

Faculty Scheduling Process Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback on the recent **faculty engagement** survey. I know each of you is committed to our common goal of **helping students succeed**, and your insights will help us in our quest to give our **students the best possible experience** at University of Phoenix.

We Heard You

We value your opinions that you shared during the survey. **Your honest feedback** revealed that many of you are interested in receiving additional insight into the **faculty scheduling process**. In response to this, we have prepared answers to your **Frequently Asked Questions** to provide transparency into this process. Our goal is that you, our faculty members, understand that scheduling faculty is part of an **integrated effort** of ensuring the best possible academic experience for each student.

1) Why does the University limit the number of courses taught by each faculty member?

Our primary scheduling objective is to help ensure the highest academic quality in the classroom and the best possible student experience. Therefore, we have established a per-campus guideline limiting the maximum number of classes an individual faculty member may teach at the same time or during the same week (concurrently). The maximum course load should not exceed two (2) at a time, unless student enrollment and the number of available faculty for a particular course dictate otherwise. Being able to provide a consistent, high-quality academic experience for our students requires that we schedule all faculty so they will be able to spend adequate time with all their students in each classroom, providing abundant, timely and high-quality feedback.

Secondly, by scheduling all faculty members using the same course load guideline, the University is able to schedule faculty in the fairest manner. We know there may be some faculty who are and may continue to be excellent instructors with heavier teaching loads, but in order to ensure the best student experience across the board and promote the maximum amount of teaching opportunities for all our esteemed faculty, this course load guideline is in place.

Another consideration in the scheduling of faculty is the fact that accrediting and regulatory bodies regularly review faculty scheduling practices for reasonableness of course load.

2) Since a course scheduling load guideline exists, can I be guaranteed the opportunity to carry the maximum load?

The University cannot guarantee a certain number or frequency of classes. The Associate Faculty position is considered part-time employment on a contract-to-contract (course-to-course) basis. Associate Faculty members are expected to have other full-time employment; therefore teaching for the University is intended as supplemental employment only.

3) What is the key reason why I may not be scheduled or may have fluctuations in my teaching opportunities?

Scheduling faculty for classes depends on enrollment trends in each program and content area, and these trends fluctuate over time. In other words, the actual number of course sections that will require a faculty member to be scheduled depends completely on how many students actually enroll.

The campuses of Online and Axia College utilize a proprietary scheduling management system that enables each campus to fairly and efficiently manage the schedules of 20,000-plus faculty. While this system has been utilized since the year 2000 and was upgraded at Axia College in the past year, any fluctuations in teaching opportunities are due to fluctuations in student enrollment. The system helps ensure we are able to schedule all faculty per the course load guideline (see question #1).

4) If I am asked by my campus to teach a course and I decline the opportunity for personal reasons, will my decision result in fewer teaching opportunities in the future?

No. One of the hallmarks of being a University of Phoenix faculty member is the flexibility our faculty have in accepting or declining teaching opportunities as their lifestyles demand. Faculty members are able to decline course opportunities and are encouraged to provide scheduling preferences to campus personnel, such as establishing vacation times or requesting less course frequency (i.e., one course per quarter or one course at a time). Also, if a faculty member has a particular course for which he/she is regularly solicited, but prefers not to teach, we ask that the faculty member notify the campus to be removed as available for that course so he/she will no longer need to decline the opportunity each time.

5) Can I be considered for additional courses within my content area, or for other content areas for which I may be qualified?

During the recruitment process, faculty are selected to teach one course within a content area based upon work experience and educational background. Although a faculty member's experience and education may qualify him/her to facilitate other courses within the same content area or another content area, the campus' initial need is for each faculty member to facilitate the course that best meets current student enrollment needs.

We do not grant additional course approvals at the request of faculty unless the request corresponds with the needs of the campus and the University. If the campus has a need for additional instructors for a particular course, a faculty recruiter will contact the qualified, existing faculty member directly to discuss the possibility of teaching the course. In order for the faculty recruiter to identify all qualified faculty members, it is imperative that each faculty member regularly keep his/her Academic Credentials page on eCampus up to date.

6) Why are my scheduled courses sometimes cancelled?

Projecting student enrollment is not an exact science. While each campus has ways of projecting student enrollment from 30 to 60 days out, the actual numbers will fluctuate leading up to each start date. Therefore, the actual number of class sections to be taught will also fluctuate. Faculty Schedulers will schedule faculty based upon the number of projected sections to avoid having too few faculty members available. Sometimes, when the start date arrives, one or more sections may need to be cancelled due to student enrollment numbers being lower than expected. It is important to note that the scheduled faculty members with the lightest course loads will receive priority (i.e., they would be the last ones to have their courses cancelled).

7) Is a faculty member's pay level considered when scheduling decisions are made?

No. The scheduling process is blind to the pay levels of faculty members.

If you have any follow-up questions, e-mail facultycommunications@phoenix.edu.