of the program. It is recommended to use RTS for off-pattern sections wherever possible, to free up GTS for on-pattern sections.
- d) **The 10-minute break between classes:** To allow subsequent classes to start on time, all teaching will cease and classes should vacate a teaching space 10 minutes prior to the scheduled end time for that class. The 10-minute time between classes is to be shared between the instructors occupying the classroom space. Whether the instructor has finished their class or is setting up for their class, neither party “owns” the 10-minute break.

4. Required Course Scheduling Elements

The following elements facilitate the creation of the Academic Course Schedule. Adherence to these elements will directly impact the effectiveness of the overall university timetable.

4.1 Course Scheduling Timelines

Scheduling Services will create academic course scheduling timelines for the winter and summer sessions and will post these on the [website](#) prior to the respective scheduling cycle. Timelines will include major milestones for the academic course scheduling community, including publication dates of the draft and final academic course schedule.

4.2 Activity Types

Timetable representatives (T-Reps) should ensure that the correct activity template is allocated to the appropriate activity type, and that activity type is not changed after the section is created. For example, all Lecture type activities should be generated from a Lecture template in Scientia. Please refer to the [T-Rep Training Canvas Course](#) for specific instructions on how to generate activity templates.

4.3 Distribution Across the Day (Prime-Time vs. Non-Prime-Time)

Academic units are responsible for ensuring that an even distribution exists for their daytime (8:00 am – 4:59 pm) course sections. Approximately 55% of course sections per course code can be scheduled in Prime-Time (10:00 am to 1:59 pm). This only applies to course sections scheduled in General Teaching Space for winter sessions. Reports will be provided to assist each unit in identifying the number of sections that would need to move outside of Prime-Time in order to achieve the required distribution.

4.4 Conflict-Free Core Courses

A conflict occurs when two (or more) core courses are part of a program or corresponding program and are scheduled at the same time. Faculties are responsible for collaborating across



academic units to ensure that core courses are scheduled conflict-free. By doing so, this increases course availability and facilitates student success.

4.5 Departmental Zone Room Allocation Model

Scheduling Services will assign GTS to course sections according to the Departmental Zone Room Allocation model. This model creates a zone of classrooms for each course code around a chosen centroid building. Each zone contains a Primary Zone (within ~200 m of the centroid) and a Secondary Zone (within ~400 m of the centroid). If no room can be found within the zone that meets the pedagogical needs, then the scheduling system will move outside the zone to find an appropriate space. More information and the General Teaching Space Allocation Methodology can be found [here](#).

4.6 General Teaching Space Assignment Approach

Scheduling Services will assign GTS in batches, while taking into consideration the following components:

- Departmental Zone Room Allocation Model
- Pedagogical requirements
- Room feature requirements
- Accessibility requirements
- Seat alignment target

Course section batch selection sizes in descending order:

- Course section size 300+
- Course section size 250-299
- Course section size 200-249
- Course section size 150-199
- Course section size 100-149
- Course section size 70-99
- Course section size 60-69
- Course section size 50-59
- Course section size 45-49
- Course section size 40-44
- Course section size 35-39
- Course section size 30-34
- Course section size 25-29
- Course section size 20-24
- Course section size 10-19
- Course section size 1-9



4.7 Draft Timetable

During each scheduling cycle, a draft timetable with assigned GTS, will be made available for academic units to review. T-reps will have access to view the draft timetable in Scientia Timetabler. Faculty members will have the opportunity to view the draft timetable [online](#).

4.8 Draft Timetable Adjustments

It is important to note the draft timetable is subject to change. Academic units can review the draft timetable and make changes in Scientia Timetabler and/or submit GTS room change requests to Scheduling Services via the [Course Scheduling Support Request Form](#) found on our website.

GTS room change requests that can be submitted to Scheduling Services include:

- Increase/decrease in planned size
- Adding additional course sections
- Modification to day/time/duration/term
- Room changes if the assigned space does not meet the teaching requirements

All other course section adjustments are to be done by T-Reps in Scientia Timetabler.

Scheduling Services will make every effort to process all requests in timely manner before the final timetable is published to students. When processing room change requests for academic units, Scheduling Services will hold rooms up to 2 business days for the requestor. Scheduling Services will work to accommodate change requests while minimizing the impact to the overall draft timetable. A section may be relocated to facilitate solutions for change requests related to the room size, room features, or to facilitate an accessibility request. Impacted units will be contacted to discuss potential options for resolving room changes.

