COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

Santa Clarita Community College District 26455 Rockwell Canyon, Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Schedule of Classes Focus Groups: Spring 2018

AD HOC Report

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September 2018



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Introduction

At the request of the Public Information Office and in collaboration with the Director of Advertising and Social Media, the office of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness conducted focus groups with students to obtain feedback on student preferences on four possible versions of the schedule of classes. The public information office was specifically interested in student feedback on the look, layout, and content of the schedule of classes to make them the most effective materials both for student recruitment/college advertisement and for student academic planning. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather feedback particularly with regard to the following research questions:

- How many students have utilized a printed schedule?
- Did the printed schedule of classes serve as the impetus for prompting a student to enroll at College of the Canyons?
- Do students prefer a simplified course schedule with less details (Sample A), more details but no course description (Sample B), basic details but no instructor or room description (Sample C), or a schedule with maximum details similar to a course catalog (Sample D) see appendix?
- What suggestions do students have, that could improve the schedule of classes?

The resulting information served to inform decisions about the visualization, formatting, and content to be included in the schedule of classes. Further, the feedback helped to optimize these schedules of classes utilized throughout the Santa Clarita Valley as advertisement and student recruitment prior to the fall 2018-spring 2019 academic year.

Methods

The Office of Institutional Research, Planning & Institutional Effectiveness with the help of the Director of Advertising and Social Media developed the following five broad questions designed to gather student input on the schedule of classes:

- 1. How many of you have seen a printed schedule? How many received one in your home?
- 2. How many of you have used the printed schedule? Did it prompt you to enroll in a course at College of the Canyons?
- 3. Looking at the available formats what is your preference at a first glance; sample A, B, C, or D (*see appendix*)?
- 4. What do you like/dislike about the printed schedules?
- 5. Do you have suggestions as to additional information that should be incorporated into the schedules or formatting changes you would like to see?

The Institutional Research office contacted faculty via email regarding their availability and willingness to allow a focus group within their classroom. Four faculty allowed the focus groups to take place for the first 30 minutes of their usual class time. The four focus group sessions were

conducted in the spring term of 2018 on April 3rd, 23rd, 24th, and 26th. The four courses were BUS-160 Business Ethics, MATH-140 Introductory Statistics, PSYCH-101 Introduction to Psychology, and SOCI-137 Statistics for Social Science. Two facilitators facilitated each focus group. One facilitator primarily asked questions and discussed with students while the other facilitator documented the responses.

Participants were encouraged to share their opinions freely without fear of negative repercussions. Seventy-five students out of the 84 students were present and participated in the focus group during the designated class time; the other nine students were absent the day their class' focus group took place.

We identified student IDs by matching course section number within our 320 referential file. We then used those student IDs for all possible 84 students across the four classes and made a match to demographic records. The following demographics are for the total 84 students enrolled across the four courses sampled.

Results

Demographics & Background

Age. Ten respondents (11.9%) were under the age of 18, 27 students (32.1%) were between the ages of 18-20, 31 respondents (36.9%) were between the ages of 21-24, nine respondents (10.7%) were between the ages of 25-34, and seven respondents (8.3%) were age 35 and above.

<u>Gender.</u> There were 45 (53.5%) female respondents and 39 (46.4%) male respondents.

Ethnicity. The sampled focus group respondents were African American/Black (6%), Asian American (7.1%), Filipino (9.5%), Latinx (47.6%), White (26.2%), Other Non-White (1.2%), and "Unknown" (2.4%).

First-Generation. Twenty-five respondents (29.8%) were first generation college respondents.

<u>Terms of Enrollment at COC.</u> Ten respondents (11.9%) were still in high school (concurrently enrolled). Nine (10.7%) were in their first term. Twelve respondents (14.3%) enrolled at COC between 2-4 terms. Fifty-three respondents (63.1%) enrolled at COC for more than 4 terms.

<u>Day Time vs. Night Time Courses.</u> Two of the four courses sampled were evening classes. Thirty-three respondents (39.3%) of the total 84 respondents interviewed were from the evening courses.

District Residence. 41.7% of the respondents reside outside of the district boundaries.

<u>Special Courses.</u> One class was a Personalized Accelerated Learning (PAL) class and one was an Open Education Resource (OER) class.

