

## Scheduling Procedure, Strategy, and Best Practices

### I. PURPOSE

To codify the SLCC scheduling procedures and guide Academic Administrators and Scheduling Coordinators in making strategic scheduling decisions.

### II. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Strategic scheduling practices are paramount for improving student access, retention, and success. To this end, it is incumbent upon Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) to implement and support a procedure that optimizes the scheduling experience and considers all stakeholders. Indeed, scheduling decisions should not be siloed affairs, given the interdependence among participants and subsequent ripple effects and tradeoffs that ensue. Consequently, to meet student demand and the college strategic goals centered around enrollment and completion, course scheduling decisions need to be taken seriously, made strategically, and executed with the understanding that the decisions in one Department or School will impact students in other disciplines.

### III. PROCEDURES

**1. Schedule Development.** The Scheduling Office constructs and disseminates a schedule that is data-informed, student-centric, and adjusted systematically. Furthermore, responsible personnel adhere to clear, well-established procedures (e.g., timeline and production calendar). It is imperative for all stakeholders to recognize that *a lot* goes into creating and adjusting a course schedule that considers enrollment trends, departmental needs, advising, General Education, Area of Study/Pathways, program requirements, campus/site goals and community interests. In short, academic administrators, faculty, advisors, support staff, and students will be presented with a schedule that has considered a myriad of factors and perspectives.

**2. Edits Process.** Once a schedule is generated, opportunities for collaborative, meaningful dialogue abound. In this regard, the [Schedule Production Calendar](#) provides a clear, mandatory timeline for the Edits Process. Part and parcel to this cooperative effort is the initial, First Round Edits meeting with the Director of Scheduling to examine the existing schedule for additional optimization. To this end, and considering other related issues, please note the following, proposed directives:

#### **Required Actions for Associate Deans/Department Chairs:**

- Follow the Schedule Production Calendar
- Meet with the Director of Scheduling for initial edits and schedule optimization.
- Make all substantial scheduling changes (day, time, location, mode of delivery) before the first day of student registration.
- Discontinue or suspend defunct courses

- Follow the bell schedule

**Recommendations for Associate Deans/Department Chairs:**

- Consider the following when adjusting course offerings decisions:
  - Historical enrollment fill rate data
  - Fiscal viability of carrying a section
  - Site-Specific, Programmatic needs
  - Offering 12, 8, and/or 4-week course sections
- Avoid requesting program electives and low demand courses to be scheduled during peak class times (10 am to 1 pm and 5:30 to 6:50 pm).
- Expand waitlist to ~13 students, which may warrant adding another class.
- Use the “reserve” status option if you are unsure about a section offering in the early scheduling process. This will allow one to have the section created and ready to be activated, but it will not be viewable to students.

**3. Enrollment Management.** To optimize scheduling, enrollment, and student success outcomes, it is critical for Academic Administrators and Scheduling Coordinators to monitor and engage proactively with enrollment data; and dialogue with the Director of Scheduling, in anticipation of the new semester. To this end, and considering other related issues, please note the following, proposed directives:

**Required Actions for Associate Deans/Department Chairs:**

- Complete Run/Cancel not later than 7 days prior to the first day of class.
- Actively engage with enrollment data updates and consider recommendations from the Scheduling Office and the Data and Science Analytics (DSA) department, particularly within the 3 weeks prior to classes starting.
- Send emails to students affected by canceled classes, and offer other options. The Scheduling Office can assist in providing alternate schedule section offerings that could be outside your departmental offerings. This is particularly important when canceling General Education requirements that are offered by several departments.

**Recommendations for Associate Deans/Department Chairs:**

- Complete Run/Cancel 14-21 days prior to classes starting, recognizing that firm dates may be established due to relevant factors (e.g., full-time faculty load deadlines, summer/holiday breaks).
- Employ rubrics or proven tactics for making Run/Cancel decisions (see Appendix for examples)

- Add new sections of courses with high fill rates
- Encourage faculty to check email occasionally during breaks, particularly within 2-3 weeks prior to classes starting
- Change elements of term (e.g., 12-week, 2<sup>nd</sup> half) and/or delivery modalities (hybrid/online) as alternatives to canceling a section when student enrollment data do not suggest a clear-cut “cancel.”

