

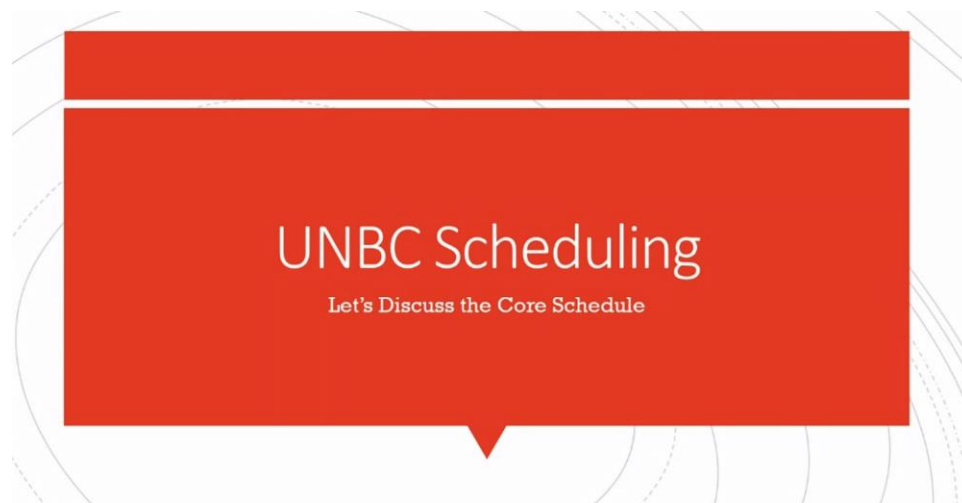
Kaffeeklatsch

Sept 15, 2021

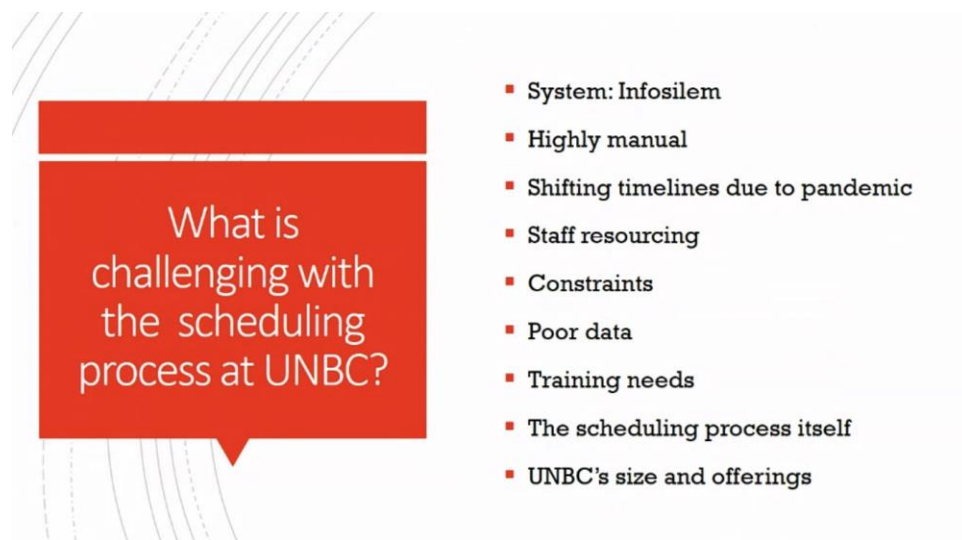
Scheduling of Classes with Dr. Todd Whitcombe & Kimberly Read (Assistant Registrar)

Participants: 37

Notes:



Key issues experienced in scheduling (process):



What is
challenging with
the scheduling
process at UNBC?

