



Academic and Event Scheduling (Abridged)

Approved by the Provost; August 15, 2023

Implemented by the Space Use Advisory Committee and the Scheduling Executive Committee

POLICY PURPOSE

As with all space, instructional space belongs to the University and is a resource that should be actively managed to provide optimal value and support mission-driven activities of the institution.

This policy:

- Implements the faculty's goal of ensuring that students have as much flexibility as possible in developing their schedules so that they can access the full range of educational opportunities offered by the university.
- Promotes fair and efficient stewardship of institutional resources, including classroom facilities, equipment, technical support staff, and administrative staff associated with room scheduling activities, in accordance with the Cornell University *Space Management Principles* approved by the Capital Funding and Priorities Committee on April 24, 2012.

This document is an abbreviated version of the policy; for more specific guidance and procedural details, please reference the full [Academic and Event Scheduling Policy](#).

CENTRAL SCHEDULING TOOLS

- [University Policy 2.7, Reporting the Use of Facilities](#) defines room types by name and by room type code, **assigns units the responsibility for recording and maintaining accurate physical space inventory** (i.e., room features) in the Facilities Inventory System (FIS) maintained by Facilities and Campus Services.
- The University provides and maintains central scheduling tools:
 - Scheduling@Cornell for classes and events, and
 - Microsoft® Outlook for meetings. Simply defined, meetings are events with an invited list of known attendees. Meetings often occur in conference rooms.

Spaces Included in Scheduling@Cornell

The following spaces, collectively identified as *instructional and event spaces*, shall be included in Scheduling@Cornell:

1. Main campus¹ institutional outdoor spaces on a list vetted by institutional risk, security, and event staff as appropriate venues for events.

¹ The main campus of Cornell University is in Ithaca, New York and includes Cornell owned and occupied land and buildings between Hanshaw Road to the north and Snyder Hill Road to the south and University Avenue to the west and Game Farm Road to the east. Facilities and land along Freese Road immediately south of Hanshaw Road are included within the main campus. In the Facilities Inventory System, this main campus is captured in Precinct 29.

2. Main campus rooms that meet the [Policy 2.7 definition](#) for:
 - a. Classroom facilities (room type code 110),
 - b. Assembly (room type code 610), or
 - c. Meeting room² (room type code 680).
3. Any location with more than one lecture (LEC), seminar (SEM), discussion (DIS) and/or Design Studio (DES) sections a semester, when the space is clearly of a character intended for general purpose instruction, no matter how classified in the FIS.³
4. Event venues: Spaces not otherwise identified by 1-3 above at any Cornell site that host events that require registration based on risk analysis.

Locations identified in categories 1-3 will be fully scheduled in Scheduling@Cornell. All locations identified under 2 and 3 above will be identified in 25Live® as “general-purpose” instructional spaces and will be automatically included in the 25Live® optimizer, S25.

For locations identified in #4, use of these event venues for registered events must be recorded in Scheduling@Cornell. All other uses of event venues are optionally scheduled in Scheduling@Cornell.

New required locations, created by renovations or construction projects, must be added to the system when the location receives a certificate of occupancy. General-purpose type instructional spaces identified under 2 and 3 above should be fully loaded with features for the semester immediately following legal occupancy.

Exceptions to inclusion in 25Live® and S25. In 2023, the Scheduling Executive Committee reviewed identified acceptable exceptions to inclusion in 25Live® and S25, many of which are temporary and will require mitigation over time to increase access to these spaces; these exceptions will remain in discussion with the units. The permanent exceptions will be noted and honored until the location is renovated or a change of use results in reconsideration.

Conference rooms. The Scheduling Executive Committee will lead a review of the use of conference rooms for classes and suggest modifications to the existing conference room portfolio as appropriate. Future revisions to this policy based on the conference room review are possible.

ACADEMIC SEMESTER SCHEDULING PRIORITIES

S25 room scheduling follows in sequence beginning with Tier I, classes. Required adjustments of classes may need to pre-empt all other events. Events in each tier may preempt all events in all subsequent tiers.