#### IV. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

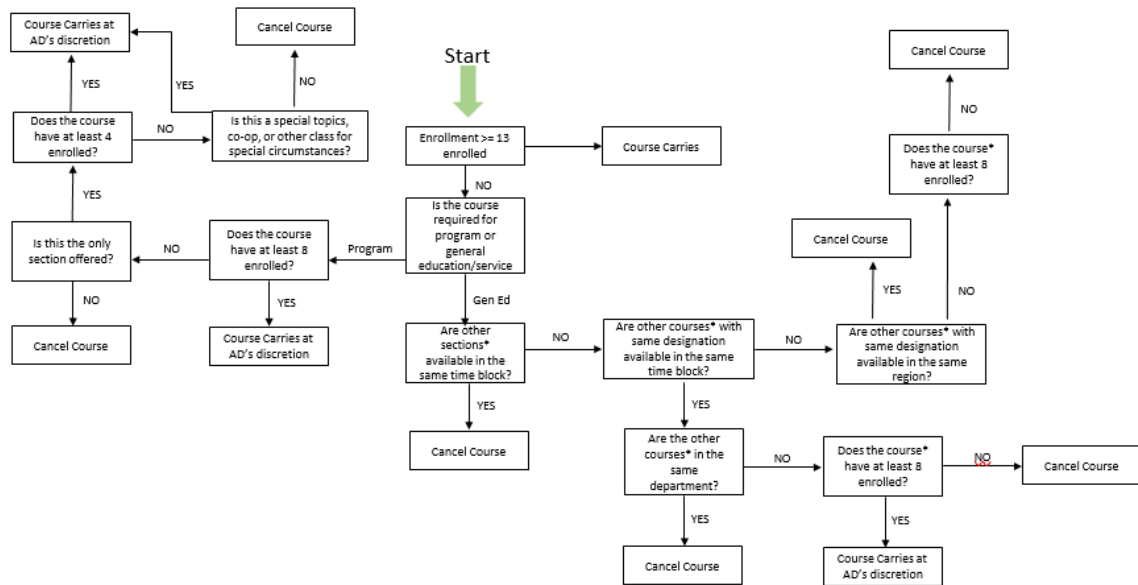
This scheduling handbook is a living document and, consequently, may be systematically updated to address recommendations from the Enrollment Council, the Scheduling Office, DSA, Associate Deans/Department Chairs, and other administrative entities; as well as more significant, paradigmatic shifts in scheduling strategy at the institution.

## APPENDIX

**Enrollment Management tools and tactics:**

- A. When considering the “Rule of 13” or the accepted cut-off point for Run/Cancel decisions, a better approach might be to be more proactive over the course of the scheduling period. For example, a “funnel” approach to enrollment management has been suggested, whereby sections that are not otherwise subject to special provisions, with less than five students enrolled, are canceled at Day 1 minus 3 weeks; sections with less than ten students enrolled are culled at Day 1 minus 2 weeks; and at Day 1 minus 1 week the final cut is made for sections with less than 13 enrolled.
- B. [Academic Insights Dashboard](#)
- C. Dean Craig Caldwell’s *Course Cancellation Guide* (see next page)

## Low enrollment course cancellation decision process



\* Assumes that the other course or section meets enrollment criteria. If the other course or section is also under-enrolled, then the Associate Dean must apply good judgement in canceling one of the courses so that only one under-enrolled class emerges from the decision process

\*\* Refer to the definition of Time Block

\*\*\* Refer to the definition of regional campus

### Definition of Regional Campuses

Individual campuses and learning centers are grouped into Regional Campuses which are defined as:

- North Region (Westpointe, Library Square, South City)
- Central Region (West Valley, Taylorsville, Meadowbrook)
- South Region (Jordan, Miller)

### Definition of a Time Block

Each Regional Campus is considered independently. The Bell Schedule identifies start times for typical 3 credit courses. These are expected to be the majority of courses scheduled. Using the start times for MW, TR, FS classes there are 5 time blocks for scheduling at each Regional Campus:

Time Block 1 - early morning	7:00—8:20 8:30—9:50
Time Block 2 - late morning	10:00—11:20 11:30—12:50
Time Block 3 - afternoon	1:00—2:20 2:30—3:50
Time Block 4 - early evening	4:00—5:20 5:30—6:50
Time Block 5 - late evening	7:00—8:20 8:30—9:50