

Four Day Weeks – 2012 – State Schools

Lately I have found ways to examine the huge class schedules of state schools. Tallies like those that I do would be routine with complete access to the data bases, but all an outsider can do is copy the class schedules as text and assemble one's own file. Unfortunately, this approach breaks the records up into a number of lines of data that are difficult to handle. I supply the files that I have assembled (most are SPSS, but excel files are supplied for the final tabulations). The reader is welcome to use these files to replicate my counts, but I am confident that the percentages that I report are highly accurate.

I started in LA where the [Claremont Schools](#) have such a low number of Friday classes. I found that both the local state schools have even worse records. California State, [Dominguez Hills](#) has the lowest percentage of courses with class on Friday that I've seen, about 4 percent. Also in the area is California State, [Long Beach](#). It's liberal arts school has less than 7 percent of its courses that meet on Friday. Thankfully the flagship school in the area, [UCLA](#), has a much better percentage, over 32 percent. While even UCLA has let the four day week into its fold somewhat, it's hard to argue that its students are weaker than the less selective state schools and that the less selective state school kids can handle the four day week well. This is a troublesome erosion of quality. Fortunately, other state schools have not all gone this route. Up the coast at [San Francisco State](#), the percentage of courses with Friday classes is 25, not great, but not like in LA.

I have also looked a little in the east, where there are couple of pockets of four-day week schools. The pattern is similar to the west, except not so bad. In Pennsylvania, where the [Philadelphia](#) schools don't have many Friday classes, the local state schools are not as low and a nearby flagship school is much better. The local schools are [Kutztown](#) and [Cheyney](#) which both have more than a third of their courses with class on Friday. Not terrible, but not nearly as good as [Penn State](#), which has over 53 percent of its courses that meet on Friday. Things are not that great everywhere. To the south at [UVA](#), the percentage of courses with class on Friday is 34, hardly better than UCLA.

In [Massachusetts](#) where there are a handful of liberal arts schools with few Friday classes, I looked at two state schools. [Westfield State](#) is in the midst of these schools and is much like similar state schools in Pennsylvania. About 37 percent of its courses meet on Friday. The flagship school in this area is the [University of Massachusetts](#). It has nearly 40 percent of its courses that meet on Friday. Why do the flagship schools have more classes on Friday? It can't be because its students are weaker than the less selective schools. It must be that they believe that a five day class week is better for student achievement, as all schools should. But it's not as if schools with less than half of their courses with class on Friday haven't slipped into easy road of the three day weekend at least a little. I hope by making these lapses of quality public, that the leaders of these schools will take steps to correct the problem. This doesn't mean that we have to return to the MWF schedule, but the administrations of these schools have to require that departments have MF, WF or TF classes to balance the MW ones. Some schools have done this.