

A Proposal to Modify the Academic-Year Class Scheduling Structure

Currently, the University of Georgia uses a class scheduling structure during the academic year that includes 50-minute periods on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (MWF); 75-minute periods on Tuesday and Thursday (TR); and 20-minute passing intervals between periods on all days. Most standard three-credit courses (*i.e.*, those that meet for 150 minutes per week) are scheduled according to one of two patterns: (I) three 50-minute classes per week on MWF or (II) two 75-minute classes per week on TR. Both scheduling patterns have their adherents, and different instructors cite different reasons for preferring one pattern to the other. However, pattern II appears to be significantly preferred to pattern I. Consequently, Tuesdays and Thursdays tend to become over-scheduled, and Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays tend to become under-scheduled, resulting in uneven classroom use, increased instances of scheduling conflicts, and reduced flexibility in the scheduling of classes that do not fit the conventional 50- or 75-minute periods (*e.g.*, laboratory courses, double period courses, etc.). Efforts to enforce a more balanced distribution within the existing scheduling structure have been met with frustration and pushback from instructors and departments.

This proposal recommends an ***alternative class scheduling structure*** (not just MWF and TR) and ***an increase in class periods of 5 minutes***. The result would be 80-minute class periods scheduled on either TR, MW, MF, or WF and 55-minute periods scheduled on MWF (please see the attached proposed scheduling grid). It also recommends ***a later start time for first-period classes***. These changes would provide greater flexibility to students in their scheduling, increase classroom utilization across the week, encourage class times other than TR, and allow slightly longer classes to meet pedagogical (*i.e.*, active learning). The change would also allow for more flexibility with the academic calendar allowing a later start date while still meeting the required contact minutes per credit hour. This proposal does not lead to an increase in the required contact minutes per credit hour during a semester.

The recommendation is to offer 80-minute class periods each weekday with 55-minute classes nested within the 80-minute periods. This nesting minimizes the potential for scheduling conflicts, standard three-credit courses would be *required* to be scheduled according to one of the following patterns in the proposed scheduling grid. Note that 55-minute classes would be scheduled on MWF, 80-minute classes could be scheduled on either TR, MW, MF, or WF, and 160-minute classes could be scheduled outside of the mid-day time slot of 11:35 – 2:30 except Fridays. The restriction on the 160-minute periods ensures maximum room utilization, as long one-day-a-week classes tend to block classrooms from use during high utilization time periods from multi-day classes.

As currently is the case, scheduling a standard three-credit course according to a different pattern would require written justification and prior approval from the Vice-President for Instruction (VPI) or his/her designee.

Many courses at the University have an auxiliary course associated with them, such as labs, recitations, clinicals, etc., that students take concurrently with the primary course. In such cases, the primary course should be scheduled according to one of the patterns described above. The auxiliary course can be scheduled as if it were a stand-alone course.

Departments with nonstandard three-credit courses are expected to schedule such courses in as close accord as feasible to the proposed scheduling grid, in order to minimize scheduling conflicts. Faculty may request flexible scheduling after 6:00 pm.

To ensure that resource use remains efficient and that course schedules do not become cramped, unit heads are expected to smooth out the distribution of classes over the week and throughout the day. The proposed system will keep the current expectation that for a given weekday, at least one-third of the total number of classes scheduled by the unit for that day must be outside the primetime periods (start times from 9:00 – 2:00). A morning double period class would count as one class period inside primetime and one class period outside primetime. This requirement will be waived for any weekday with fewer than 10 classes scheduled. The proposed system would have the added expectation that seats in courses offered over the week would be uniformly distributed over the week or skewed toward MWF. In other words, Friday is a day of instruction. The VPI or his/her designee will monitor these expectations and work with unit heads to ensure that the expectations are being met. The VPI will have the authority to waive these guidelines on a case-by-case basis when the circumstances warrant it.

Justification

Variations of the proposed class scheduling structure are used by other colleges and universities, many of which we consider comparator institutions. A noncomprehensive list includes: Georgia Institute of Technology, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Northwestern University, Syracuse University, University of California–Irvine, University of Iowa, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, and University of Wisconsin - Madison. The 55/80 class structure is used at Georgia Institute of Technology, Ohio State University, Syracuse University, and Rutgers University.

