

Upcoming Events

Critical Thinking 2.0 (Special Saturday Event)

September 10, 10:00am-12:00noon
ITLAL Underground (LI B69)

If lately you find yourself drifting alone among the upper registers of Bloom's Taxonomy and are frustrated by students' inability to find you there, this session is for you.

Designing a Dynamic Discussion

September 20, 2:00-3:30pm
Husted 310 (Downtown)

September 23, 10:00-11:30am
ITLAL Underground (LI B69)

This workshop will focus on the skills that students can develop in well-planned discussions and will demonstrate several techniques to help encourage student engagement through discussions.

Minimal Marking for Maximum Impact

October 4, 2:00-3:30pm
Husted 310 (Downtown)

October 5, 3:00-4:30pm
ITLAL Underground (LI B69)

How much feedback is enough? How much feedback is effective? The best feedback on student writing is not always the most voluminous.

Identifying and Overcoming Unexpected Barriers to Learning

October 19, 3:00-4:30pm

ITLAL Underground (LI B69)

Learn about dealing with special cases by hearing from campus experts on student learning disabilities. You'll also explore strategies for structuring classroom encounters and assignments that will help all your students be more successful.

To register for these events, please visit
<http://albany.edu/teachingandlearning>

Or

Telephone: 442-5521

Or

E-mail: teachingandlearning@albany.edu

What's Happening With UAlbany Classrooms?

Test your Classroom IQ. (*Correct Answers can be found on page 2)

1. About how many classrooms are used in the regular scheduling of classes? A) 170 B) 150 C) 120 D) 100
2. Which of the following is the variable that will most limit your chances of getting the kind of room you request for your course? A) Time zone selection; B) Location of the room; C) Size of the room; D) Number of students enrolled in your course
3. Who guides decisions on prioritizing and outfitting classroom spaces for renovations? A) The Registrar; B) The Provost; C) Facilities and Planning; D) The Classrooms Advisory Committee

You may have noticed some changes in classrooms at UAlbany recently. Over the past three years the UAlbany Classroom Advisory Committee, which includes administrators and faculty members from across the UAlbany community, has collected and analyzed data about classroom spaces in order to guide the university toward a more user-friendly, adult-friendly, and flexible teaching and learning environment. These changes are intended to bring our classrooms into the 21st Century as well as to provide more options for those instructors who use less traditional pedagogies.

Now that the Registrar's inventory of classrooms includes some new configurations, it is important that instructors and department schedulers know about the options available to them and how to use the scheduling process to their best advantage. For this purpose we decided to put some questions to the current University Registrar, Karen Chico Hurst and her staff, who have been working with the Classroom Advisory Committee to oversee the recent changes and to improve the scheduling process.

What's the future of classrooms at UAlbany?

Chico Hurst: In the near term, we're very close to having a baseline of technology in all of the existing classrooms that are under the Registrar's control. Most new classroom renovation projects include presentation technologies and internet access; some will have a computer work station and others will be "laptop ready." Many newly renovated classrooms will have flexible furnishings like the mobile desk-chairs ("Node" chairs) seen in the newly renovated Social Science classrooms, or round or modular tables like those in the new Husted classrooms, Lecture Centers 3A and 3C, Humanities 109 and Education 123. Most renovations will also include expanded whiteboards, and classroom lighting will be upgraded in all rooms over the next several years as part of a University-wide lighting project. There will be several new classrooms when the new School of Business building comes on-line in 2013. For a listing of other current campus projects that will affect classroom space, we point people toward the facilities web page for classroom updates: <http://albany.edu/facilities/classroomRenovations.html>.

How can instructors find out about the characteristics of any given classroom?

Chico Hurst: We're working with ITLAL on a web page with classroom pictures and specifications. This should be ready in Fall 2011 to help our instructors in choosing their preferred classrooms. In addition, as SUNYCard access is expanded to all full-time faculty (see below), they will have the opportunity, one week in advance of the start of classes, to visit any classroom which they've been assigned.

For those classrooms and/or meeting rooms that are not "under the Registrar's control," who controls them and how do we schedule them?

Chico Hurst: We control 98 classrooms on the uptown campus and 24 on the downtown campus. There are additional classrooms that we know of that are not part of this inventory, and those are usually controlled by academic and administrative departments based on the location of the building. Check with a nearby department to find out who controls a room that is not in our portfolio.