The demographics of the focus group respondents is similar to the overall student demographics for the spring 2018 term. The following section presents the focus group findings with regard to the schedule of classes' layout and content and the suggestions that respondents provided during the focus groups.

Focus Group Findings

Student Familiarity with Schedule of Classes

Question 1: How many of you have seen a printed schedule or received one in your home?

Only 26% of our sampled students had seen and/or received the schedule of classes prior to our focus group meeting. Specific results by course were as follows:

- Course one (24 students present): only one student had seen it and received it at their home.
- Course two (27 students present): six students had seen it and received it at their home.
- Course three (8 students present): none had seen the schedule or received it at home.
- Course four (25 students present): thirteen students had seen it and received it at their home.

Question 2: How many of you have used a printed schedule or known someone who has used the printed schedule? Did it prompt you or someone else who wasn't otherwise planning to attend College of the Canyons, to enroll?

Only one student within each of the four classes used the printed schedule to enroll.
 Across three of the four classes, zero students knew someone else who used the printed version. Only one student from one course had given their schedule of classes to a neighbor so they could see the offering of classes.

Student Preference for sample A, B, C, or D of Schedule of Classes

Question 3: Given the available formats, what is your preference at first glance, A or B or C or D?

Sample A: is a simplified course schedule with fewer details (see appendix).

Sample B: has more details but no course description (see appendix).

Sample C: has basic details but no instructor or room description (see appendix).

Sample D: is a full schedule with maximum details similar to a course catalog (see appendix).

Overwhelmingly, across the four classes, sample B was the preferred option. However, the main suggestion was that different groupings with sub-dividers of the classes would help with being able to more easily see and read the material. Specifically, sub dividers and different colors would help with the simplicity so that it is easier to read.

- Course one: these students preferred sample B, they liked the simplicity of it. They suggested dividing or "breaking up" the course information in terms of formatting (e.g., groups of classes or by color). Further, there does not need to be a room number included into the content of the schedule of classes. Most students said this was not important for the purposes of planning. Eighteen students total voted for this format but with a different color scheme.
- Course two: these students preferred sample B because they felt it was the most similar to the online website of classes and it most reflects what they see online. They felt D had too much information and that perhaps D was only useful for first time students but not for the academic planning of continuing students. Another suggestion was to apply the color and look of sample A to the content in sample B.

- Course three: these students felt sample A was the easiest to read but that it didn't provide all necessary information needed. Sample B was the preferred schedule. They felt sample B was more "to the point".
- Course four: these students thought sample B was very concise and they appreciated the simplicity of the format. They felt that days, times, and instructor are key information to be included in a schedule of classes and sample B has this information.

Question 4: What do you like/dislike about the printed schedules?

The overwhelming response was in favor of Packet B. Most students felt Packet D had too much information and Packet A was too vague.

- "I don't like the vagueness of the (M, E, A) in Packet A. I did not know they meant morning, evening, or afternoon. I don't think that's very helpful I would need more detail."
- "Packet D has too much information that you don't need to plan your course enrollment."
- "Overall I like sample B, it has all the details I want but it looks too clustered, if it could look a little more like sample A, that'd be great."

Student Suggestions

Most all of the students wanted a copy of the schedule of classes mailed to their home. Across the four courses, 28 students said they would appreciate having the chosen version of the schedule of classes available digitally via a pdf, accessible perhaps through CANVAS or their email for printing. This was especially the case for students who lived outside the district who were concerned they would not receive a printed schedule of classes. Across three courses, 15 students said they would like to have PAL and OER information listed within the schedule of classes. Individual sample comments included:

- "I think it would be a good idea to have a couple of blank sheets at the end of the schedule to map out two or three different schedules."
- "I think it would be useful to add whether the specific instructor is a CANVAS user or not, because this impacts whether I take the course or not. I prefer only CANVAS user instructors."
- "It would be helpful to add the estimated cost of course materials/books."
- "I would like to have the finished product available to me in a pdf format as well."
- Include information as to whether a particular course is a PAL or OER course.