While this structure does slightly reduce the total number of periods available during the week, we feel that its advantages far outweigh this one shortcoming:

- It provides greater flexibility in scheduling 80-minute classes (MW/TR/WF/MF), which, for a variety of academically sound reasons, are preferred by a majority of instructors and by many students.
- It preserves the MWF schedule, which some instructors and students find preferable. The nesting of 55-minute classes within 80-minute periods minimizes possible scheduling conflicts.
- It allows students to spread out their course schedule while preserving the time they may currently use for experiential learning activities.
- It would hopefully alleviate the tendency to schedule classes heavily on the TR schedule. This tendency tends to put extreme pressure on students
- It shifts the first period of the day back to increase the overall utilization of the first periods of the day. In the current system, the first period and last period of the day have lower demand.
- It fosters productivity in scholarship by providing more opportunities for faculty members and graduate student instructors to confine their teaching to two weekdays, leaving more days to focus on scholarship. This is particularly valuable for those disciplines (e.g., experimental sciences, disciplines requiring a lot of fieldwork, etc.) in which external factors make large blocks of time essential for conducting research.
- It is likely to improve classroom usage efficiency by smoothing out the distribution of classes over the week.
- It will likely reduce the flow impacts of all classes starting and ending on the same time schedule (e.g., crowded buses, lines in dining halls).

Start End

8:00 8:05
8:05 8:10
8:10 8:15
8:15 8:20
8:20 8:25
8:25 8:30
8:30 8:35
8:35 8:40
8:40 8:45
8:45 8:50
8:50 8:55
8:55 9:00
9:00 9:05
9:05 9:10
9:10 9:15
9:15 9:20
9:20 9:25
9:25 9:30
9:30 9:35
9:35 9:40
9:40 9:45
9:45 9:50
9:50 9:55
9:55 10:00
10:00 10:05
10:05 10:10
10:10 10:15
10:15 10:20
10:20 10:25
10:25 10:30
10:30 10:35
10:35 10:40
10:40 10:45
10:45 10:50
10:50 10:55
10:55 11:00
11:00 11:05
11:05 11:10
11:10 11:15
11:15 11:20
11:20 11:25
11:25 11:30
11:30 11:35
11:35 11:40
11:40 11:45
11:45 11:50
11:50 11:55
11:55 12:00
12:00 12:05
12:05 12:10
12:10 12:15
12:15 12:20
12:20 12:25
12:25 12:30
12:30 12:35
12:35 12:40
12:40 12:45
12:45 12:50
12:50 12:55
12:55 1:00
1:00 1:05
1:05 1:10
1:10 1:15
1:15 1:20
1:20 1:25
1:25 1:30
1:30 1:35
1:35 1:40
1:40 1:45
1:45 1:50
1:50 1:55
1:55 2:00
2:00 2:05
2:05 2:10
2:10 2:15
2:15 2:20
2:20 2:25
2:25 2:30
2:30 2:35
2:35 2:40
2:40 2:45
2:45 2:50
2:50 2:55
2:55 3:00
3:00 3:05
3:05 3:10
3:10 3:15
3:15 3:20
3:20 3:25
3:25 3:30
3:30 3:35
3:35 3:40
3:40 3:45
3:45 3:50
3:50 3:55
3:55 4:00
4:00 4:05
4:05 4:10
4:10 4:15
4:15 4:20
4:20 4:25
4:25 4:30
4:30 4:35
4:35 4:40
4:40 4:45
4:45 4:50
4:50 4:55
4:55 5:00
5:00 5:05
5:05 5:10
5:10 5:15
5:15 5:20
5:20 5:25
5:25 5:30
5:30 5:35
5:35 5:40
5:40 5:45
5:45 5:50
5:50 5:55
5:55 6:00

