DON BRENNEIS  
Chair, Academic Senate  

JOHN TAMKUN  
Chair, Committee on Educational Policy  

DONALD SMITH  
Chair, Graduate Council  

Dear Don, John and Don,  

Re: Standard Time Slots for General Assignment Classrooms and Finals  

I request input from the Senate, including the Committee on Educational Policy and the Graduate Council, on two items related to standard scheduling times for classes and final examinations taking place in general assignment classrooms for partial amelioration of classroom capacity issues.  

1. Reduction of class meeting time to UC standard, reduction of passing time, and a 20% increase in time slots, with standard instruction ranging from 8:00 a.m. to 10:35 p.m.  
   Response requested if at all possible by January 22, 2016.  

2. Reduction of standard final examination block to 2 hours, and increase in offering days.  
   Response requested by March 1, 2016.  

As always, other times and days, including weekends, could be accommodated within unit space and, as available, general assignment space. Non-standard times can increase scheduling conflicts for students.  

Overview  
Since construction of the Humanities Lecture Hall eight years ago, our campus has seen a 16% increase in fall undergraduate enrollment with no concomitant increase in classroom space. During this period, state funding reductions have caused many programs to favor larger classes, typically with multiple teaching assistants. The peak utilization of our 6 largest classrooms, accounting for one third of classroom seats, was 140%\(^1\) in Fall 2014, 25% higher than 2007. 

The recent plans by the University of California to grow enrollments system-wide by 10,000 undergraduates ensure that our incoming undergraduate classes will be at or above the Fall 2014 levels, leading to even more impaction of our large lecture spaces.  

The impacts of the growth in enrollment are even more severe for final examinations. Thus, we also must look at adjustments to our final exam schedule that may include weekend days, reduced standard time slots, and other approaches.  

\(^1\) 100% utilization means that one student is enrolled per seat for 35 hours of instruction per week.
Class Meeting Time
In order to make room for additional time slots, we must consider the duration of standard class scheduling slots as well as the length of the standard instructional day. Over the longer term, the campus and course sponsoring agencies will also need to consider weekend instruction for sections, labs, and potentially courses.

As discovered by my predecessor Mark Cioc, UC Santa Cruz has the highest number of contact minutes per unit in the system: 42 minutes per unit per week in comparison to 37.5 at all other campuses. Rather than 187.5 minutes per week, our classes are scheduled for 210 minutes per week.

I propose that we reduce meeting times to match, as close as possible, these system-wide standards for our classes. I propose a reduction to 195 minutes for classes meeting 3 times a week (39 minutes per unit) and 190 minutes for classes meeting 2 times a week (38 minutes per unit). This proposal would shorten the length of each session of a class meeting three times a week by 5 minutes, and each session of a class meeting twice a week by 10 minutes.

Additionally, I propose modification of passing time to 15 minutes on all days, rather than 20 minutes between classes that meet three times a week, and 15 minutes between classes that meet twice a week.

Adding three time slots also necessitates a lengthening of the instructional day. My informal discussions with various constituencies, including faculty, advisors, and Business and Administrative Services, have not been supportive of beginning the first standard times slot before 8:00 a.m. (e.g., Riverside begins at 7:00 a.m.). Instead, extending the standard instructional day to 10:35 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday, 10:25 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, and 5:05 p.m. on Fridays, makes possible an increase from 15 to 18 time slots.

The proposed standard schedule is as follows:

- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Seven time slots of 195 weekly minutes in three sessions of 65 minutes.
  - 8:00 a.m.–9:05; 9:20–10:25; 10:40–11:45; 12:00 p.m.–1:05; 1:20–2:25; 2:40–3:45; and 4:00–5:05.
- Monday and Wednesday. Three time slots of 190 weekly minutes in two sessions of 95 minutes.
  - 5:20 p.m.–6:55; 7:10–8:45; and 9:00–10:35.
- Tuesday and Thursday. Eight time slots of 190 weekly minutes in two sessions of 95 minutes.

The proposed change in time slots would also affect scheduling of sections in general assignment classrooms.

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2 This and following discussions may be found at [https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/classslots](https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/classslots).
In order to reach a final decision on the preferred time slots for general assignment classrooms prior to Fall 2016 scheduling, input is requested by January 22, 2016. I regret the urgency of this request. Until recently, it was our campus’ expectation that the Fall 2016 class would be smaller than the Fall 2015 class, rather than significantly larger.

Final Examination Length and Schedule
An increase in class time slots means an increase in final examination time slots. We are beginning to consider a variety of issues related to the Fall 2016 final examination schedule.

- We are considering moving from a 4-day to 5-day final examination schedule. Such a change would reduce the likelihood of multi-test days for students, as well as increase our ability to, for example, schedule multiple rooms for an examination to increase spacing between students, or to schedule common finals for classes with multiple primary sections.
- Reduction of the standard time slot to 2 hours. As discussed in Chair Tamkun’s June 9, 2015, message to Senators, disability accommodations for testing can typically be 1.5 times to 2.0 times the standard examination period, that is 4.5 hours or 6.0 hours. The scheduling of rooms and protocols for 6.0-hour examinations is quite difficult, and as such, we wonder if it would make sense for the standard examination time slot to be reduced to 2.0 hours. UC Davis and UC Irvine use 2-hour final examination time slots.
- As we develop a new Curriculum Management system, we are considering an opt-in step in final examination time slot scheduling, so that we can be fully aware of which classrooms are really being used for an examination, and which are available as additional space for other classes.

Because final examination scheduling takes place after class section scheduling, initial thoughts would be appreciated by March 1, 2016. I expect that working out the details on this issue will require continued collaboration between the Senate and the Division of Undergraduate Education, as well as course-sponsoring agencies.

Thank you,

Richard Hughey
Vice Provost and Dean
of Undergraduate Education

cc: Campus Provost / Executive Vice Chancellor Galloway
    Vice Chancellors
    Vice Provosts
    Deans
    University Registrar Sanger
    Associate Registrar Claxton
    Director Gubash