How can a faculty member get the room he/she prefers?

Chico Hurst: Room scheduling depends on volume of requests in any given time zone. If you want to improve your chances of getting a specific type or size of room, the best option (if it is available to you) is to offer your course in one of the less populated time slots. Choosing any Tuesday-Thursday time slot between 10:15am and 4:05pm will severely limit your chances of scheduling the type of room you desire. Beyond that, availability is a function of the number of features requested (number of seats, special technology, etc.). To increase your chances of getting a specific kind of room, consider a time zone different than the one listed above and make sure you limit your request to the feature that really matters most. Your length of service with the university, department affiliation, and/or previous room assignment are not criteria used in scheduling rooms.

How does one reserve a room for meetings outside of normal class hours?

Chico Hurst: Departments that wish to reserve a room in the Registrar's inventory on the uptown campus can request a room directly through the Registrar's Office using the e-mail account scheduling@uamail.albany.edu. Requests should include day, date, start/end time, size of room (# of attendees), name of person responsible for the event and contact information for that responsible person. Departments that wish to reserve a room on the downtown campus can do so by submitting a request online at: www.albany.edu/downtown/rooms/downtown.html.

Why is it that sometimes classrooms are left open, then other times they are accessible by swipe card, and then other times they are all locked? What's the logic?

Chico Hurst: Normally, classrooms with electronic (card-swipe) locks open automatically prior to the start of classes. If this does not happen, you can still access the room with your SUNY Card. Starting Fall 2011, during the hours when buildings are regularly open, full-time faculty will have swipe-card access to all classrooms with electronic locks, excluding labs. This applies only to rooms under the Registrar's control.

We ask faculty members to please keep your SUNY Card with you whenever you are on campus, so you can access the classrooms. However, please note that swiping your SUNY Card to gain access into a room does not actually unlock the door; it gives you access, but the door will relock in 8 seconds.

I have noticed the room next to mine is available and I prefer it to my current room. Can I simply move my class?

Chico Hurst: Please don't do that. We often schedule events or meetings in rooms that are not being used for classes. If you see a classroom that appears vacant, and you wish to relocate your

class, please have your department submit a Room Change Request Form to the Registrar's Office.

Why is my classroom sometimes trashed when I come in? Isn't someone supposed to take care of that?

Chico Hurst: They are cleaned almost daily during the week, but not in between every class meeting or event. We ask that everyone take responsibility and make sure the room you've been using is put in order (chairs arranged, boards erased, litter collected, etc.) before you leave. It may be necessary to ask your students to take a couple of minutes at the end of your class and help out. Meanwhile, if you enter your class and find it in disarray, see broken furniture, see too many chairs/desks or see that chairs/desks are missing, please contact Customer Service at 442-3480.

What should I do if I have trouble with the computer in my classroom?

Chico Hurst: The Classroom Advisory Committee has ordered the placement of stickers in every Registrar-controlled classroom with detailed information on who to call for assistance with technology, emergencies, furniture, and/or reasonable accommodation problems, etc.

What are the procedures for dealing with disabled students, or with an instructor's medical condition that limits the type of room he/she can teach in?

Chico Hurst: Special needs for instructors should be noted when a department makes its classroom requests during the annual scheduling process. Special needs for students are much less predictable from one class to another, so these accommodations will need to be handled through Customer Service at 442-3480. In most cases a special table or desk can be put in the room, or, in extreme cases, a room can be changed. For room changes please have your department contact the Registrar's Office.

There are never any whiteboard markers or erasers in my classroom. Who is responsible for these things?

Chico Hurst: Classroom supplies are the responsibility of your department. It's a good idea to have markers and an eraser with you when you go to class, to make sure you have what you need.

As part of their continuing efforts to improve communication about the scheduling process, the Registrar's Office will be hosting information sessions in the upcoming academic year.

Questions and Comments Regarding Projects

During construction, please contact Trish Meyer, in Facilities at 442-3434.

To provide feedback on classroom needs and ideas for classrooms, please email Registrar Karen Chico Hurst with your comments at KChicohurst@uamail.albany.edu.

(*Answers to Classroom IQ quiz: 1-D; 2-A; 3-D)



INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING, LEARNING
AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

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