

TO	Allison Kirkman, Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity), care of Jenny Christie, Academic Office
FROM	Ellen Humphries, VUWSA Education Officer and Rick Zwaan, VUWSA President
DATE	15 th July 2015
SUBJECT	Student Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed new Course Scheduling and Constraints Policy. Overall, we believe this to be a positive and straightforward change.

We would first and foremost like to commend SLT on listening to the concerns surrounding the proposal to extend the teaching day beyond the current 6.30pm finish. VUWSA agrees that this change would likely be detrimental to students and their learning outcomes, and are happy with SLT's decision to retain the current finishing time. However, the discussion surrounding this proposal brought other concerns to light that VUWSA would like to comment on.

It is important to remember that students and their ability to attend lectures and supplementary events is crucial for their individual success, and the success of the University. VUWSA hopes that this policy change has brought serious discussion to the forefront concerning the future of teaching spaces at Victoria, especially considering the University's strategic plan to increase student numbers plus the moving of Education onto Kelburn campus. Although VUWSA respects that many of the comments raised during discussions at faculty boards are outside of the scope of this policy, it is essential that these very serious concerns are addressed.

In particular, we would like to see moves made to ensure greater year to year consistency of timetabling be improved such that students can plan the staging of their degrees in advance. For example, it should be the expectation that courses (particularly those for major requirements) are always taught in the same trimester(s) unless exceptional circumstances occur.

Furthermore, we hope that these changes will improve the expediency for which the following years Academic Timetable can be released. The earlier the Academic and Exam Timetables are released the better.

VUWSA would like to see and be involved in the creation of a working party or other initiative arising in response to the comments concerning reducing demands on space. We envisage this to involve increasing alternative approaches to teaching and the best way to utilise space, ensuring that students are able to get the most out of tutorials. Until that discussion can be had, an alternative response to timetabling pressures such as attempting to increase the efficient use of already available teaching spaces (on either side of the peak times of 10am-2pm as specified by CAD) would be a sensible and useful approach.