² Meeting rooms are often confused with conference rooms. Although a meeting room may be assigned to a specific organizational unit, it is more available and open to various groups and generally functions in more configurations than a conference room. Meeting rooms are also used more frequently for events with both invited and public attendees. Often, the events held in conference rooms include known lists of invitees. Meeting rooms may be configured like classrooms (i.e., with participant focus to the front of the room) and may be equipped with a variety of furniture types. Department seminars are often held in meeting rooms. Conference rooms (room type code 350), defined as those rooms serving an office complex (i.e., considered by organization (a department or unit) or by physical grouping (a group of related office workspaces)) and used primarily for meetings and unit activities that are not directly related to instruction and with known attendees, are not required to be scheduled in Scheduling@Cornell.

³ See the Exceptions section in full [Academic and Event Scheduling Policy](#) for details regarding locations that host general-purpose type classes but are clearly of a character to support a primary purpose of more specialized instruction.

Priority Tier	Includes
I	Classes (see Class Scheduling Order for priorities within this Tier)
II	Department Seminars Faculty Meetings
III	Class-related Events: TA/office hours, tutoring sessions, breakouts, etc.
IV	Alternative Testing Program
V	Central Administration Events (admissions, Cornell Days, career services, Board of Trustees, etc.)
VI	Student Organization Events

INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE SCHEDULING⁴

This scheduling section has the following three objectives aimed at achieving conflict-free schedules for students and faculty and efficient use of classroom resources:

1. **Apply standardization to pre-assignment of classrooms:** Flexibility is needed to support the rooming of all classes; optimal placement of classes university-wide is improved by maximum room availability. Pre-assignments block the optimizer (S25) and can limit effective class placement. Pre-assignments in S25 locations should be used exceptionally, to meet accessibility needs of an instructor or student or for access to specialized equipment or adjacent facilities. A process for optimizing the use of active learning locations for active learning classes is in development and will be promulgated through a revision to this section when available. Some situations, including low seat fills, may require the removal or overwrite of an S25 pre-assignment request.

Pre-assignments are limited to these circumstances: classes; locations with instructional capacity <150; adherence to the standard meeting pattern; meet a seat fill of >75% (without inflating enrollment projections – class caps will be monitored to guard against inflation). Department seminars and faculty meetings can be pre-assigned in non-S25 rooms provided they align with standard meeting patterns.

2. **Require adherence to faculty-endorsed standard meeting days and times:** Offering classes based on a standard meeting pattern of days and times is a critical feature of an effective scheduling system. The lack of adherence to standard days, start and stop times, and class durations creates conflicts in student schedules and in addition can effectively block a room for two or more standard time periods, preventing other classes from using the room.

Faculty must work with their department chairperson to make every effort within the academic unit to remove or mitigate the circumstances that might prevent adherence to this objective. Only when local resolution proves impossible may the faculty member request, in writing, an exception after first being approved by the unit Associate Dean, who must then seek final approval from OUR. Scheduling policy exceptions that are granted are valid only for the semester

⁴ This policy section applies to all undergraduate and graduate non-professional classes meeting during the regular class day as defined by the current meeting pattern (see Appendix ISS.1 and Courses of Study) on the Ithaca campus during the fall and spring terms. Law School, Johnson Graduate School of Management, or Veterinary College classes meeting during the regular class day in spaces under the stewardship of an undergraduate college.

for which they are approved. Faculty will not be granted a permanent exception. A non-conforming class without an approved exception will not be entered into the Student Information System.

3. **Distribute classes efficiently across scheduling blocks:** Undergraduate and graduate non-professional classes held on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Fridays that meet during the regular class day should distribute enrollment across four blocks of time.

Block	Class Enrollment Distribution	Classes that start between
1	At least 20%	7:30 am – 9:59 am
2	No more than 30%	10:00 am – 11:59 am
3	No more than 30%	12:00 pm or 1:59 pm
4	At least 20%	2:00 pm or later

Classes held in classrooms, meeting rooms, and assembly areas are included in the class distribution objective. Laboratory and studio classes are exempt.

Class Scheduling Order. During bulk scheduling, OUR will schedule classes into classrooms in the following order.

- The largest classes (those with expected enrollments of 300 or more) will be scheduled first regardless of their meeting pattern.
- Remaining gateway classes will be scheduled next.
- The remainder of classes will be scheduled based on expected enrollment (largest to smallest) and the weekly meeting frequency (three or more meetings vs. fewer than three meetings).
- Classes approved to meet at non-standard days and/or times will be scheduled last.