Recommendations

The participants in the focus groups provided valuable information on what students prefer to see within a printed schedule of classes concerning the content, layout, and format. These findings are limited to students from these four courses. Exact information regarding particular demographics of each student in connection to their opinions and preferences were not the focus of this report and therefore were not recorded. Upon review of the focus group comments, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- Consider a schedule of classes similar in content and layout to sample B for the 2018-2019 academic school year.
- Consider including other details about each course such as; whether the instructor organizes their course materials via CANVAS or whether the course is a PAL or OER designated course.
- Consider providing a digital version of the schedule of classes available to all students via CANVAS or MyCanyons, regardless of district residence.
- Further, the public information office may want to consider allowing for the printed schedule of classes to be available not only to every resident of the Santa Clarita Valley district but also to students who are actively enrolled at College of the Canyons but who reside outside of the district boundaries. This could ensure not only that advertising of the college is successful but also that all students are equally able to succeed in their academic planning.

Appendix: Sample Layouts for the Schedule of Classes

Figure 1. Sample Schedule A

COURSE NA	ME COURSE TITLE	Valencia	Canyon Country	Online
Admini	stration of Justice			
) FALL				
ADMJUS-10 ADMJUS-11 ADMJUS-12 ADMJUS-13 ADMJUS-13 ADMJUS-16 ADMJUS-16 ADMJUS-17 ADMJUS-18	Introduction to Administration of Justice Principles & Procedures Criminal Law Substantive Criminal Law Report Writing for Law Enforcement Criminal Evidence Criminal Investigation Enforcement/Investigation Organized Crime & Vice	M M M, E M M, A A E E	M, E E M	×
▶ SPRING	G 2018	S SUPERIOR	STATE OF THE PARTY	Philippins
ADMJUS-101 ADMJUS-110 ADMJUS-126 ADMJUS-130 ADMJUS-135 ADMJUS-135 ADMJUS-175 ADMJUS-180	Principles & Procedures Criminal Law Substantive Criminal Law Report Writing for Law Enforcement Criminal Evidence	M M M, E M, E M E	E E E	
Anthrope	ology	1000		
FALL 20	17	-		,
ANTHRO-101 ANTHRO-101L ANTHRO-103 ANTHRO-210 ANTHRO-220	Physical Anthropology Physical Anthropology Lab Cultural Anthropology Introduction to Archaeology Indians of California Magic, Witchcraft & Religion	M. A. E M. A M. A. E A A M	M M, A M, A	×
PSPRING	2018			
ANTHRO-101 ANTHRO-101L ANTHRO-103 ANTHRO-105 ANTHRO-210 ANTHRO-220	Physical Anthropology Physical Anthropology Lab Cultural Anthropology Introduction to Archaeology Indians of California Magic, Witchcraft & Religion ural Drafting	M, A, E M, A M, A, E A M M	M, A, M, A M, A	
PALL 201 ARCHT-084 ARCHT-096L ARCHT-100 ARCHT-110 ARCHT-110 ARCHT-140 ARCHT-160 ARCHT-200A ARCHT-200B ARCHT-270	Digital Illustration for Architecture & Interior Design Architectural Drafting Cad Lab Careors in Architecture, Interior Design Architectural Drafting Design I - Elements of Architectural Design Materials & Methods of Construction 2-D CAD for Architecture & Interior Design Sustainable Development/Environmental Design Design III-Environmental Design Lab Advanced 3-D CAD & Building Information Modeling	M A E E M E E M		×
		3 3%	1	