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:15 - 9:35	8:15 - 9:35	8:15 - 9:35	8:15 - 9:35	8:15 - 9:35
8:40 - 9:35	8:40 - 9:35	8:40 - 9:35	8:40 - 9:35	8:40 - 9:35
8:35 - 11:15	8:35 - 11:15	8:35 - 11:15	8:35 - 11:15	8:35 - 11:15
9:55 - 11:15	9:55 - 11:15	9:55 - 11:15	9:55 - 11:15	9:55 - 11:15
9:55 - 10:50	9:55 - 10:50	9:55 - 10:50	9:55 - 10:50	9:55 - 10:50
11:35 - 12:55	11:35 - 12:55	11:35 - 12:55	11:35 - 12:55	11:35 - 12:55
12:00 - 12:55	12:00 - 12:55	12:00 - 12:55	12:00 - 12:55	12:00 - 12:55
1:15 - 2:35	1:15 - 2:35	1:15 - 2:35	1:15 - 2:35	1:15 - 2:35
1:15 - 2:10	1:15 - 2:10	1:15 - 2:10	1:15 - 2:10	1:15 - 2:10
2:55 - 4:15	2:55 - 4:15	2:55 - 4:15	2:55 - 4:15	2:55 - 4:15
2:55 - 3:50	2:55 - 3:50	2:55 - 3:50	2:55 - 3:50	2:55 - 3:50
2:55 - 5:35	2:55 - 5:35	2:55 - 5:35	2:55 - 5:35	2:55 - 5:35
4:35 - 5:55	4:35 - 5:55	4:35 - 5:55	4:35 - 5:55	4:35 - 5:55
4:35 - 5:30	4:35 - 5:30	4:35 - 5:30	4:35 - 5:30	4:35 - 5:30

Flex Scheduling
(After 6:00 pm)

Current MWTF	Current TR
4:10 - 5:00	8:00 - 8:50
3:55 - 5:10	8:00 - 9:15
3:00 - 3:50	9:10 - 10:00
2:20 - 3:35	9:35 - 10:50
1:50 - 2:40	10:20 - 11:10
12:45 - 2:00	11:10 - 12:25
12:40 - 1:30	11:30 - 12:20
11:30 - 12:20	12:40 - 1:30

MON/WED/THUR (80 minutes)
TUE/FRI (60 minutes)
SAT (60 minutes)

4 credit hour lecture meeting 4 days per week (15 min block)

Spring Semester 2026
Based on 55 minutes classes (MWF), 80 minutes classes (MW, WF, MF, TR)

Classes Begin	Jan. 5 Jan. 12	Monday
Drop/Add for undergraduate and graduate level courses	Jan. 5-9 Jan. 12-16	Monday-Friday
Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr. Day- No Classes	Jan. 19	Monday
Last Day of Classes Prior to Spring Break	Feb. 27	Friday
Spring Break- No Classes	March 2-6	Monday-Friday
Classes Resume	March 9	Monday
Midterm	Feb. 26 March 9	Thursday Monday
Withdrawal Deadline	April 2 April 9	Thursday
MW Class Schedule in Effect	April 27	Monday
Classes End	April 27	Monday
Reading Day	April 28	Tuesday
Final Exams	April 29- May 5	Wednesday-Tuesday
Graduate Commencement	May 7	Thursday
Undergraduate Commencement	May 8	Friday
Grades Due	May 11	Monday, 12:00 p.m.

Fall Semester 2026
Based on 55 minutes classes (MWF), 80 minutes classes (MW, WF, MF, TR)

Classes Begin	Aug. 12 Aug. 17	Wednesday Monday
Drop/Add for undergraduate and graduate level courses	Aug. 12-18 Aug. 17-21	Wednesday-Tuesday Monday-Friday
Holiday: Labor Day – No Classes	Sept. 7	Monday
Midterm	Oct. 5	Monday
Fall Break- No Classes	Oct. 30	Friday
Withdrawal Deadline	November 11	Wednesday
Last Day of Classes Prior to Thanksgiving Break	Nov. 24 Nov. 20	Tuesday Friday
Holiday: Thanksgiving-No Classes	Nov. 25-27 Nov. 23-27	Wednesday-Friday Monday-Friday
Classes Resume	Nov. 30	Monday
WF Class Schedule in Effect	Dec. 1	Tuesday
Classes End	Dec. 1	Tuesday
Reading Day	Dec. 2	Wednesday
Final Exams	Dec. 3-9	Thursday-Wednesday
Commencement	Dec. 11	Friday
Grades Due	Dec. 14	Monday, 12:00 pm