

To: Ken Baerenklau  
Associate provost

From: Jeff Sacks  
Chair, Comparative Literature and Languages

Re: Lower-division language course pre-scheduling agreement

This is to request that the pre-scheduling agreement, created in order to provide for the scheduling of lower-division language courses, which meek on a four-day-per-week pattern, in INTS 2136, INTS 2138, HMNSS 1400, HMNSS 1401, SPR 2356, SPR 2361, OLMH 1122, and OLMH 1127, be retained.

### 1. Background Information

This pre-scheduling agreement is essential for the functioning of the ten majors and thirteen language programs housed in our Department. The language programs we staff, supervise, support, and run include: Arabic, Cahuilla, Chinese, Classical Greek, Filipino, French, German, Italian, Korean, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Vietnamese. These language programs provide basic, intermediate, and advanced language training for graduate and undergraduate students across UCR; they also enable students in CHASS, CNAS, and other Colleges at UCR with language breadth requirements to complete those requirements in a timely way to enable students' timely completion of the degrees.

To run these programs we employ, depending on the year, some 25 lecturers, with advanced training in language pedagogy in the particular language areas in which they teach. Since our language programs require particular forms of specialization which require life-long and intensive commitment, knowledge, and learning, it is extremely difficult to recruit and retain qualified candidates; it is impossible to replace candidates on short notice, regardless of the reason. For example, if a scheduling conflict arises and our lecturer for 3<sup>rd</sup> year Chinese cannot teach a particular course, it will not be possible for us to easily find a replacement, in particular on short notice—but also more generally—because a qualified applicant pool, who will be able to take on the role in the required time frame, and with the required training, does not exist. The same applies in the case of most our other languages, including Japanese, Korean, Arabic, Vietnamese, Filipino, Latin, Greek, Russian, and others. Since our need is skill-based, and not solely knowledge based, and since we require lecturers with life-long language skills and teaching commitment, we have found it necessary to organize our programs so that we can accommodate scheduling requirements of our lecturers. This context differs substantially from other contexts; for example, to replace a lecturer with content knowledge in Math or Business, for example, or in the writing program, would require a focused recruitment, but our recruitment—in a comparable context and within a comparable time frame—will face challenges that are different in kind, because of the scarcity in the applicant pool, and the kinds of knowledge and skills required.

Because we hire lecturers with particular language skills, and because that cannot be replaced by other lecturers with skills that may seem proximate (our lecturers in Italian cannot teach German; our lecturers in Korean cannot teach Arabic), we have historically gone to significant efforts to accommodate our lecturers' scheduling needs. So, for example, our lecturer in Filipino lives in Anaheim, and does not own a car; she takes three busses to commute to UCR on teaching days, and for this reason she can teach between 10am and 3pm, but neither before nor after; our lecturer in Greek teaches Middle school, as does one of our lecturers in Italian, and we make every effort to accommodate their schedules so that they can teach at UCR. Our lecturer in Arabic and our senior lecturer in Korean teach at Cal State San Bernardino, and we make every effort to accommodate their schedules as well; one of our senior lecturers in Chinese teaches High School in the afternoon, and so we schedule her to teach in the morning only, between 8am and 11am. There are many other examples that parallel these. Because the majority of our Lecturers hold more than one job, scheduling, for most of our lecturers, does not relate to a preference but to an urgent financial need.

Our most important requirement, in terms of language scheduling, is that we retain a capacity to schedule consistently over time. This will allow us to plan and account for our lecturers' complex work and commuting schedules, a need I've outlined above. It will also allow us to plan and account for the needs of our Ph.D. program in Comparative Literature; since a number of our language courses are taught by teaching assistants in our Ph.D. program, we need to be able to consistently schedule our lower-division language courses that are taught by these teaching assistants, so that they do not conflict with our graduate seminars, which are generally taught on M,T,W, and R, from 2-5 or 3-6. Since a core mission of my Department is to support and develop its graduate program, and since a core aspect of graduate student training involves their gaining experience as teaching assistants in the various languages in which they work, retaining control over the scheduling of lower-division language courses enables us to fulfill this core aspect of our Department's mission. Were we to lose this capacity, our graduate program would be quite significantly, and negatively, affected.

The Department of Comparative Literature and Languages has, over the past five years, run approximately 50 lower-division language courses per quarter. Our courses cap at 25; on average our courses enroll at 22 students per course. This means that we seat approximately 1,100 students per quarter, and 3,300 students per year, in these courses.

