

CUASA COMMUNIQUÉ

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Waiting for Answers:

Questions for Senior Administration about “Centralized Scheduling”

Despite -- or because -- of the Administration's unwillingness to consult with faculty, announcements about the proposed imposition of centralized course scheduling via the InfoSilem® software are raising many questions from CUASA members.

Members of CUASA have expressed three points loudly and clearly at Council and to members of the Steering Committee:

- ◆ The Administration has yet to demonstrate what is supposed to be wrong with the current system of scheduling.
- ◆ Centralized scheduling undermines academic professionalism, taking important decisions away from those ultimately responsible for teaching and for organizing research.
- ◆ **What** we teach and **when** we teach are inextricably interrelated.

At its last meeting, members of CUASA Council raised the following questions for Senior Administration. These are the questions CUASA will take to the next meeting of the Joint Committee to Administer the Agreement (JCAA) on March 16th. We have asked for a special meeting of JCAA to try and resolve some of our differences with respect to centralized scheduling.

1. What is the problem with the *status quo*? Where are the results of the studies which identified the problem? Why were they not made public for discussion?
2. Assuming there are problems, what other solutions have been considered? What cost-benefit analyses have been carried out?
3. How are teaching days to be allocated for faculty?
4. What provisions are there for units with labs, field placements, studios, and so forth to be integrated into centralized scheduling?
5. What happens to classrooms currently administered by Faculties and Schools, rather than central Administration?
6. What provisions have been set up to test and monitor the implementation of InfoSilem®?

7. What are the criteria that will be used to decide if InfoSilem® works? How much money is available for fixing the software if, like Banner®, it turns out to be unworkable until it is customized? How many consultants will need to be hired to make InfoSilem® work?
8. Does the Administration intend to make available to faculty its implementation agreement with InfoSilem®? Is there a plan to make public the results of test runs of the scheduling software?
9. Does the senior Administration intend to work with CUASA on the implementation of InfoSilem®, for example through JCAA?
10. How would the program accommodate faculty with disabilities, with childcare and eldercare commitments? How would the program respond to adjuncts and those with cross-appointments?
11. Given the large number of our students working part-time, have students' concerns been taken into account? When and where was their input gathered and reported?
12. The training manual for InfoSilem® gives greater weight to large courses relative to smaller ones. What would this mean for offering senior undergraduate and graduate courses at a university that claims to be research intensive?
13. What are the exact hours during the day, Monday through Friday, during which classes will be scheduled? Will Saturday classes be scheduled?
14. How would centralized scheduling affect faculty who need flexibility for their research?
15. How has the Administration taken into account the low morale centralized scheduling is likely to create among faculty?
16. How has the Administration taken into account the impact centralized scheduling would have on recruitment and retention of faculty in a competitive climate?
17. How has the Administration taken into account the impact centralized scheduling would have on retention of students at a commuter campus such as ours? Where are the results of those studies?
18. Why is the Administration using centralized scheduling to undermine the leadership and judgment of Chairs and Directors, some of whom are in our bargaining unit and are covered by our Collective Agreement?

Perhaps, once some of these questions are answered, academic staff will understand how Carleton University's academic mission is served by centralized scheduling.

Fran Cherry
President, CUASA