SAFC meeting
Date: February 12, 12-1pm
Location: Zoom
Attendees: Gabriel Dadi, Brian Higgins, Samuel Franklin, Yung Soo Kim, Kiersten Wise, Akiko Takenaka

The group discussed the findings from the feedback that Gabe, Yung Soo, and Akiko received from department chairs and course schedulers in the Colleges of Engineering, Communication and Information, and Arts & Sciences, respectively.

The emails went out on January 22, 2024, with a response deadline of February 2, 2024.

Feedback received from:
- A&S 6 departments
- Eng 2 departments and the associate dean for undergraduate education and student success
- C&I 1 department

Key takeaways from the feedback:
- Whitehall going offline seems to have exacerbated the existing problems with course scheduling in which the University registrar's office sends back course schedules with some courses without rooms to the department schedulers. While WHCB was online, these kinds of incidents were few and far in between. (I scheduled for my department for three years and only remember a handful of such situations.) Now, the University registrar's office is sending back course schedules to departments with sometimes dozens of courses without rooms. The scheduler and the college registrar have been working overtime to remedy the situation.
- Department chairs and schedulers feel that they were not given adequate guidance on how differently to schedule courses. The guidance was: just spread classes out, schedule classes at 8am and after 2pm. (This was the case for A&S)
- Department chairs are worried about fairness among their faculty and faculty productivity. Many faculty cannot accommodate different teaching schedules due to family, etc., obligations. As a result, others have stepped up to accommodate those who logistically cannot teach early/late. Some faculty are scheduled to teach four/five days a week, which is detrimental to their research.
- Some departments (e.g. Math, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering) seem to be disproportionately affected due to the number of large courses they offer.
- Many departments in the College of Engineering have a unique difficulty in that many majors do not have much flexibility in course selections. Example: if a 100 course that Engineering students need to take during their freshman year to become a major is only being offered at 8am, there arises a concern that the number of majors would decrease.
- Some departments (C&I) have been asked to change the meeting pattern of large lecture because rooms are not available. Suggested meeting patterns include changing a TR

class to MWF, offering hybrid options, and holding lecture only once a week rather than twice.

Recommendations/questions:

- Encourage faculty to check out their assigned rooms for Fall 2024
- Messaging to colleges that are not directly affected about the renovation so that they will be more receptive to courses outside their colleges being scheduled in their buildings.

- More precise guidance (e.g., "X percent of classes in each department can be scheduled during X times") to ensure equity across departments. This can be difficult due to the varying nature of course requirements. Some majors have more restrictions compared to others. How do we ensure equity across departments and colleges?
- Recognizing additional labor for those involved (department scheduler, chair, college registrar) → how should this happen? do they need additional support? Can we make the registrar's office do more rather than sending schedules with unresolved issues to colleges and departments?
- Are there ways to ensure that key courses (e.g., 1st year required course for Engineering) receive priority scheduling so that it does not affect enrollment in the major?

Bigger takeaway
- Everything depends on the full construction schedule for the entire campus since we seem to be relying on the increase in classroom space that is supposed to result from multiple ongoing projects. Can we be confident that all of the construction will proceed in a timely manner?
- What is the priority for the university with these renovations and additions? Is it just to make sure that there are no empty classrooms between 8am and 5pm? How does this goal affect our pedagogical goals and faculties' research productivity?

Next steps:
Fall 2024
- Follow up on student enrollment in Fall 2024 courses (start of the semester)
- Follow up on faculty productivity (end of semester)