- System: Infosilem
- Highly manual
- Shifting timelines due to pandemic
- Staff resourcing
- Constraints
- Poor data
- Training needs
- The scheduling process itself
- UNBC's size and offerings

Manual process

- Historically very manual process as using system in a rudimentary fashion
- Last few years: leverage system and expand accessibility

Pandemic

- Uncertainty, last-minute decisions, shifting timelines

Staff resourcing

- We don't have enough

In comparable schools with similar numbers of programs – we should have 2 scheduling officers instead of just one.

Constraints

- Universal student constraints
- Universal faculty constraints
- Individual faculty constraints
- Room constraints
- Course constraints
- Academic block constraints
- Pattern constraints

Tetris... blocks of classes fitting together

Poor data



- String text time and room notes
- Requests that are incomplete
- Requests that break logic
- Rolled data that is missed

Training needs

- Suite of training videos for DCU users
- Need to expand

Kimberly will be expanding scheduling training this fall.

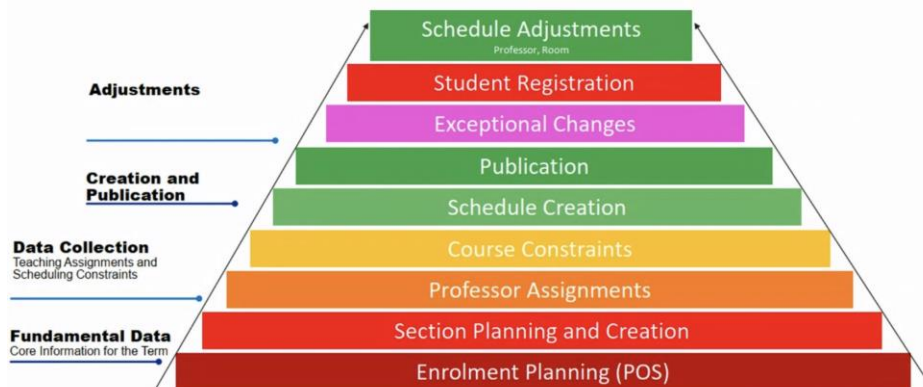
What is challenging with the scheduling process at UNBC?

- System: Infosilem
- Highly manual
- Shifting timelines due to pandemic
- Staff resourcing
- Constraints
- Poor data
- Training needs
- The scheduling process itself
- UNBC's size and offerings

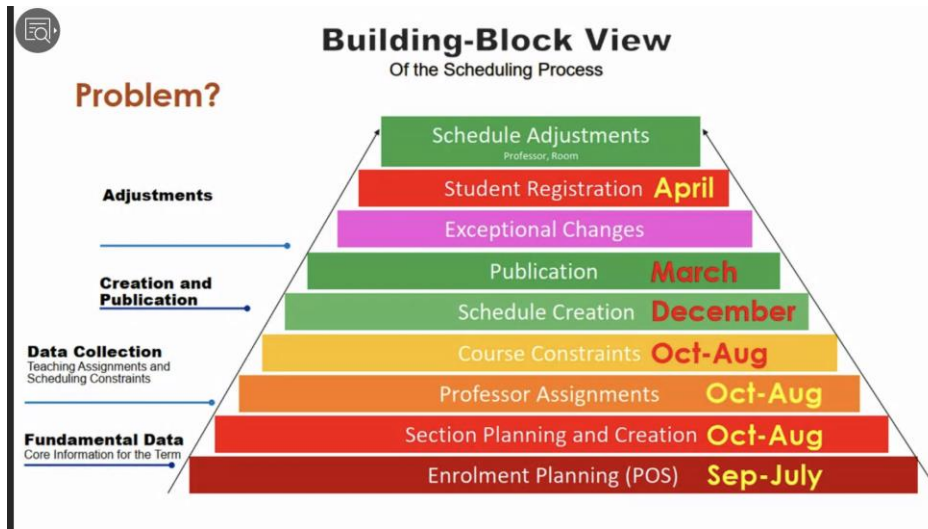


Building-Block View

Of the Scheduling Process



We have been building our schedule too early and then getting many constraints and updates, new courses late. New programs and courses can be approved by Senate after scheduling has closed.



