Provost Guidelines for Class Scheduling
(Approved by the Provost – 8/29/2017)

Standard Class Scheduling Patterns *(Standard Meeting Times)*

- Standard class scheduling patterns allow for maximum access to class offerings for students and facilitate the most efficient use of classrooms.
- The University has two standard class scheduling patterns:

    - 50-minute classes beginning on the hour on Monday (M), Wednesday (W), and Friday (F)
    - 75-minute classes beginning at the following times on Tuesday (T) and Thursday (H):

        8:00 A.M., 9:30 A.M., 11:00 A.M., 12:30 P.M., 2:00 P.M., 3:30 P.M., 5:00 P.M., 6:30 P.M., 8:00 P.M., and 9:30 P.M.

- The following is the **day chart** of the standard class scheduling patterns (with **prime time** hours shaded):

Period	Time	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1	8:00 - 8:50			
2	9:00 - 9:50			
3	10:00 - 10:50			
4	11:00 - 11:50			
5	12:00 - 12:50			
6	1:00 - 1:50			
7	2:00 - 2:50			
8	3:00 - 3:50			
9	4:00 - 4:50			

Period	Time	Tuesday	Thursday
16	8:00 - 9:15		
17	9:30 - 10:45		
18	11:00 - 12:15		
19	12:30 - 1:45		
20	2:00 - 3:15		
21	3:30 - 4:45		

- Classes that meet the standard scheduling patterns are understood to be:

    - Three-credit courses (400 level and below) with three contact hours
    - Containing ONLY lecture and discussion meetings (i.e. labs, experiential components, and TBAs such as individual study and online courses are not included)
    - Scheduled in the University's standard **day-chart** scheduling patterns (i.e. periods 1-9 and 16-21)
    - Meeting only once in any given day

- The University's standard class scheduling patterns allow for maximum access to class offerings for students and facilitate the most efficient use of classrooms. Classes that do not conform to the standard class scheduling meeting times result in incomplete use of classrooms because they overlap multiple times and block full use of the rooms.
- Classroom scheduling priority will be given to classes that meet during the standard meeting times. Classes scheduled outside of these standard patterns will be slotted for classroom assignment after all classes in standard meeting times have been assigned rooms. These classes also run the risk of not optimizing classroom availability, including having no room available.
- Classes using a one-day-only pattern and meeting for more than normal duration (e.g., three hour seminars, etc.) should be scheduled in non-prime time hours, particularly on Fridays.

- Units are permitted to request classes outside of the standard class scheduling patterns. Justifications are required (from the Colleges for undergraduate courses, and from the Department Chairs/Program Directors for graduate courses) for these requests, and must be submitted to the Office of the Provost before the requested classes can be scheduled in rooms. Consideration should be given to how such an arrangement might impact the final exam schedule (e.g. T 9:30 - 12:00 and H 9:30 - 12:00 = TH 9:30 - 10:45 and TH 11:00 - 12:15).
- Classes being scheduled outside of the standard meeting times should make every effort to use Departmental rooms first, and be scheduled at non-prime time hours.
- Instructors requesting room accommodations due to disability must file a request with the Office of Faculty Affairs, which will inform the Office of the Registrar concerning reasonable classroom accommodations, including the duration of such.
- The Office of the Registrar reserves the right to remove pre-assigned spaces if:

    - The room can be better utilized by another class
    - The time of the class prevents maximum use of the room throughout the day
    - A room change is requested due to disability accommodations

- Classroom priority agreements will be reviewed every three years, and updated if appropriate. Room priority ends at the end of the online scheduling process.

Seat Utilization Goal

- The Office of the Registrar will attempt to maximize the use of classroom space. An overall room use rate of 67%, or higher, is required by the State of Maryland, not to exceed 80%. Units are asked to assist in reaching the seat utilization goal by conforming to standard class scheduling patterns. Classes where seats offered are less than 80% of room capacity may be moved to smaller rooms to accommodate larger classes, including after students have registered.

