



**Inside  
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# **Course Scheduling: The Impact on Student Success**

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# Webcast| Course Scheduling: The Impact on Student Success

## Hosts:

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## Panelists:

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Laura E. Boyer, Northeast  
Lakeview College

Rebecca Brewer, Northern  
Arizona University

# Course Scheduling + Student Success: Data and Best Practices

## From Hanover Research review (2018):

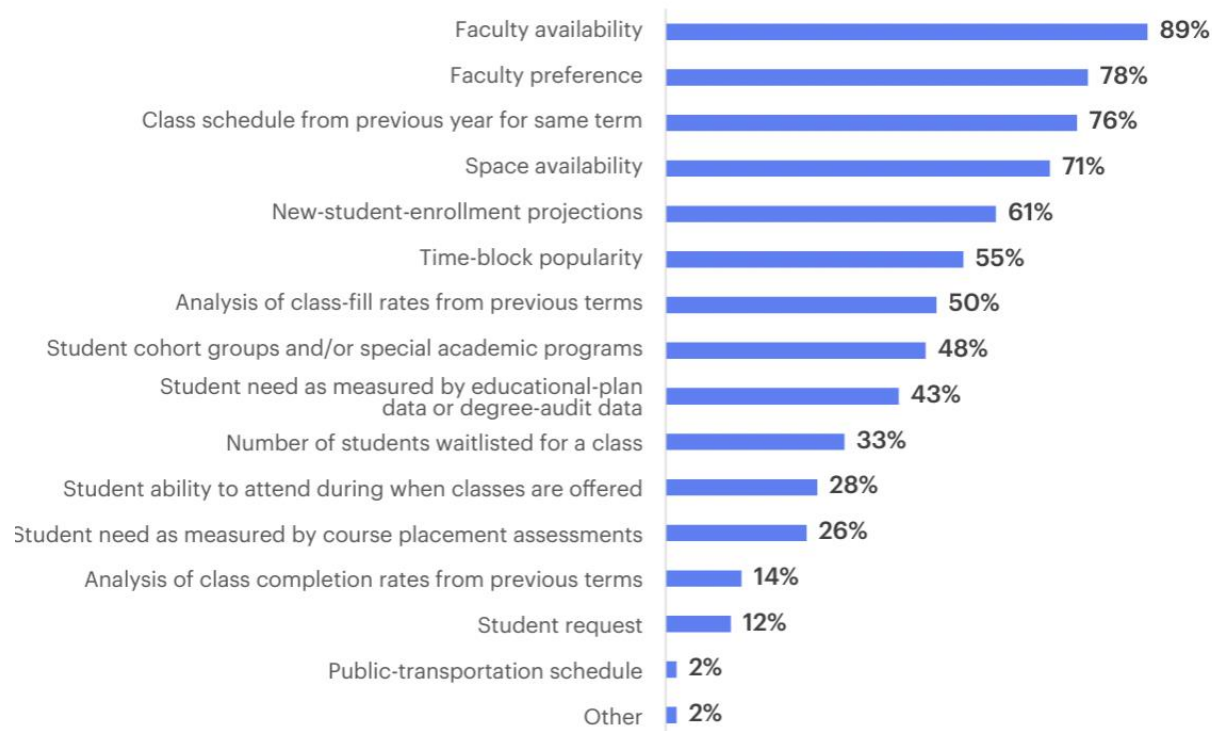
- Effective scheduling can boost retention
- Don't simply carry over schedules from term to term
- Collect and analyze data to inform future course scheduling
- Students want flexibility such as accelerated terms and late-start courses (also recommended by Achieving the Dream)
- Commuter and part-time students may especially benefit from flexibility and data-driven scheduling
- 2x-per-week courses are linked to better student performance

\*Various analyses also *link taking more credit hours per term to better outcomes* (e.g. Complete College America's 15 to Finish)



# Course Scheduling + Student Success: Data and Best Practices (Cont.)

Figure 1: Factors Used When Building the Undergraduate-Class Schedule (all that apply)



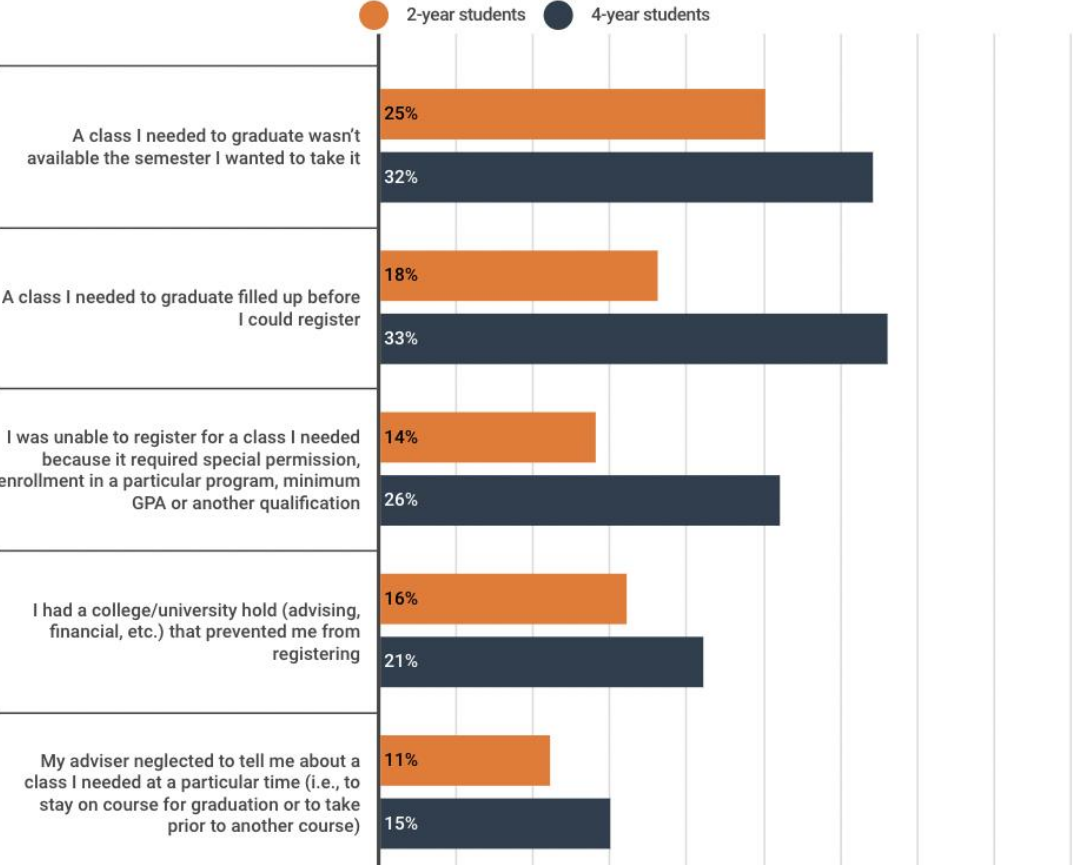
Source: AACRAO’s “A Comprehensive View of Undergraduate-Class-Scheduling Practice, Policy, Data Use and Technology” (2022)

