

Office of the Registrar

NEW FINAL EXAMINATION SCHEDULE INFORMATION

STARTING WITH THE SPRING 2018 SEMESTER

In response to a *Final Exam Scheduling Optimization and Recommendations* proposal put forth by a group of faculty,¹ in October 2017 the Faculty Senate adopted a resolution for approval of the modification of the then-current final exam scheduling model.² The Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs concurred with the Faculty Senate's resolution and has implemented this new model for Fall and Spring semesters effective **Spring 2018**.³

This new scheduling model produces an optimized final exam schedule that will minimize the number of students who are required to take 3 or more final exams on the same day, as well as minimize the number of students with exam conflicts.

Actual student registration data for the current semester is used in this process to ensure the most efficient final exam schedule possible. Such registration data is based on the enrollment census for the term. Therefore, the final exam schedule for the term will not be available until the 3rd or 4th week of the term.

Faculty course syllabi are to reflect a "to be announced" final exam date/time and should include the link to Final Exam Calendars maintained by the Office of the Registrar (<http://registrar.siu.edu/calendars/finalexam.php>).

¹ *The Final Exam Scheduling Optimization and Recommendations proposal is attached.*

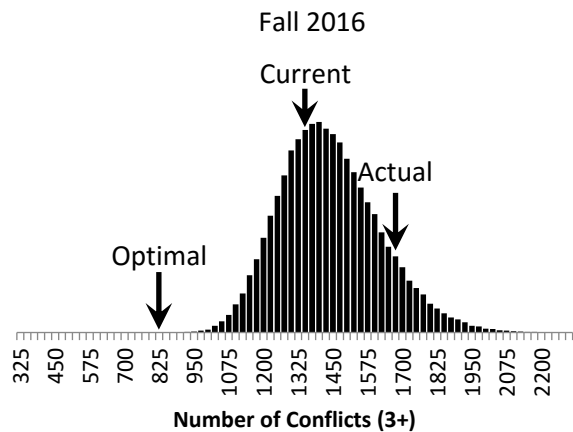
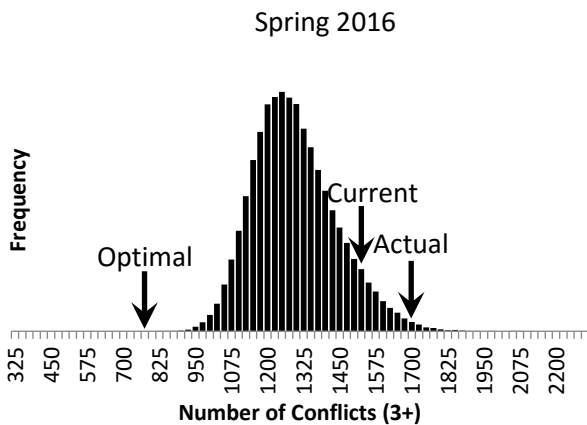
² *The Faculty Senate's resolution is attached.*

³ *The Summer session final exam model is not affected by this change.*

Final Exam Scheduling Optimization and Recommendations

Professors: Steve Esling (CoS), James Mathias (CoEng) and Ken Anderson (CoS)

- Software tool for modelling and “optimization” of final exam schedule has been developed.
 - Utilizes student schedule information provided by Information Technology
- **Optimal is defined as minimizing the number of students required to take 3 or more exams on the same day**
- Conflicts are calculated based on class schedules **only**
 - Individual faculty may or may not actually require that students take a final exam at the prescribed time. Also includes Labs. So calculations may overestimate actual conflicts.
 - Does not consider evening classes or evening exams

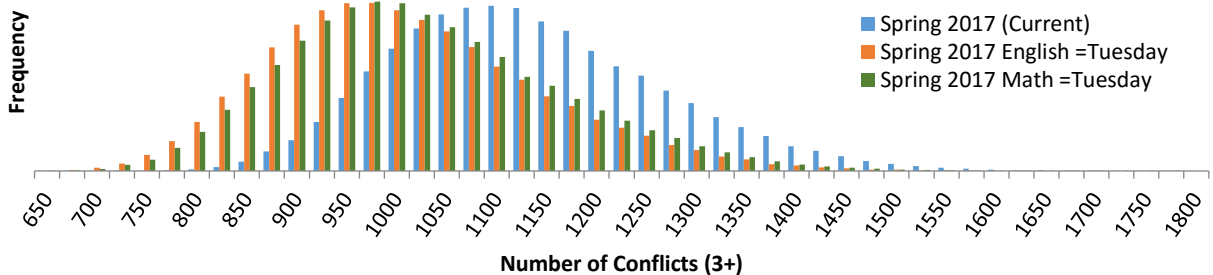


Conflicts: 3- ##### (4)

Actual	Current	Optimal	Actual	Current	Optimal
1696 (84)	1478 (52)	786 (7)	1688 (80)	1322 (35)	824 (12)

Co-scheduling of Math and English Common exams inherently increases conflicts by ~ 10%

- Scheduling these back-to-back (as in the current schedule) is *absurd* and counter productive



Semester-to-semester scheduling

- The % of students enrolled in classes in particular time slots varies only slightly between semesters
- However, applying an exam schedule optimized for one cohort to another results in an ~10% increase in conflicts

Recommendations:

- **Current scheduling model** is onerous for students and should be **abandoned**
- Scheduling based on a random schedule model should be implemented asap, beginning with Spring 2018
 - Faculty will find their exams scheduled at different time from semester to semester
- **Math and English Common exams should be separated**
 - To be fair to the departments affected, scheduling of the Tuesday slot should be alternated between the Spring and Fall semesters
 - Extension of the deadline to turn in grades till Wednesday should have already alleviated any affect of time allowed for grading
- ***Accommodation should be allowed for students with 4 exams scheduled in one day (current policy) and students with 3 exams scheduled back to back to back in one day (not current policy)***

Calculation of the optimal schedule can be accomplished in either of two ways:

1. Use data for the **current** semester
 - Gives the most optimal result (minimizes exam conflicts for the current cohort)
 - Requires that registration data be available
 - **Schedule not available until ~ 4rd week of the semester**
 - Requires a ***change in policy***
2. Use data for the **prior** (equivalent, S/S or F/F) semester
 - Gives **sub-optimal result - *Students disadvantaged***
 - Data readily available well in advance of the semester
 - **Schedule can be published prior to the beginning of the semester**

Pros and cons to both options

Choice of option requires faculty input (Faculty Senate)

Faculty Senate Resolution:

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

Resolution to Recommend Approval of the Proposal for
Modification of the Final Exam Schedule

WHEREAS the current final exam schedule is unnecessarily burdensome for students; and

WHEREAS faculty have developed software tools for optimizing the final exam schedule which assists in identifying and minimizing the number of scheduling conflicts;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate recommends:

1. the current fixed final exam schedule be abandoned.
2. scheduling based on a random schedule model (optimized to minimize the number of instances when students are required to take 3 or more final exams on the same day) should be implemented as quickly as possible, beginning with Spring 2018.
3. the final exam accommodation policy should be modified such that students whose schedules require more than 3 final exams to be taken in the same day and students whose final exam schedule requires them to take 3 exams scheduled back to back may request an accommodation.
4. that Option #1, as provided on the Final Exam Scheduling Optimization and Recommendation Proposal (use data for the current semester), be the method to calculate the optimal final exam schedule.

FS1807

Date of Resolution Approval: 10/17/2017

Semester:

President, Faculty Senate

Date