

Date: February 14, 2022

To: UNM Central Campus Deans, Department Chairs, and Academic Program Directors, Dean of Law

From: James Paul Holloway, Provost *JPH*

Cc: HSC Deans and Branch Chancellors, Carolyn Gutierrez

Re: Proportionate Scheduling for Fall 2022 Courses on UNM Albuquerque Central Campus

Thank you for all amazing efforts on behalf of our students to manage course scheduling during the covid pandemic. As we look towards Fall 2022 we should start to think more strategically about the course modalities we are selecting, and a focus on student retention, success, and graduation, particularly at the undergraduate level. Over the last two years we have balanced more towards public health, and the negative impacts on student success have been notable (DFW rates are high in remote courses, and overall student retention rates are down). Fortunately with the evolution of the public health crisis and the development of new tools and understanding to manage it, we can anticipate a renewed focus on advancing student success, including through in-person engagement. While our predictive powers are imperfect, we should anticipate that our modality decisions will be driven more by these student-focused considerations relative to public health considerations.

Because Fall 2022 scheduling is happening now, we will roll out a two-phase process, outlined below, to encourage more strategic thinking on course modalities and to enhance student success.

Note that these requirements, incentives, and plans are focused on central campus units. Note also that while most of the Phase 1 goals focus on undergraduate course scheduling, some do address graduate courses.

Phase 1:

For Fall 2022 schedules, programs and departments should meet the following three scheduling targets (A, B, and C below), largely restoring the number of non-MOP/AOP sections to pre-pandemic levels, with a focus on delivery of online sections that have historically been offered online, are part of an identified online degree program, or are fully developed as peer-reviewed online sections. See <http://online.unm.edu/online-degrees/index.html> for a listing of identified online degrees. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure instructional continuity for students in existing programs, reduce student scheduling conflicts, and ensure that undergraduate students may choose face-to-face sections for most of their lower division coursework.

Departments and Programs meeting proportionate scheduling targets will receive a one-time incentive funding allocation that can be used at discretion of the department/program chair (see below). Departmental schedules that fall significantly short of these targets will be returned for revision or justification. The Fall 2022 schedule deadline for first DESR draft was February 8, 2022. Unfortunately, DESRs that have already been submitted show disproportionate numbers of online and hybrid courses. The deadline for incorporating proportionate scheduling targets in Fall 2022 DESRs is March 4, 2022.

To address the targets, the total number of sections and proportions should be calculated excluding 1-person ARR enrollment sections (for example, problems, independent study, thesis, dissertation) and excluding MOP/AOP sections (which constitute about 4% of the current online curriculum). Home departments of cross-listed courses should include in their section calculations the sections of the cross-listed course offered under the cross-listing department course number. Conversely, departments providing a section for cross-list with a class offered by another department should not include that section in their total count.

A. Target Proportions of Face-to-Face, Online Max, and Hybrid courses:

Goal: Address negative impact on student outcomes of pandemic expansion of Online Max and Hybrid courses; foster evaluation and planning around curricular role of Online Max and Hybrid courses in academic programs.

- Lower Division Courses: at least 84% of lower division sections should be F2F and no more than 16% may be Online and Hybrid (excluding MOP/AOP sections and 1-person ARR sections from total);
- Upper Division Courses: at least 77% of upper division sections should be F2F and no more than 23% may be Online and Hybrid (excluding MOP/AOP sections and 1-person ARR sections from total);
- Hybrid Courses must be true hybrid courses, with at least one day a week of F2F; instructors should not represent the on-campus instruction as optional or refer students to the LMS as a substitute for the on-campus instruction (such a course is not a hybrid course, it is online). Please provide a pedagogical justification for proposing more than 5% Hybrid courses (excluding MOP/AOP sections and 1-person ARR sections from total);
- Programs and departments should move toward separating MOP/AOP programs and sections from non-MOP/AOP online sections.

B. Target Proportions of MWF and TR with time ranges:

Goal: Distribute undergraduate courses more evenly across the weekly schedule to minimize time conflicts that make it difficult for students to enroll in courses needed for graduation. Consider impact of tightly clustered courses on graduate students.

For Undergraduate Courses:

- TR: 49% or lower of sections should be TR
- MWF: 50% or more of sections should be MWF

- On pattern: 90% or more and 100% at on pattern start times

For Graduate Courses:

- Courses scheduled between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. should be 80% on pattern.

