

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA
ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AA-001-223

Lab Time Modules on Mondays and Wednesdays

Academic Affairs Committee

Date: 08/31/2022

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 11/30/2022

Academic Senate

Date: 12/07/2022
First Reading
02/15/2023
Second Reading

Background

Your Name: Alex Small

Your Email: arsmall@cpp.edu

Title of Referral: Lab time modules on Mondays and Wednesdays

Names and Titles of proponents: Alex Small, Professor and Co-Chair, Department of Physics and Astronomy

Keywords: Time modules, class scheduling, laboratory

Is there a deadline by when this referral needs to be considered by the Academic Senate?:
No

Deadline Date:

Justification for deadline:

Background: Many key introductory courses for STEM majors are lecture-lab combinations (e.g. BIO 1210/1210L, CHM 1210/1210L, PHY 1510/1510L, etc.) consisting of a 3 unit lecture and 1 unit lab. Scheduling large numbers of sections is a complicated task for departments, particularly in making sure that available lecture and lab sections do not conflict for students.

Common time slots for 3-unit lectures are Monday & Wednesday afternoon or evening, or Tuesday & Thursday afternoon or evening. At the moment, the lab time slots on Tuesdays and Thursdays are compatible with the lecture time slots. To wit, standard afternoon/evening lab times are 1-3:50pm Tuesday or Thursday, 4-6:50pm Tuesday or Thursday, and 7-9:50pm Tuesday or Thursday. The 3-unit lecture time slots have start or end times that match up with these lab time slots: 1-2:15pm, 2:30-3:45pm, 4-5:15pm, 5:30-6:45pm, 7-8:15pm, and 8:30-9:45pm. Each lecture time slot excludes students from only one lab time slot.

However, the Monday, Wednesday, and Friday lab time slots mostly do NOT match well with the standard lecture time slots. The lab time slots are 12-2:50pm, 3-5:50pm, 5-7:50pm, 6-8:50pm, and 7-9:50pm. The MW, WF, and MF lecture time slots, on the other hand, are the same as the TuTh time slots: 1-2:15pm, 2:30-3:45pm, 4-5:15pm, 5:30-6:45pm, 7-8:15pm, and 8:30-9:45pm.

The result is that a student whose MW lecture runs 2:30-3:45pm is excluded from labs starting at noon AND labs starting at 3pm. Similarly, a student whose MW lecture runs 4-5:15pm is excluded from labs starting at 3pm and 5pm.

Proposal:

In order to streamline scheduling for students and also for faculty (who teach multiple lecture and lab sections in those same time slots), it is proposed that the following laboratory time slots be added to the approved list for 1-unit lab classes:

Monday 1-3:50pm

Monday 4-6:50pm

Wednesday 1-3:50pm

Wednesday 4-6:50pm

Friday 1-3:50pm

Friday 4-6:50pm

Additionally, while it is less common for 1-unit labs to be split between 2 days, when these splits do happen, to avoid conflicts with multiple lecture classes, it is proposed that the following twice-weekly time slots also be approved for 1-unit lab classes:

Monday & Wednesday 1-2:15pm

Monday & Wednesday 2:30-3:45pm

Monday & Wednesday 4-5:15pm

Monday & Wednesday 5:30-6:45pm

Monday & Friday 1-2:15pm

Monday & Friday 2:30-3:45pm

Monday & Friday 4-5:15pm

Monday & Friday 5:30-6:45pm

Wednesday & Friday 1-2:15pm

Wednesday & Friday 2:30-3:45pm

Wednesday & Friday 4-5:15pm

Wednesday & Friday 5:30-6:45pm

These time slots match up with current TuTh lab time slots, and also with current MW lecture time slots.

Recommended Resources: Laura Massa

Department Chairs

Class schedulers

Associate Deans

Attachment 1: See "AA-001-223-Summary of information about lab time modules."

Discussion

Committee members consulted with their constituents as the Office of Academic Programs.

Based on feedback, we made a friendly amendment to the submitted referral in order to add a 9:00am-11:50am module on M/W and T/Th. These were suggested in order to align M/W and T/Th schedules as well as to optimize use of space and resources in the mornings.

In the attachment, a PDF illustrates how the added time modules will allow for scheduling that better serves students who have conflicts due to other lectures and labs on M/W.

Overlaps within the same color column = These overlaps show where there may be potential room or resource conflicts that departments would need to monitor (so a potential drawback would be that more module possibilities might change how rooms and resources are booked, but so far this has been doable based on feedback from some departments.

Consultation outreach specific to the question of resources and rooms was made to the Deans of Science on 11/22, but a response has not yet been received. We do not anticipate this to be a serious issue since the modules merely allow for the possibility of scheduling around lectures, but they do not require anyone or everyone to adopt new scheduling patterns. This is an issue that some impacted departments would need to discuss further between the first and second reading.

Overlaps between different colored columns = These overlaps indicate areas where students may have issues scheduling classes and progressing through their degrees. This was one of the main concerns that this referral is attempting to address.

Recommendations

We recommend adoption of AA-001-223 with the addition of the 9:00am-11:50am one-unit, once-per-week module on M/W/F and T/Th.