Memorandum

Date: May 31, 2012
To: Joan Lorden, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
From: Committee on Class Schedule and Classroom Utilization/Priority
Lee Gray, Associate Dean, College of Arts + Architecture (Chair)
Bill Hill, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Banita Brown, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Daryl Kerr, Associate Dean, Belk College of Business
Steve Coppola, Assistant Provost for Institutional Research
John Smail, Dean, University College
C.J. Russo, Office of the Registrar
Steve Clark, Director, Office of Classroom Support
Re: Use of Fridays

The Committee on Class Schedule and Classroom Utilization/Priority solicited information from academic units across campus in an attempt to determine the current “use” of Fridays. The Committee asked department chairs to respond to six (6) questions concerning their use of Fridays. These questions sought to determine – in addition to teaching – how Fridays were used. The Committee received 44 responses, which are summarized as follows:

1.) List regularly scheduled meetings (faculty and student).

Twenty-four units reported that meetings – ranging from full faculty to committee meetings – were regularly scheduled on Fridays.

2.) List other ways in which you use Fridays to bring students and/or faculty to campus

Sixteen units reported that they used Fridays in a variety of ways that brought students and faculty to campus; these included regularly scheduled meetings of student organizations, research seminars, lectures by visiting scholars, and admissions activities.

3.) List other program/department specific activities/requirements that involve students but may not bring them to campus on Fridays (internships, practicums, research activities, etc.).

Five units reported that their students are regularly engaged in off-campus internships, practicums or community service activities on Fridays.

4.) List any problems, particularly regarding Fridays, created by the current schedule.

Three units responded noting specific problems associated with Fridays: one unit reported that “both students and many faculty think of Friday as a day off or at least a day away from the campus,” one unit reported that the primary “challenge is getting faculty and students to buy into offering or taking courses on Friday.” and one unit reported that attendance at scheduled events on Fridays (performances, etc.) is typically low “because students and faculty have left campus.”
5.) If you feel the current schedule should be changed in any way, please specify the changes that should be made.

Six units responded to this question: four responses concerned class scheduling and two concerned scheduling faculty meetings.

The scheduling responses included the following comments: “the current schedule promotes a part time atmosphere for both students and faculty. Campus is a ghost town on Fridays! If the university wants to take the next step, then our culture needs to change … Units should have some flexibility but the general schedule should more traditional in my opinion,” “Students tend to see Friday as their day away from campus. Alternative scheduling that would better include Fridays for course work would seem to be a consideration,” and “Reinstitute Friday classes to relieve pressure on scheduling and class size issues while the university continues to grow in an environment where the new buildings are not available for general purpose instruction.”

The faculty meeting responses included the following comments: “that Wednesday be the new Friday: i.e., we schedule classes for Mon-Thurs and Tues-Fri, and have Wed for block scheduling and meetings. We still need some open time for faculty governance and meetings” and “It would be useful if there were a campus-wide agreement about Friday meetings. For example, college-level meetings in the morning, department-level mid-day, and university-level in the afternoon. That way, we could really use Fridays for meetings … As it is, department meetings take place at different times all day long, and scheduling university-wide committees (for example) ends up being difficult and at least as likely to occur on non-Fridays.”

6.) Please provide additional information (as needed) to address other uses of Fridays not suggested by the above prompts.

There were no responses to this question.