

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

January 23, 1997

To: Deans, Chairs, Directors, and Masters  
From: Robert J. Zimmer, Associate Provost for Research and Education  
Re: New class hours schedule



... former  
Implementation  
Committee  
(~~at the~~  
~~Harvard~~)  
ad Anne  
Harville

Congratulations  
to all who  
worked on  
this!  
Mark

Beginning with courses to be offered in the Fall quarter of 1997, the University will institute changes in the weekly class hours schedule. These changes will apply to the Divisions and the College. Attached is a memo that is being distributed to all faculty in these units, describing these changes.

To implement this new schedule, the Department Chairs, Directors, and Masters in the Divisions and the College should provide oversight of their units' scheduling. Specifically, they are asked to:

- Communicate the new course hours to all relevant staff in your unit.
- Each year, review the proposed course list and time schedule before submission to ensure that:
  - a) listings conform to the new course hours;
  - b) there are not excessive internal scheduling conflicts of courses offered by the unit.
- Respond cooperatively to problematic inter-unit scheduling conflicts when they arise.
- Ensure that proper educational considerations are taken into account when deciding whether a course should be scheduled for 60 minutes, 90 minutes, or longer.

The Divinity School and the Pritzker School of Medicine, units with significant programmatic or space overlap with the Divisions and the College, will cooperate to the full extent possible in making their schedules compatible with the new hours.

If you have any questions concerning these changes, I will be happy to discuss them with you. Thanks for your help and cooperation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

To: Faculty of the Divisions and the College

From: Robert J. Zimmer, Associate Provost for Research and Education *RJZ*

Date: January 23, 1997

Re: New class hours schedule

Beginning with courses to be offered in the Fall quarter of 1997, the University will institute changes in the weekly class hours schedule. These changes will apply to the Divisions and the College. They have been endorsed by the Divisional Deans, the Dean of the College, the the College Council, and the Provost.

Our present class hours schedule and its implementation have caused difficulty for many years by creating excessive course conflicts. This has led to unnecessary restrictions in student course choices and in availability of classroom space. The new schedule is designed to improve this situation. A fuller discussion of the background is contained in an appendix to this memo.

New Course Hours

|               |                |                 |                 |                |                          |
|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 8:30-9:30 MWF | 9:30-10:30 MWF | 10:30-11:30 MWF | 11:30-12:30 MWF | 12:30-1:30 MWF | 1:30-2:30 MWF            |
|               |                |                 |                 |                | 1:30-3:00 MW, WF, or MF* |
| 9-10:30 TTH   |                | 10:30-12 TTH    |                 | 12-1:30 TTH    |                          |
|               |                |                 |                 | 1:30-3 TTH*    |                          |

\*After 3 p.m. classes may be scheduled for any combinations that equal three hours per week.

There are three essential components to the changes.

- All TTH time slots are shifted to be 30 minutes later, thus beginning at 9:00.
- A new flexible time slot of MWF 1:30-3:00 will be added. This can be used as either a 60 minute slot meeting three times/week, a 90 minute slot meeting two times/week (either MW, WF, or MF), or for part of a 3 hour seminar meeting 1:30-4:30.
- Each day after 3:00, there is complete flexibility in class scheduling.

These new hours will be implemented as follows:

- The new hours will apply to all courses in the College, and all courses cross-listed with the College.
- The new hours will apply to all graduate courses in the Divisions that are taught in 60 or 90 minute classes.
- Graduate courses that are taught in 3 hour seminar sessions can be scheduled for successive time slots (or after 3:00.)
- Courses requiring more than 3 hours per week should use either two standard time slots or time after 3:00.
- Scheduling of laboratories should conform to the spirit of the new schedule to the extent possible.
- The Provost will instruct the registrar to list courses only if they conform to these rules.

The Divinity School and the Pritzker School of Medicine, units with significant programmatic or space overlap with the Divisions and the College, will cooperate to the full extent possible in making their schedules compatible with the new hours.