***“For most undergraduate-serving institutions, class scheduling is a complex process that involves numerous factors contributing to when, how, and where a class is scheduled. Furthermore, overcoming the driving forces of faculty availability and preference means surmounting a great deal of inertia tied to historical practice, policies, and the limited use of available data to understand student class-scheduling needs. AACRAO advocates for the use of data-driven decision making and recommends the use of data to initiate discussions to move toward student-centric undergraduate-class scheduling practices.”***

—The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

# Student Registration Problems

Complications 2- and 4-year college students report having experienced while registering for classes, by share of respondents



*Some colleges “don’t necessarily know how many students are following each program of study, or they don’t have a clear curriculum map for students to follow within the program of study, and as a result, they don’t have a good sense of the likely demand for each course—or the number of seats they should offer—in each term.”* —Shanna Smith Jaggars, assistant vice provost for the Student Success Research Lab, Ohio State University

*“If technology can map almost every street in the U.S., it can surely be designed to calculate the number of students who will need which courses in the coming semester to meet graduation and next-step requirements. That is, if colleges and universities want to serve the crucial needs of students.”* —Terry O’Banion, senior professor of practice in educational leadership, Kansas State University

Source: *Inside Higher Ed/College Pulse Student Voice Survey on Academic Life* (2023)

# Case Study: Alamo Colleges

*“We felt we needed to be proactive and aggressive in developing solutions for students and, like everything else, we’ll assess it, right? We’ll see what the outcomes are and how we can tweak it, how can we improve it.”* —Gilberto Becerra, associate vice chancellor of advocacy, retention and completion, Alamo Colleges

- ~20% of students from across the district’s five campuses have taken advantage of a new policy allowing them to **register for classes two or three terms at a time** (as of fall 2023)
- The colleges are experimenting with **8-week terms** for the academic core and several high-demand transfer majors (students can mix and match 8- and 16-week courses and the college has found students are taking more credit hours)
- District is also rolling out an **accelerated workforce program** (18 months) based on 8-week terms

# Case Study: Northern Arizona University

Within a year of adopting a course scheduling platform, NAU saw:

- 60% reduction in course scheduling *conflicts*
- 14% drop in *overfilled sections*
- 200+ of hours saved in *auditing errors and enforcing po*

Technology can help:

- *Empower* academic units
- *Enforce* institutional policies
- *Follow scheduling best practices* (examples: automatic rule validation helps prevent basic errors and bottlenecks + predictive data inform what courses to offer, when)
- Build a *culture of evidence*



# Panel Discussion



**Monica Parrish Trent**, Achieving the Dream



**Tammy Aagard**, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers



**Laura E. Boyer**, Northeast Lakeview College



**Rebecca Brewer**, Northern Arizona University



# Sponsor Chat



Brian Smith,  
Product Manager  
for Scheduling  
and Events at  
Coursedog



Doug Lederman,  
Editor and Co-  
Founder at Inside  
Higher Ed

# Audience Q & A

**Melissa Ezarik**, Inside Higher Ed

**Monica Parrish Trent**, Achieving the Dream

**Tammy Aagard**, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

**Laura E. Boyer**, Northeast Lakeview College

**Rebecca Brewer**, Northern Arizona University

# Thank you!



# Helpful Links

<https://f.hubspotusercontent30.net/hubfs/4523134/Hanover%20Research%20-%20Best%20Practices%20in%20Course%20Scheduling.pdf>

<https://achievingthedream.org/preparing-for-shortened-academic-terms-guide-workbook-and-spotlights/>

[https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/research-docs/aacrao-sept-2016-class-scheduling-practices-60-second-survey-report.pdf?sfvrsn=b4a30dda\\_10](https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/research-docs/aacrao-sept-2016-class-scheduling-practices-60-second-survey-report.pdf?sfvrsn=b4a30dda_10)

<https://www.aacrao.org/research-publications/aacrao-research/a-comprehensive-view-of-undergraduate-class-practice-policy-data-use-and-technology>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/03/01/student-survey-reveals-gaps-core-academic-advising-functions>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/student-success/academic-life/2023/09/21/community-college-course-registration-three-semesters>