Buffalo State Policy on Classroom Instructional Labs

Approved May 8, 2014

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Computer labs, including classroom instructional labs, are a significant part of the academic mission for many programs on campus and essential for student success. The need for instructor-led class time as well as individual work time is required for many courses using both common and specialized software and hardware.

The campus is also required to attain instructional computer lab utilization standards as determined by SUNY.

Buffalo State must manage its space resources with the greatest care to fully realize our academic potential and full value of our facilities.

The goals of this policy are to:

1. Maximize the number of appropriate classes scheduled in the classroom instructional labs
2. Consolidate classroom instructional labs in an effort to reduce the number of labs in which expensive titles must be available
3. Maximize access to hardware and software for students to complete their assignments
4. Ensure the integrity and availability specialized labs
5. Reduce costs

The following statements of principle are provided to govern the scheduling and management of all classroom instructional labs at SUNY Buffalo State. These principles apply to all campus units – academic, administrative, housing, and student services.

1. Classroom instructional labs are considered generally scheduled rooms.
2. Specialized labs will be exempt from general scheduling. A list of specialized labs will be determined by Academic Deans, the Registrar, and the Chief Information Officer.
3. Training labs are not considered classroom instructional labs.
4. In order to allow classroom instructional labs to be scheduled as efficiently as possible, open (non-classroom) labs must be open to all Buffalo State students who need access to computers to complete assignments.
5. Appropriate software will be made available outside of classroom instructional labs.
6. Courses that require students to use a computer during class will be given priority in scheduling classroom instructional labs over those that do not.
7. All scheduled time for classroom instructional labs will be maintained in a central scheduling repository to allow visibility into availability.
8. After classes are scheduled for a semester, departments may reserve open time in their classroom instructional labs for students to work on class assignments if the required software is not otherwise available in open labs on campus. This scheduled open time should be posted appropriately.

9. Planning for new spaces, including scheduling classroom instructional labs for classes, must, to the extent possible, match projected enrollment with room capacity. When planning new or renovated spaces, existing lab capacity and projected enrollments should be taken into consideration.

10. Departments will not have to bear the expense of printing in generally scheduled computer labs.

Definitions

Computer Lab: any space with more than one computer intended for student use.

Classroom Instructional Lab: a computer lab that includes installed audio/visual presentation equipment and a computer at each student station and configured with the institution’s standard software. Specialized software may be installed for departmental needs by request. These rooms are primarily used for scheduled classes and open when classes are not scheduled in the room. These labs may have limited hours including restricted usage and printing by college departments.

Open Lab: a non-departmental computer lab with multiple computers that is open to the general student population and usually not scheduled for classes.

Generally Scheduled: This term applies to all spaces that are scheduled for courses after pre-assignment.

Pre-assigned: Courses for departments given scheduling priority for a Classroom Instructional Lab will be scheduled in the lab before it is scheduled for other departments or made available for open lab time.

Specialized Computer Lab: a room with multiple computers that is only open to the department and not open to the general student population. The facility supports department courses with discipline-specific courseware installed on the computers and may contain specialized equipment not intended for general use. The room may or may not have an instructor station.

Training Lab: Any lab with computers and software and/or A/V equipment that is not generally scheduled for classes and not typically used for student instruction.

Utilization: Planning guidelines adopted in the Buffalo State Facilities Master Plan have a goal for specialized instructional spaces (computer labs) which is 50% utilization of the daytime scheduling window (20hrs. of the 40.5 hours available) and a station occupancy rate of 80%.
Revision History

Original version: May 8, 2014