## 2. Options Considered

Since I became Chair of the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages in July 2017, we have experience significant scheduling challenges in relation to our lower-division language courses. In order to coordinate our language courses with the majors to which they are related (for example, the Japanese major requires that students take courses in Japanese language, literature, and culture; the same is the case for our majors and minors in German, Italian, Chinese, Arabic, and others), each language program is coordinated by a Senate faculty member, who is responsible for allocating teaching roles and proposing course schedules for Lecturers on a quarterly basis. Historically, this has meant that our Department has forwarded a

schedule of courses for each language program, which is collated, along with the language courses in the Hispanic Studies Department, by the Enrollment Manager and, then, Registrar. In my experience as Chair, each quarter, after the Registrar would run the scheduling algorithm, a number of lower-division language courses in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages would be returned to us as unschedulable, after first, second, and third time-slot options had been taken into account. This would then lead to the quite unenviable situation, where 5 or 6 lecturers needed to change their course schedules one quarter in advance of the time when that schedule was to be implemented; this led to massive complications, the reorganization of program teaching schedules, the collapse of sections—and event that has long-term program enrollment consequences—and other undesirable outcomes; it is this quandary which led me to re-think our approach to scheduling these courses in general.

To re-think scheduling in this way, I met, on several occasions, and for some duration in each instance, with Ryan Lipinski (Director of Enrollment Management), Suzy Sharweed (Advisor Supervisor), and Liz Sanchez (Enrollment Manager). The consensus that we reached was that each Department in question—Comparative Literature and Languages and Hispanic Studies—should assume complete control over the scheduling of the 8 language teaching rooms. At that time, Ryan Lipinski studied the enrollment histories of both Departments over a 5-year period, and determined that, historically, Comparative Literature and Languages has offered approximately 50 lower-division language courses per quarter, and Hispanic Studies, 30. Based upon this information, the two Department Chairs agreed to split the 8 rooms—5 were devoted to Comparative Literature and Languages, and 3 to Hispanic Studies—and to assume full responsibility for scheduling them.

What this has meant, for Comparative Literature and Languages, is that the Department Chair has effectively assumed the role of master scheduler for these courses. In consultation with Ryan, Suzy, and Liz, we developed a series of rules, to be followed by each program in creating their lower-division language schedules. These are: (1) each program may schedule no more than half of its courses in prime time; (2) each program may not teach more than one course during a given hour; (3) large programs must teach at least one course from 8-9am and one from 5-6pm; (4) smaller programs must teach one course at one of these two times. I also built in a measure of flexibility, where some of our very small programs—Greek and Latin, for example—were allowed a greater measure of flexibility; for example, were we to offer Greek 1 at 8am—and we teach one section of Greek per quarter—we would, effectively, be ending the Greek language program at UCR, and this, we all agreed, was not a desirable outcome. Finally, the Department Chair collates all of the requests, and schedules these 50 sections; this schedule is passed on to the Enrollment manager, and, then, to the Registrar, who schedules these courses as requested.

We implemented this new process this Fall, and it has worked spectacularly; programs have more control over scheduling; the Department is able to ensure that lecturers and teaching assistants are assigned to teach courses that do not conflict with job responsibilities or commuting requirements (in the case of our lecturers) or graduate seminars (in the case of our graduate students). The one whose work load was most significantly impacted by these

changes was the Department Chair, who has, in effect, taken in the role of scheduling these courses.

Finally, were the scheduling of these course to be absorbed into the new standard scheduling procedure, where they would be put into competition with other courses that wished to be scheduled on a M,T,W,R pattern, we would be back where we were when I began Chairing my Department in July 2017. Each quarter there would be a number of lecturers whose courses could not be scheduled, and, because of the scarcity of rooms, would be asked to teach at times when they could not teach, because of financial, job-related, commute-related and other reasons, which I've described above. Since this created, in the recent past, outcomes that had significant negative consequences, I strongly recommend that the pre-scheduling agreement be retained. Since our teaching needs require lecturers with particular skill-sets, and because of the experience, training, and lived sensibility with and knowledge of languages required to teaching a language course, our lecturers are not interchangeable and cannot simply be replaced. We require a solution that accommodates needs; produces continuity and predictability, and, therefore, ensures the present and future success of our language programs and our students.

### 3. My Request

This is to request that the pre-scheduling agreement, for the teaching of lower-division language courses in 8 designated rooms, for the Departments of Comparative Literature and Hispanic Studies, be retained. This agreement, and our recent implementation of a new scheduling procedure for these rooms, described above, is essential to the delivery of our language programs, our majors and minors, and our Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. It allows us to have autonomy in scheduling; it allows us to meet the unique needs of our lecturers; it allows us to provide for predictability for our lecturers, so that they can manage the jobs they need to retain in order to earn a livelihood; it allows us to best focus the resources of the University toward the very targeted need that language teaching is; and, finally, it allows us to serve the entire campus by proving language training—including the capacity to complete language breadth requirements—for students at all levels.