For Professional schools/programs: consider scheduling patterns carefully relative to the populations you serve.

- Overall (excluding Professional schools/programs): Distribute course times equally without concentrating the majority of course start times between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Fewer than 30% of course sections should have start times between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

C. Target number of Cancel/Reschedule and New Course Creation after Fall 2022 schedule is opened for registration on April 11, 2022:

Goal: Reduce the total number of course changes that occur after the schedule is published from the current proportion of 31% of all sections to 5%, so that instructors, students, and staff can plan and not suffer from last-minute cancellations or changes.

- No more than 5% of the total number of sections (excluding 1-person ARR courses) can be rescheduled or new classes added after Fall 2022 registration opens on April 11, 2022;
- Adding or opening sections of an existing class to address additional enrollment for an existing class is, of course, acceptable, and may occur in excess of the 5% limit;
- Low enrollment sections should be cancelled on August 11, 2022 and advising should be informed of canceled sections so that advisors can work proactively with affected students.

Incentive Structure:

Program or Department meets one target: \$3,500

Program or Department meets two targets: \$5,000

Program or Department meets three targets: \$7,000

Rationale:

Since the onset of the pandemic in Spring 2020, the number of sections that UNM has delivered in fully remote online and hybrid modalities has, of necessity, scaled up considerably and now constitutes a third of all sections on Albuquerque campuses. We have seen an 18.4% increase in online headcount from Spring 2021 to Spring 2022 and online SCH currently make up 37.2% of all SCH at UNM Albuquerque campuses. Prior to the pandemic, in Fall 2019, online courses, including MOP/AOPs but excluding one-person ARR sections, made up 21% of all sections. We have all invested in a tremendous effort to ensure some instructional continuity for our students, along with continuity in access to support resources. Initial evaluation of the effort indicates that

we accomplished our crisis goal: we kept a majority of students on track toward degree, although overall retention is down. It also indicates that many of our students, and especially our lower division students, do not thrive with schedules made up of a mixture of online courses when their experience is not coordinated within a planned online degree program (an MOP or AOP) and with an online program support structure. For the period between Spring 2020 and Fall 2021, an average of 81.80% lower division students per semester in F2F courses completed these courses successfully, while an average of only 72.81% lower division students per semester in online asynchronous courses completed these courses successfully. The number of non-MOP/AOP lower division online courses tripled between Fall 2019 and Fall 2021, and our lower-division students are less likely to complete these courses successfully.

A Spring 2021 survey of all UNM advisors, as well as student feedback in fora with the president and provost, indicate that UNM's history of scheduling the majority of classes between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays hinders degree progress by pushing students into courses that simply "fit their schedules" rather than courses that meet their interests and degree program requirements. This correlates with national studies conducted by AACRO and other organizations. Moreover, on the Albuquerque campuses, 31% of all sections were changed after the schedule was posted for Spring 2022 making it challenging for instructors, advisors, and students to plan programming, supports, costs, and attendance appropriately. Schedule challenges push students to institutions outside of UNM when they seek required classes that don't present time conflicts. Off-pattern courses create potential conflicts with two or three other classes. UNM also has a residency requirement for first-year students that is incompatible in spirit and outcomes with a heavily online first-year curriculum. Of course planned online programs with appropriate student supports and addressing the needs of specific cohorts of students (for example, working students, rural students, or students who are care givers) can be highly effective. But unplanned assemblages of online courses have eroded the gains we have made over the past decade in improving our retention and graduation rates. Moreover, a proportionate and balanced curriculum has the potential to generate opportunity for alternative teaching approaches that may facilitate research and work/life balance needs, as explored in Phase 2.

Phase 2:

Goals: Improve student access to courses and decrease time to degree; coordinate scheduling in areas in which students may be taking courses across multiple departments and programs (for example, pre-health); improve enrollment and retention through better schedule design; build innovative scheduling solutions that facilitate instructor collaboration as well as improve teaching/research balance to ensure our mission of knowledge generation is enhanced.

Programs and Departments with the strongest proportionate scheduling in Fall 2022 will be selected for participation in a pilot program to learn lessons and strengthen overall schedule design. Programs and departments with the weakest proportionate scheduling will be selected for support to assess and redress these scheduling challenges. Participants in phase 2 will receive incentive funding, provided with analytics, and with design support. These details of this phase are being developed.