

# Guidelines for Common Time, 2009-2010

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In Spring 2009, the Provost announced the creation of “Common Time,” four hours each week when no undergraduate classes are to be scheduled. The purpose of Common Time is to provide time for events and meetings that build community and facilitate the achievement of the University Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. Cross-unit meetings and open events are privileged during Common Time, though meetings of staff units and departments of instruction are privileged on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

The following table shows the general guidelines for how Common Times will be used each month, September –May, beginning Fall 2009. It is a temporary set of policies, subject to revision as our experience with Common Time evolves.

## Guidelines for Common Time Usage:

1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday Restricted to a single community event, determined by the Provost. No other meetings or events will be scheduled.	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday Department and Unit meetings are privileged. Other meetings & events for faculty and staff are discouraged. Events and meetings for students are permitted.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday Meetings of UF and SBG committees are privileged. Other events and meetings permitted if they do not require members of UF/SBG committees to attend.
4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.
5 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.	5 <sup>th</sup> Thursday Open for all cross-unit events and meetings.

## FAQ: Questions Frequently Asked about Common Time:

### Q: What is Common Time?

A: Common Time at Gallaudet is a twice weekly period of time each during the Fall and Spring semesters when undergraduate classes are not scheduled. For the academic year 2009-2010, Common Time will occur each Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 PM to 2:20 PM.

### Q: Why do graduate classes still meet during Common Time?

A: Some graduate programs do not control when their classes are able to meet, because they must yield to schedules set by agencies providing critical internship and practicum experiences. Graduate

programs will do their best to minimize the number of classes and department meetings scheduled during Common Time so that graduate faculty and students can participate in the activities offered.

**Q: What is the purpose of Common Time?**

A: The purpose of Common Time is to provide time for events and meetings that build community and facilitate the achievement of the University Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. It also directly addresses a need recognized for many years for time when faculty and staff from different departments and units can meet to work on common goals and program development. Recent changes in the curriculum and in the organization of the University have increased the need for interdisciplinary and cross-unit cooperation, which has increased the need for a schedule that facilitates that work.

**Q: What are 'cross-unit' activities, and why are they privileged when department/unit activities are discouraged during Common Time?**

A: Cross-unit activities are those which are designed to include faculty, staff and/or students from different departments or units at Gallaudet. Examples of cross-unit activities include UF and SBG committee meetings; presentations and performances that anyone can attend; workshops for faculty/staff/students from varying departments/units; meetings of faculty teaching in multidisciplinary programs like the Honors Program and GSR; etc. Cross-unit activities are privileged during Common Time because they have far less ability to determine their members' schedules than departments/units have.

**Q: If the focus of Common Time is on cross-unit activities, why are department/unit meetings privileged on the second Thursday of each month?**

A: Some departments, particularly larger departments that offer courses every day at virtually all available hours, have nearly as much trouble finding time to meet as do cross-unit groups. Ironically, the establishment of Common Time exacerbates the meeting time problem for these departments, because they have to move courses from the Common Time slots to other times when they might have been able to meet. Therefore, accommodation for their needs is made directly in the Common Time schedule.

**Q: Why are graduate students and faculty excluded from Common Time activities?**

A: They are not! Graduate faculty and students are strongly encouraged to organize and participate in Common Time activities whenever possible. Though it is true that some graduate classes must meet during Common Time due to circumstances beyond their control, graduate departments are encouraged to minimize the number of those classes to enable their faculty and students to take advantage of the same opportunities available to others in Academic Affairs.

**Q: What is the process for scheduling a Common Time activity?**

A: Any individual or group of faculty, staff or students can schedule an activity during Common Time on any day other than the first Tuesday. The procedures for scheduling and announcing meetings for a closed group are slightly different than those for open events.

Steps for scheduling meetings and closed events during Common Time:

1. Request an appropriate room through the traditional sources: the Registrar's Office or Campus Activities, depending on the kind of space your activity would require.

2. The room reservation staff who receive your request will check to be sure that your activity fits within the Guidelines (above) and send you a confirmation email.
3. After your room reservation is confirmed, inform the members of your group.

Steps for scheduling open events during Common Time:

1. Request an appropriate room through the traditional sources: the Registrar's Office or Campus Activities, depending on the kind of space your activity would require.
2. The room reservation staff who receive your request will check to be sure that your activity fits within the Guidelines (above) and send you a confirmation email
3. After you have received the confirmation email, complete the appropriate form on the Daily Digest website so that the event will be added to the University Calendar.
4. If you will need special technology for your event, send a request to Helpdesk.
5. If you will need interpreters for your event, contact GIS.
6. In addition to submitting information to Daily Digest, consider other means of promoting your event to your target audience.

**Q: How much will Common Time pay for interpreters or to bring in outside speakers?**

A: Unfortunately, Common Time is a scheduling opportunity, not a program with a budget. It cannot provide funds of any kind. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to secure whatever funding is needed to support their activity.

**Q: How can I prevent scheduling conflicts during Common Time? How can I be sure that there won't be a competing activity at the same time?**

A: Except for the first Tuesday each month, all Common Times are likely to have several activities scheduled simultaneously. When two open events are offered at the same time, it is likely that some people will choose to participate in one and other people will choose to participate in the other. The only way to guarantee that your event is exclusive is to obtain approval to offer it on a first Tuesday.

**Q: How do I schedule an exclusive event on a first Tuesday?**

A: Email your request to [common.time@gallaudet.edu](mailto:common.time@gallaudet.edu), specifying the nature of the activity, the target audience (faculty? Students? Undergraduates? Support staff? Departments offering B.S. degrees? Etc.) You will receive a response letting you know the status of your request and when to expect a decision. Selections are the responsibility of the Provost's Office, which is creating a group to review requests.

Q: If I have other questions or comments about Common Time, who do I contact?

A: Email your concern to [common.time@gallaudet.edu](mailto:common.time@gallaudet.edu) and it will be routed to the appropriate person for response.