Scheduling Distribution Goals

- The most popular times for scheduling classes have traditionally been Mondays through Thursdays at the prime time periods. Unfortunately, having too many classes offered on these days and times regularly results in scheduling conflicts for students (which limit class access, and could negatively impact student success), and in not having enough general purpose classrooms available to meet the high demand during these popular days and times. In response, scheduling distribution goals have been established. Each unit offering undergraduate courses should achieve the following target goals for its classes:

Goal #	Target Achievement in Standard Meeting Patterns
1	No more than 70% scheduled on MWF
2	No more than 45% scheduled on TH
3	At least 10% scheduled in Periods 1 and 16
4	At least 20% scheduled after Periods 7 and 20

- Each unit offering undergraduate courses must meet the scheduling distribution goals at the time of submission of its schedule to the Office of the Registrar.
- Meeting patterns scheduled into departmentally-owned spaces do not count towards the 10% and 20% limits.
- A priority rank will be assigned to each unit on the basis of the distribution of its requests across all standard meeting times. A lower priority rank may result in the need for a unit to change meeting time, day, building, or classroom requests.

Guidelines to Achieve Scheduling Distribution Goals

- Having consistent scheduling patterns makes it more efficient for students to plan their schedules (allowing for more back-to-back classes), and makes it easier for the Office of the Registrar to locate available classrooms in which to place classes each term.
- Class schedules for an upcoming term begins by using the schedule from the previous like term as a starting point (e.g. using the Fall 2016 schedule to plan the Fall 2017 schedule), and then making adjustments as

needed. The Office of the Registrar refers to this practice as "prior like term roll over." While this practice can make the process of planning class schedules faster and easier, using historic classroom assignments and day/time scheduling patterns may not support the campus target goals for scheduling patterns and classroom utilization.

- Units must evenly distribute classes (including discussions) throughout the day (i.e. across class hours) and week (i.e. day patterns) based on the scheduling distribution goals. Non-conforming units must change class meeting times to meet distribution goals.
- Where possible, classes that meet once per week should be scheduled on Fridays, or during off-peak hours (i.e., before Periods 3 and 17, or after Periods 7 and 20), to the extent that these classes do not roll into prime time hours. This leaves greater blocks of time when classrooms can be used consistently by other classes that require classrooms multiple days per week.
- If a once-a-week class must be scheduled during the Monday through Thursday timeframe, the unit should make an effort to place another once-a-week class in the same classroom at the same time, but on a corresponding meeting pattern day. For example, if a 3-hour long class is scheduled from 2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. on a Tuesday, the unit should schedule another 3-hour long class in the same room at the same time on Thursday to balance the use of the room to match the standard TH class scheduling pattern.
- Classes with unique scheduling patterns (e.g. MW) make it more challenging to schedule a classroom on other days of the week at the same time and make it challenging for students to fit other classes around this type of unusual pattern. If a unique scheduling pattern is needed, the unit should make an effort to request classes with other unusual patterns in the same classroom at the same time on other days of the week. For example, if a class requests to meet on MW 11:00 – 12:15, should they be offering any, the unit should also consider requesting a one-day-a-week Friday (1 or 2-credit class) to be in that same room. This leaves greater blocks of time when the classroom can be used for other classes.

Strategies Units may Use to Achieve Seat and Scheduling Distribution Goals

- Identify faculty who favor the opportunity to teach early in the morning, or later in the day.
- Encourage faculty to take into consideration the number of class sections taught within a week and the time the class is offered (e.g. it may be more desirable to teach an early morning class if the class meets fewer times per week).
- Consider scheduling required, or popular, classes during non-prime time hours (e.g. before Periods 3 and 17, after Periods 7 and 20, or on Fridays)--students do register in classes that are either required, or popular, regardless of when they are offered during the day or week.
- Consider scheduling discussions, seminars, or other classes that meet only once a week on Fridays, particularly since many classrooms are underutilized on Fridays.
- Review each classroom assignment and class scheduling pattern, when preparing class schedules, to ensure they meet the target goals for seat and scheduling distribution.
- Reports that compare each unit's performance against the scheduling distribution goals and classroom size goals will be made available in the Office of the Registrar Report Library. Units are strongly encouraged to review these reports when planning class schedules.