Release of Rooms. OUR will monitor enrollments and may ask a class to relocate if enrollments do not align with room capacity. Unites are encouraged to monitor for low enrollment sections and combine sections as possible or relocate low enrollment sections to more appropriately sized spaces and are expected to update reservations for classes that relocate. Reservations should not continue when the class is no longer using the space.

ACCESS TO SPACE FOR EVENTS

On weekdays during the fall and spring terms, academic classes, preliminary and final exams have scheduling priority for classrooms, meeting rooms, and other general-purpose type spaces. Classrooms and other event spaces⁵ may be reserved for non-class events after the first week of classes. At all other times (outside of academic terms and on weekends), spaces may be reserved by group size.

Unit stewards of space are expected to make space available to requesters according to the procedures described in the [full policy document](#), which detail best practices, reservation and registration procedures, cancellation guidelines, special considerations for summer and evening reservations, expectations for seat fill, guidance for resolving scheduling conflicts, and a feedback system for reporting irresponsible space use.

⁵ Reservable spaces are further explained in the Glossary.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

OUR will make available a series of scheduling effectiveness reports to monitor adherence to the standard meeting patterns, classroom utilization, and class distribution objectives and thereby assist the responsible units with compliance with this policy. The reports will be generated and can be used throughout the scheduling cycle to track compliance as classes and classrooms are scheduled.

After the end of each semester, scheduling effectiveness reports for that semester will be provided to college Associate Deans and Registrars. Classes will be monitored, and reports made available to ensure that expected enrollments are accurately based on a two-year rolling average of actual enrollments.

OUR is developing scheduling effectiveness and trend reports to share with the units, the Scheduling Executive Committee, and the University's Space Use Advisory Committee (SUAC). Further consideration of these reports will be developed in future iterations of this policy.

EXCEPTIONS PROCESS

Exceptions to this policy will not be granted based on individual faculty teaching preferences or prior historical scheduling practices. **Exceptions are on a semester-by-semester basis** except for permanent exceptions to inclusion in 25Live® based on room type. Any exception granted will be closely tailored to preserve the ability of students to schedule their courses without unnecessary conflicts, and to ensure good stewardship of University resources.

OUR will publish operational procedures for submission and review of exception requests.

GOVERNANCE

The Provost is the steward of instructional space and is responsible for ensuring that this space supports the academic mission and needs of the University. The Provost, deans, and division leaders work collaboratively to promote optimal physical environments for engaged learning and teaching. The Provost has the final authority for decisions regarding instructional space.

Responsibility and accountability for management of instructional space are delegated to deans and division leaders. Deans and division leaders are responsible for the efficient use and active management of instructional spaces within their units.

The Scheduling Executive Committee includes representation from the Vice Provost for Enrollment, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, and the Vice President for Budget and Planning and oversees this policy, including interpretation, periodic reviews and revisions, and establishing procedures for exceptions.

RELATED UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

University policies are published by the [Policy Office](#) and space and scheduling-related policies are published by the [Division of Budget and Planning](#). Four documents of relevance to this Academic and Event Scheduling policy include:

- Faculty Handbook, <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/the-new-faculty-handbook/>
- [Fees for Internal Users of Cornell Physical Space](#) establishes consistent procedures to determine and charge space rental fees to internal users and describes the circumstances under which a fee may be charged. An Interdepartmental Fee Committee approves the amount of space rental fees.
- Policy 2.7, [Reporting the Use of Facilities](#), requires units to maintain accurate and complete inventories of unit space. This policy identifies room type codes and room type descriptions and provides detailed explanations of each room type.
- [Space Management Principles as Applied to Cornell Instructional Space](#)

CONTACTS

Academic and event scheduling website: <http://scheduling.cornell.edu>

Capital and Space Planning, 607/255-2557, spaceplanning@cornell.edu

Conference & Event Services: confserv@cornell.edu

University Registrar, 607/255-4232, scheduling@cornell.edu, <https://registrar.cornell.edu>, <https://scheduling.cornell.edu/>

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, 607/255-3062, ovpue@cornell.edu