



FOUNDED: 1963

LOCATED: Cleveland, Ohio

ENROLLMENT: 58,000

OFFERING: More than 70 career and technical programs and liberal arts curricula

"Astra Schedule gave us the opportunity to review our space and have frank discussions about how it is used."

—J. Michael Thomson,
Dean of Academic Affairs,

CUYAHOGA'S FIVE-SITE OPTIMIZATION SUCCESS

Scheduling one room at a time with no utilization reports, schedulers at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C), a multi-campus, single college, had no way of knowing how well—or poorly—they were using classroom space.

J. Michael Thomson, Dean of Academic Affairs at Tri-C's Western Campus, says, "We used to guess a popular time and shop around in Banner to find a space. It was a free-for-all." This method packed some parts of the day, while leaving other parts almost completely unscheduled and underutilized—and they always held their breath that two courses would not collide.

Improving Processes

Tri-C implemented Astra Schedule in January 2007 to apply course optimization—assigning rooms based on enrollment numbers and the resources needed for each course and instructor.

To determine what resources students needed in order to learn versus what instructors merely wanted, the scheduling team quizzed instructors on why they needed certain rooms. "We wanted to get away from deal-making and start basing our room assignments on student needs, while still taking our instructor's needs into account," says Thomson.

The room assignments, which used to take days to complete, are now done in about two hours through the Astra Schedule Optimizer. By making the process transparent for instructors, schedulers were able to cut the number of room changes made after publishing the schedule by nearly half.

Successful Optimization

Schedulers automatically placed 85 percent of 3,600 courses for Fall 2007 using Astra Schedule. The next semester, they increased success to 90 percent. Thomson beat his 95 percent goal for the 2008 Summer schedule with an average of 97 percent optimization success across all five sites. Two sites, with a combined total of 627 courses, had 100 percent success with no courses left unscheduled after optimizing through Astra Schedule.

In addition, "We finally have demand data from collecting preferences that shows how many technology classrooms we need," Thomson says. He has used this data to upgrade technology in 15 classrooms, relieving many space bottlenecks.





AD ASTRA INFORMATION SYSTEMS

SOLUTIONS THAT FIT.