

Understanding Course Priority & Weight



Priority is assigned to courses so that when you run the scheduling algorithm, the software will work to schedule the courses with the highest priority FIRST. Make your hardest to schedule courses (Singletons, Doubletons, English) the lower number or higher priority. Don't get hung up on the actual number. You have a range of 0-100 to use. Apply the lower or lowest numbers to your hardest to schedule. That does not necessarily equate to anything to do with graduation requirements per say. The Scheduling Parameters are considered and used as a tool to assist in getting students scheduled into all of the courses they requested. The courses that are the hardest to schedule and those that are most critical to have them scheduled into such as English or Math – use a higher priority to increase the odds they will successfully schedule without conflicts.

Course weighting is used by the algorithm to balance schedules across semesters and is only used at the high school level. If you have an issue getting balanced schedules, you can *optionally* use weighting to help with that. When doing the weighting, don't focus so much on the actual weight, that number. It's the imbalance that matters.

Balanced – Good Schedule

Semester 1 Weight	Semester 2 Weight
Core 80	80
Core 80	80
Elective 40	40
Elective 40	40
Total Weight 240	240

- The goal is to make it impossible for the program to add that additional core course into a semester AND stay within the allowable marking period imbalance.
- Look at the example below. Adding a 3rd core course into semester 1 would create an unbalanced schedule.

Unbalanced Schedule

Semester 1 Weight	Semester 2 Weight
Core 80	Core 80
Core 80	Elective 40
Core 80	Elective 40

Elective	40	Elective	40
Total Weight	280		200

- **Semester 1 Total 280**
- **Semester 2 Total 200**
- **Difference in weight between semesters is 80**
- When running the Scheduler, if you opted to **Use Marking Period Balancing**, to prevent the unbalanced schedule as shown below, you would define a **Maximum Marking Period Imbalance** of anything lower than 80. If you define anything lower than 80, the software cannot place the 3rd core course in semester 1.

Use Marking Period Balancing



Maximum Marking Period Imbalance

It's not the actual weight, whether you use 100, 80 or 50 that matters. It's creating a total weight and then defining the allowable imbalance that makes it work. Weighting of courses really does not directly correlate to graduation requirements or the importance of courses in that respect. It is defining parameters that ensure the software places 2 core and 2 elective courses in each semester.