**DATE:** January 23, 2019

**TO:** UCR Course Scheduling Committee

**FR:** Amit Roy-Chowdhury, Chair  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

**RE:** Pre-assignment of graduate seminars (EE 260)



**Background:** The Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) graduate program includes 125 Ph.D. students and 30 M.S. students. EE 260 graduate seminars are required courses for both the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Electrical Engineering. Between 50 to 70 ECE graduate students enroll in graduate seminar courses each year. In 2018-2019, we offer eight seminar courses covering all major areas of the ECE graduate curriculum.

**Options considered:** These seminar-type courses achieve two important goals:

- A. Long-term seminar courses represent high-level Ph.D. courses needed for Ph.D. students to ease their transition from classrooms to research labs. These are typically offered in years two and three of Ph.D. studies and are tailored for deep understanding of the contemporary research issues. Removing these type of classes will substantially impede the transition to research and will lengthen our typical time to Ph.D. defense beyond four to five years.
- B. Transitional seminar courses represent new offerings needed to broaden the general graduate curriculum. These offerings depend on new research directions for both new and established faculty. They may or may not become regular classes after one to three years, depending on students' interests and enrollments. ECE as a field is witnessing rapid progress and it is necessary to introduce students to recent developments in a field on a continuous basis. These classes also allow ECE to launch pilot programs on a faster pace, without going through the formal approval by the Graduate Council and the Committee on Courses.

**ECE Request:** The ECE department requests to retain EE 260 graduate seminars in the pre-assignment agreement. Both types of seminars detailed above are of paramount importance for the ECE curriculum. Most graduate students take these classes in their first and second years in the program. In particular, about 50 graduate students are taking 260-numbered classes in academic year 2018-19.

In summary, these classes accomplish two goals:

1. Faster transition to research for Ph.D. students (type A);
2. Broader appeal and enrichment of the general graduate curriculum (type B).

**Chair approval and support:** Thus, these classes help us to achieve ECE programmatic goals and we strongly suggest to keep them in the ECE curriculum. We also need full pre-assignment of these classes to make better plans and scheduling for students and faculty to accommodate both teaching assignments and instruction. Cancelling these plans will substantially hinder regular planning and class enrollment.

## Michelle Jaramillo

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**From:** Katherine A Borkovich  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 2, 2019 9:39 PM  
**To:** Ken Baerenklau  
**Cc:** Kathy Redd; Studentdeancnas; James Borneman; Cheryl L Gerry  
**Subject:** Request to establish a Prescheduling Agreement for MCBL/BIOL 121L

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Ken:

Kathy Redd and Connie Nugent let me know that the Introductory Microbiology Laboratory course (MCBL/BIOL121L) does not currently have a Prescheduling Agreement. The Registrar's Office told Kathy that the list they provided is comprehensive and that MCBL 121L never had a special agreement and that they were just able to accommodate the time during regular scheduling.

If we continue to ask for Tuesday at 8:10-9:00 am, the class would be scheduled outside of "Prime Time" even in the new guidelines; however, it will still be non-standard because it meets only 1 day a week for 1 hour and it is a one hour class on a Tuesday when standard meeting patterns on Tuesdays are 1.5 hours. In the new scheduling guidelines that take effect in Fall 2019, this would put MCBL 121L in the next-to-lowest category of scheduling priority: Non-standard Primary Activities

We are requesting that you grant MCBL/BIOL 121L a prescheduling agreement, for the following reasons:

- 1) BIOL/MCBL121L only has one 1-hr lecture/week. Therefore, the lectures for this course can not be held on Mondays, due to Monday holidays (we lose too many lecture meetings).
- 2) BIOL/MCBL121L has laboratory exercises that span several weeks. Again, due to Monday holidays, we can not use a MW laboratory schedule.
- 3) Because of the above two points, we need the lectures for BIOL/MCBL121L to be held early on Tuesdays, 8:10-9:00 AM. This ensures that students in the Tuesday afternoon and evening labs are able to hear the lecture material for that week prior to their lab section. Therefore, we are requesting that BIOL/MCBL121L have a prescheduling agreement to allow the lectures to be scheduled for 8-9am on Tuesdays for each quarter it is taught (currently Winter and Spring).

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks and Best Regards,  
Kathy Borkovich

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