Figure 2. Sample Schedule B

	199	VALENCIA (CAM	IPUS - SESS	ION I (Ji	ine 5 – J	uly o)				
SECT	ION COURSE ID	TITLE	UNITS	INSTRUCTOR	DAYS	START TIME	END TIME	START DATE	END DATE	ROOM	
	43 ADMJUS-101	Introduction to Admin. of Justice	3	Pinho, C	TWTH	07:30AM	11:00AM			SCOH-203 SCOH-203 SCOH-203 SCOH-203	
	14 ADMJUS-135	Criminal Evidence	3	Pinho, C Alvarez, L	TWTH	11:10AM 02:50PM	02:40PM 06:20PM	06/06/17		SCOH-203 SCOH-203	1
	45 ADMJUS-150	Police Field Operations Police-Community Relations	3	Gasior, R	TWTH	06:30PM	10:00PM	06/06/17		SCOH-203	1
	46 ADMJUS-185 57 ANTHRO-103	Cultural Anthropology	3	Kirwin, A	TWTH	07:30AM	11:00AM	06/06/17	07/06/17	BYKH-105	
2716		Cultural Anthropology	3	Feldmeier, K	TWTH	11:10AM	02:40PM	06/06/17	07/06/17	ICUE-122	
2716		Cultural Anthropology	3	Ramos, G	MTW	11:10AM 11:10AM	02:40PM 02:40PM	06/05/17 06/06/17	07/05/17		
2717	O ANTHRO-220 ARCHT-110	Magic, Witchcraft and Religon Architectural Drafting I	3	Kirwin, A Oliver, J	MTWTH	09:00AM	01:30PM	06/05/17		MENH-223	
	1 ART-110	Art History: Paleo to Renaissance	3	Jenkins, D	TWTH	11:30AM	03:00PM	06/06/17	07/06/17	BONH-13	
	5 ART-111	Art History: Renaissance to Modern	3	Staff	MTWTH	07:15PM	09:45PM	06/05/17		MENH-253	
	0 ASTRON-100	Survey of General Astronomy	3	Levine, D	TWTH	07:30AM	11:00AM	06/06/17		TWSH-107	
	3 ASTRON-101	Stars and Galaxies	3	Staff Francis, J	TWTH	11:10AM 06:30PM	02:40PM 10:00PM	06/06/17			
2725 2725		Introduction to Business Principles of Management	3	Hawkins, P	MTW	06:30PM	10:00PM	06/05/17		7 HSLH-304	
	2 BUS-211	Business Law	3	Gilbert, S	MTW	11:10AM	02:40PM			7 HSLH-233	
	1 CHEM-151	Preparatory General Chemistry	4	Flynn, K	MTWTH	10:10AM	12:40PM	06/05/17		7 ALLB-321	
	LAB			Lasif A	HTWTH	01:10PM 07:30AM	03:40PM 10:00AM	06/05/13		7 BYKH-304 7 HSLH-230	
27690		Preparatory General Chemistry	4	Latif, A	MTWTH	10:20AM		06/05/1			
2760	LAB CHEM-151	Preparatory General Chemistry	4	Piao, T	MTWTH	07:30AM		06/05/1		7 BYKH-304	
2/093	LAB	cparatory outlier enermony	1		MTWTH	10:10AM	12:40PM	06/05/1	7 07/06/1		
27692	CHEM-151	Preparatory General Chemistry	4	Gopal, B	MTWTH	01:15PM		06/05/1			
	LAB			M-D D	MTWTH	04:00PM		06/05/1			
27694	CHEM-151	Preparatory General Chemistry	4	McBroom, R	MTWTH	04:30PM 07:10PM				17 BYKH-304	
27200	CINEMA-123	American Cinema: Crossing Cult.	3	Santi, G	MTW	11:10AM				17 HSLH-101	
27355		Introduction to Programming	3	Riveira, B	MTWTH	10:10AM		06/05/1			
	CMPSCI-235	C Programming	3	Riveira, B	MTWTH	01:00PM				17 LTLC-161	
	COMS-105	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Leach, M	MTWTH	07:30AN				17 HSLH-135	
	COMS-105	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Leach, M	HTWTH	10:10AN				17 HSLH-135 17 HSLH-135	
	COMS-105	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Leach, M	TWTH	01:00PM 06:30PM				17 HSLH-135	
	COMS-105	Fundamentals of Public Speaking Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Ward, M Stevenson, D	HTWTH	07:30AN				17 HSLH-205	
27400	COMS-105 COMS-105	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Stevenson, D	MTWTH	10:10AN		06/05/	17 07/06/	17 HSLH-205	
27406		Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Haley, K	MTWTH	06:30PN					
	COMS-105 *	Fundamentals of Public Speaking		McKaig, M	F	07:30AI				/17 HSLH-205	
27409	COMS-120	Small Group Communication	3	Johnson, L	WTW	06:30PN				/17 HSLH-204 /17 SSC-118	
	COUNS-150	Student Success	3 2	Reardon, A	MTW MT	07:30AN 09:00AN					
27811	CULARTS-050	Knife Skills	2	Otto, D	MT	11:00A					
27012	CULARTS-055	Culinary Safety and Sanitation	1	Guillard, H	MT	06:00PM					
	CULARTS-121	Culinary Fundamentals I	3	Bustillos, M	TWTH	08:00A				/17 ICUE-122	
2,013	LAB				TWTH	10:30A				5/17 ICUE-103	
27814	CULARTS-127	Principles of Baking	3	Schwanke, C	TWTH	09:00Al					
	LAB		2.5	O++- D	TWTH	11:00Al 09:00Al					
27815		International Cuisine	2.5	Otto, D	WTH	11:30A					
27642	LAB	Introduction to Voga	1	Curtis, S	MTWTH						
	DANCE-180	Introduction to Yoga Child Growth and Development	3		TWTH	11:10A				6/17 ECED-B	
	ECE-101 ECON-201	Macroeconomics	3	Su, B	MTW	07:30A					
	ECON-202	Microeconomics	3	Su, B	MTW	11:10A				5/17 HSLH-206	
	ENGL-091	Intro. to College Reading/Writing	3	Jung, E	TWTH	07:30A				6/17 BONH-301 6/17 BONH-308	
27171	ENGL-091	Intro. to College Reading/Writing	3	Otoo, S	MTWTH					6/17 BONH-308	
	ENGL-091	Intro. to College Reading/Writing	3	Antler, A	MTWTH	03:40P 02:50P				05/17 BONH-309	
	ENGL-091	Intro. to College Reading/Writing Intro. to College Reading/Writing	3	Hoelle, N	MTWTH					06/17 MENH-234	
	ENGL-091		3	Rawley, K Small, J	TWTH	02:50P				06/17 BONH-301	
	ENGL-101	English Composition English Composition	3	Otoo, S	MTWTH					06/17 BONH-308	
	ENGL-101 ENGL-101	English Composition	3	Albert, J	MTWTH		M 09:00	PM 06/0		06/17 BONH-308	
	ENGL-101	English Composition	3	Wallace, L	MTW	07:30/	AM 11:00			05/17 BONH-309	
	ENGL-101	English Composition	3	Francois, A	MTWTH					06/17 MENH-234	
	ENGL-101	English Composition	3	Portillo, D	MTWTH					06/17 MENH-234	
	ENGL-103	Critical Reading/Writing/Thinking		Kent, E	TWTH	11:10/				06/17 BONH-301	
	ENGL-103	Critical Reading/Writing/Thinking		Berman, C	MTWTH					06/17 BONH-308 05/17 BONH-309	
	ENGL-103	Critical Reading/Writing/Thinking		Collins, G	WTW	11:10/				05/17 BONH-309	
7204	ENGL-103	Critical Reading/Writing/Thinking	3	Wallace, D	MTW	00.30	10.00			50, 11 DOM1-303	
				COLLE	GE OF THE C	ANYONS -	SCHEDUL	AT-A-GL	ANCE · SU	MMER 2017	5

