

To: Department Chairs

From: The offices of the provost and registrar

Date: January 27, 2009

Re: Revised procedure for constructing course schedules

The confluence of several circumstances has highlighted the need to revisit the way in which course schedules are constructed.

- As discussed previously in senate, we as an institution are not doing an adequate job of offering entry-level general education courses to our incoming students. Even with our low entering enrollment this year, the late addition of four additional sections and raising the enrollment cap in other courses, we offered a barely adequate number of appropriate lower-division courses. Given the current economic climate, we need to be more diligent in seeing that our incoming students are well cared for academically.
- Independently, the data we reviewed in senate revealed imbalances in upper/lower-division course offerings and enrollments. In particular, severely under-enrolled, elective courses evidence poor stewardship of resources. We need to take a careful, global look at patterns of course offerings and enrollments. Even in times of plenty, this information should drive our decisions about how often courses will be offered. This type of stewardship is particularly critical given the college's current budget situation.
- In addition, if all goes according to plan registration for next fall will take place online. This means that our ability to make real-time modifications to the schedule, as awkward as they have been historically, likely will be even more constrained. Consequently, it is of great importance to create a schedule of classes that works well from the start.

We cannot afford to create course schedules from a purely departmental perspective. An institutional perspective is becoming ever more important. With this motivation, we will be following the protocol below for constructing the 2009-2010 course schedule.

1. On or about January 23, the registrar will send to department chairs a call for preliminary 2009-2010 course schedules.
2. *Prior to January 27, department chairs will receive a memo detailing the implications of the facts above for their individual department.*
3. Preliminary course schedules are due back to the registrar's office by February 13.
4. *The preliminary schedules will be reviewed in consultation with the registrar's office to ensure that the departmental objectives outlined in the departmental memo have been realized and that there is an appropriate breadth of lower-division general education courses across the available class periods. Negotiations with individual departments will take place as needed to meet these goals.*
5. Proofs of the schedules will be delivered to department chairs by March 4.
6. Final signoffs on the schedule of classes by department chairs is due in the registrar's office by March 13.

Thank you for all that you contribute to Westmont College and for your careful attention to these matters as you construct the course schedule for your department.