Goal for this next cycle – open in late December and leave open for January.

Many questions about modes of instruction & what they mean, how to accommodate international students.



UNBC's size & offerings

- UNBC schedules for Fall/Winter:
 - ~2800 FTE, 3400 HC
 - 700 sections
 - ~70 programs

700 sections does not include labs.

3400 students head count



UNBC's size & offerings

- Academic blocks increase:
 - How many combinations are possible?
 - How many sections are offered?

Because UNBC only runs 1-2 sections of required courses, and multiple programs require that specific course – it makes scheduling very difficult to accommodate all the programs. Please consider other programs when making requests – don't just consider your program if others also need that course.

Further to Kimberly's observation about scheduling and the future .. when faculty and instructors were asked about their post-pandemic expectations they clearly indicated expected changes in practice ahead [gounbc-
my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/gpotter_unbc_ca/Ecm34hdxlQRNp1fuKBkEoO8BsRFin0PbJtO3-
KV7WNnIRQ?e=NVig2U](https://my.sharepoint.com/:i:/g/personal/gpotter_unbc_ca/Ecm34hdxlQRNp1fuKBkEoO8BsRFin0PbJtO3-KV7WNnIRQ?e=NVig2U)

All data from the 2021/21 UNBC Digital Pulse Survey Project available in the following infographic infogram.com/unbc-digital-pulse-project-1h7k2303jev9g2x?live

There is a hardcoded course schedule – courses that are forced to occur every year at the same time/day every year. This was built long ago – and we are trying to fit new programs (ENGR, etc.) around this core schedule.

Planning Cycle:

Registrar's Office is thinking an entire year ahead – they will be starting the Fall 2022/23 cycle this November. Building database, preparing for DCU open in Dec 2021/Jan 2022 to enter info. Draft produced in March 2022, ask for feedback & fixes. Publish live for registrations live in June.

Dr. Todd Whitcombe:

How was the Core Schedule developed?

During the first 5 years of UNBC, we had fewer degrees and fewer blocks. Students in BIOL & CHEM had conflicts in the courses they absolutely needed to take in the first year. It got worse the more programs that were added and the more students that were involved. So they created a firm "Core Schedule" to block out those 4 courses. (MATH & PHYS, BIOL & CHEM were paired together)

SCAPP decided to do this for all of first year courses for each program. The first year courses were created in a schedule that happens in the same blocks each year, every year – in concrete. This allowed us to guarantee that the students can take all the pre-req's & labs in their first year & they would not conflict with one another.

There is a real issue around labs. We have labs running in adjacent rooms that share instrument rooms. One class only uses the instrument room periodically. TA coordination issues (plus scheduling around their grad courses).

TA's are not tracked in the scheduling system....

Comments:

"let's schedule another Kaffeeklatch on this topic with Kimberly Read and Todd Whitcombe. This is all "dope" information, and we should have a long conversation in segments."

More lab rooms so they don't have to be shared

More Faculty to teach additional sections where needed

Better data on admissions in each program, projected enrollment & retention (bad data creates false demand)

How many of our courses are enrolled to capacity

What was the wait list

Automated pattern recognition software?

I know very little about what the data receiving and processing looks like, so this question is a superficial consideration of a complex system. For 'bad data', would an automated pattern recognition software that highlights to a human which parts of a submission are the 'unusual' be of benefit? Would that save human hours?

let's really make sure we do this again.

70% of faculty in the 2021/21 UNBC Digital Pulse Survey indicated [Strongly Agree] or [Somewhat Agree] with the question "I would like to teach some of mycourses as a combination of in-person and online instruction (partially online/hybrid model)."

Dr. Casperson: we have a 4th year data mining course, that might be willing to do a project looking for interesting patterns. (Terry)

If you have scheduling questions you can always contact Taylor or Kimberly in the Registrar's Office.