If you have any questions, I will be happy to discuss them with you. Thanks for your help and cooperation in instituting these changes.

Appendix: Background to the new course hours schedule.

The specific phenomena that have led to excessive scheduling conflicts are:

- Over-scheduling of certain times slots (such as TTH 10-11:30) and under scheduling of others (such as TTH 8:30-10). See Table 1.
- Considerable use of non-standard time slots. An analysis of Fall, 1995 College courses indicates that almost 1/3 of College courses were held outside standard hours. Each such course conflicts with courses taught in two standard time slots. For examples of the resulting conflict in scheduling, see Table 2.
- Inadequacy of the number of 90 minute standard time slots. Relative to their availability, ninety minute slots have been more heavily subscribed by faculty than have 60 minute slots. This has contributed to the use of non-standard slots. See Table 3.

Table Number 1

| Registration in Standard Scheduled Courses by Starting Time (Autumn, 1995) |                              |                   |                              |                   |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Standard Starting  | M, W, F                      |                   | T, TH                        |                   |
|  | Under-graduate Registrations | Courses Scheduled | Under-graduate Registrations | Courses Scheduled |
| 8:30   | 737                          | 20                | 163                          | 8                 |
| 9:30   | 1417                         | 51                |                              |                   |
| 10:00  |                              |                   | 1479                         | 67                |
| 10:30  | 958                          | 46                |                              |                   |
| 11:00  |                              |                   |                              |                   |
| 11:30  | 916                          | 46                | 571                          | 31                |
| 12:00  |                              |                   |                              |                   |
| 12:30  | 574                          | 31                |                              |                   |
| 1:00   |                              |                   | 954                          | 44                |
| 1:30   | 464                          | 16                |                              |                   |
| 2:00   |                              |                   |                              |                   |
| 2:30   | 476                          | 22                | 519                          | 26                |

Table Number 2

| <u>Three Large Conflicting Patterns</u> |             |                   |                       |                           |             |                   |                       |
|---|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Standard Times</u>                   |             |                   |                       | <u>Non-Standard Times</u> |             |                   |                       |
| Days                                    | Times       | Courses Scheduled | College Registrations | Days                      | Times       | Courses Scheduled | College Registrations |
| MWF                                     | 12:30-1:30  | 31                | 574                   | MW                        | 1:00-2:20   | 19                | 460                   |
| MWF                                     | 1:30-2:30   | 16                | 464                   |                           |             |                   |                       |
| MWF                                     | 10:30-11:20 | 46                | 958                   | MW                        | 10:30-11:50 | 10                | 160                   |
| MWF                                     | 11:30-12:20 | 46                | 916                   |                           |             |                   |                       |
| MWF                                     | 1:30-2:20   | 16                | 464                   | MW                        | 1:30-2:50   | 8                 | 135                   |
| MWF                                     | 2:30-3:20   | 5                 | 130                   |                           |             |                   |                       |

Table Number 3

| Distribution of College courses and registration (Autumn, 1995) by length of time slot. (starting time 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.) |                                  |                   |                           |                                       |                                 |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Meeting Times (Hours)   | Standard Slots: Current Schedule | Number of Courses | Courses per Standard Slot | Number of Undergraduate Registrations | Registrations per Standard Slot |
| 1 per Meeting   | 7                                | 251               | 35.9                      | 5854                                  | 836.3                           |
| 1.5 per Meeting   | 5                                | 280               | 56.0                      | 5580                                  | 1116.0                          |

It is expected that the new schedule will have the following effects:

- i) Decrease unnecessary course and space conflicts caused by use of non-standard hours, uneven distribution of courses across time slots, and inadequacy of the number of 90 minute time slots.
- ii) Increase faculty flexibility in use of standard times for 90 minute classes by creating a standard 90 minute slot on MWF, and a second useful 90 minute slot on TTH mornings. This yields 5 standard 90 minute time slots, running fully between 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in contrast to the current 4 standard 90 minute slots 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., one of which is marginally utilized.