General Teaching Space changes made by academic units should follow the required course scheduling elements, as outlined in this document. Changes made by academic units will be reviewed by Scheduling Services to align with the campus-wide approach to course scheduling, including the collaborative campus-wide resolution of change requests.

4.9 GTS Room Resolutions

Space on campus is a finite resource and there may be instances where two or more academic units require/desire the same space at the same time. In such a case, Scheduling Services will facilitate conversations between academic units, these conversations will include the appropriate Faculty level representatives (e.g. Department Heads, Associate Deans Academic). In the rare circumstance a final resolution is required, it will be made by the Provost or their delegate.



4.10 Final Timetable

The final timetable will be published based on the timelines found [here](#). Academic units and students can view the final timetable [here](#). Changes after the final timetable is published are strongly discouraged as this will affect student registration.

4.11 Course Section Set Up & Publication in SISC

Academic units are responsible for setting up course section information in the Student Information Service Centre (SISC), including information such as Activity Type, Mode of Delivery and course publication. Course sections must be published and permit students to register. Any exceptions for unpublished course sections should be communicated to Scheduling Services by the beginning of June in order to retain GTS rooms.

5. Best Practice Course Scheduling Elements

Adherence to the following scheduling elements is recommended in order to create an optimal schedule for students, to improve space utilization, to reduce conflicts between course sections, and to increase alignment with scheduling practices and processes.

5.1 Room Utilization Rate

Scheduling Services will make every effort to reach a 70% room utilization rate for the use of GTS during daytime hours (8:00 am to 4:59 pm). This rate of room utilization allows for flexibility in the timetable while avoiding bottlenecks in larger rooms (capacity 100+).

5.2 Seat Alignment Rate

Scheduling Services will make every effort to achieve a 70% seat alignment rate for all course sections in GTS. This translates to making use of 70% of the actual capacity of a space (i.e. a room with 100 seats must have at least 70 students). This rate of seat alignment allows for flexibility in pedagogy while ensuring space is allocated appropriately.

5.3 Thursday Block

A period of time on Thursday each week between 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm which is kept free of course sections to enable departmental functions to take place without clashing with scheduled teaching activities. For more information please refer to https://senate.ubc.ca/sites/senate.ubc.ca/files/downloads/va_minutes_february2001.pdf.

5.4 Distribution Across the Week

Faculties should ensure a balanced distribution of course sections across the week (Monday – Friday). A balanced distribution equates to approximately 20% of course sections, per day.



6. Definitions

Core Courses	Scheduling Services defines core courses as degree requirements which are listed in the Academic Calendar.
Core Course Conflict	A conflict occurs when two (or more) core courses are part of a program or corresponding program and are scheduled at the same time.
Course Code	A subject code indicated by a 2-4 letter abbreviation (e.g. BA, KIN, CRWR)
Course Section	Any teaching activity associated with the subject which requires a location and/or teaching resources allocated.
Day of the Week Notation	In timetable notation, days of the week are represented by the following letters: M = Monday, T=Tuesday, W=Wednesday, R=Thursday, F=Friday, S=Saturday, U=Sunday
Daytime Hours	UBC daytime hours are considered to be 8:00 am to 4:59 pm, Monday to Friday, as described in the November 2000 Senate meeting minutes .
Department Centroid	A building that is used as a centre point to create a zone for each course code in the Departmental Zone Room Allocation Model.
General Teaching Space (GTS)	General Teaching Space is shared space used for the teaching needs of Faculties, Departments, and Schools. UP9 further defines General Teaching Spaces .
Planned Size	The anticipated student registration of a course section.
Prime-Time	Prime-Time is considered to be 10:00 am to 1:59 pm, as the highest volume of activities is scheduled during this period.
Published Timetable	The academic course timetable that is made available to students, staff and faculty.
Restricted Teaching Space (RTS)	Restricted Teaching Space means that such space is to be used for that faculty's or department's teaching needs, with ancillary use in periods of low academic utilization for UBC-hosted academic functions (conferences, symposia, etc.) only. UP9 further defines Restricted Teaching Spaces .
Room Utilization	The percentage of hours between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday, that a classroom is used for scheduled instruction.
Seat Alignment	The percentage of seats that are occupied when the room is in use.

7. Additional Resources and Materials

- Scheduling Services Academic Course Scheduling [website](#)
- Supporting materials for Departmental Zone Allocation Model:
 - [General Teaching Space Allocation Methodology](#) (.pdf)
 - [Updated Department Zones 2022W](#) (.xlsx)