Figure 3. Sample Schedule C

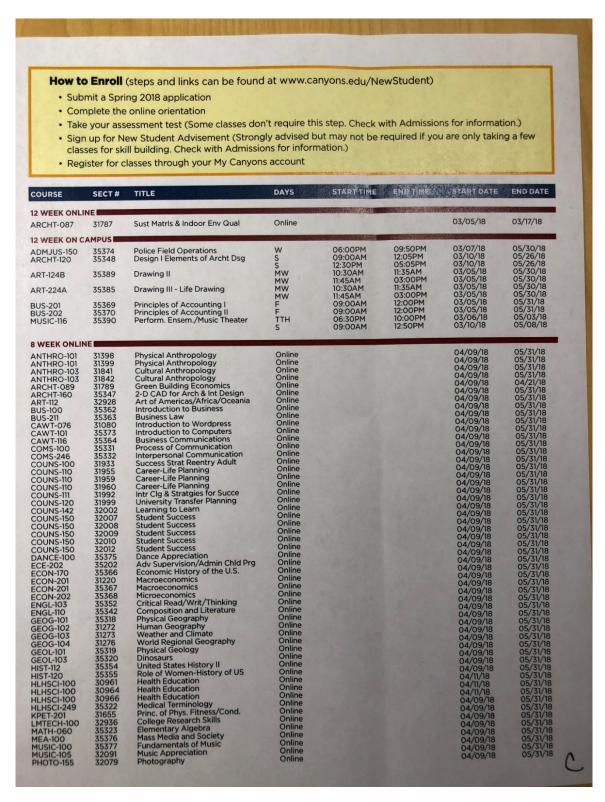


Figure 4. Sample Schedule D

