

Classroom Feature Preference in Connect Carolina (Optional)

What is the purpose of classroom feature preference?

The new classroom feature preference in Connect Carolina can be used to improve the chances that instructors are assigned classrooms that are a good fit with their preferred teaching methods.

Do I need to select a classroom preference for every course my unit is offering?

No. Use of the classroom feature preference setting is *completely optional*. Courses without a feature request will be scheduled as they normally would. Nor would you need to select a feature characteristic for a course being scheduled in one of your department's scheduling priority classrooms.

How does the classroom feature preference work?

For each course entered in Connect Carolina, departmental scheduling staff can select 1-2 preferred classroom features from a menu of eight. Courses first go through 25Live's (the University's enterprise scheduling software) optimization process. During the optimization process, 25Live always prioritizes room utilization first. For example, a class expecting 45 students would never be placed into a room seating 100 by the optimization process just to meet a feature request. After 25Live establishes an acceptable room utilization, it will look to match the course according to room features requested. The order that course feature requests are considered in 25Live is completely random.

What are the eight classroom feature preferences?

- Tablet Desk – *Individual desks that are usually configured in rows facing the front of the classroom. Note: Classrooms associated with this feature are NOT Active Learning Classrooms, but may be HyFlex and/or Suitable for Film Studies.*
- Table and Chairs – *Tables and moveable chairs configured in rows facing the front of the classroom. In a few classrooms the seats are attached to the tables. Note: Classrooms associated with this feature are NOT Active Learning Classrooms, but may be HyFlex and/or Suitable for Film Studies.*
- Active Learning Classroom – *Roughly a third of the University's 200+ general purpose classrooms are designated as active learning classrooms (ALC). ALCs are intended for instructors who make regular use of small group work and other interactive methods. They are designed to facilitate 1) sustained student interaction (eye contact), 2) the ability of instructors to interact directly with all students, and 3) the use of multiple instructional modes and transitions between them. Most ALCs are outfitted with tablet arm chairs on casters, a few use tables and chairs and two use fixed swivel seating. Search at hotline.unc.edu for a list of classrooms designated as 'Active Learning Classrooms.'*
- Suitable for Film Studies - *Include the ability to block natural light and to limit displays to one screen; some classrooms may also include audio enhancements.*
- Suitable for Accommodating Remote Participants (HyFlex) - *Designed to accommodate interaction between in-person and remote participants through the use of cameras and built-in microphones. Note: Larger classrooms may depend on the use of hand-held microphones to capture the comments of in-person students; other HyFlex rooms use ceiling-mounted microphones.*
- Chalk Board - *Standard wall-mounted chalk board for use with chalk*
- Marker Board - *Standard wall-mounted marker board for use with dry erase markers*
- Microphone system - *The microphone system provides speech reinforcement in large classrooms and auditoriums. This system is independent of the room audio. Note: Portable voice reinforcement options can be borrowed through ITS Classroom Hotline for use in smaller rooms without a built-in system.*

Does selecting a classroom feature guarantee that my course will be scheduled in a room with that feature?

No. There are several factors that will end up determining whether a course ends up being scheduled in a classroom with the requested feature. They include the number of classrooms with the desired feature, the number of requests being made for a particular feature, the day/time the course is scheduled, the number of features being requested for each course, and at what point during the optimization process your request is processed. Again, the queue for feature requests is completely random. We will learn more about how this process plays out during the next academic year.

How can I improve my chances of getting a classroom with the desired feature?

Limiting your classroom feature request to *one per course* is highly recommended. Selecting two or more decreases the likelihood that a classroom with multiple features will be available at the time your course is scheduled. Courses scheduled outside of peak hours may also enjoy improved odds as there is typically less competition for classrooms during off-peak hours.

How can individual instructors take advantage of this option?

Only departmental scheduling staff have administrative rights to enter a feature preference request in Connect Carolina. Interested instructors should reach out to their academic unit's scheduling staff about entering any classroom feature requests they would like to have assigned to their courses.

What recourse do I have if I get a classroom without the requested feature?

As always, you are welcome to contact the University Registrar's Scheduling Office at scheduling_office@unc.edu to inquire about your options.

How do I set a classroom feature preference in Connect Carolina? (For scheduling staff only)

The room characteristics box is on the Meetings tab.



A horizontal row of six navigation tabs: 'Basic Data', 'Meetings' (highlighted in blue), 'Enrollment Control', 'Reserve Cap', 'Notes', and 'Exam'.



The 'Room Characteristics' section includes a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and a '1-1 of 1' dropdown. Below is a table with columns for 'Room Characteristic', 'Description', and 'Quantity'. The 'Quantity' column has a text input with '1', a '+' button, and a '-' button.

Room Characteristic	Description	Quantity
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text" value="1"/> + -

You can select one or more characteristics when requesting a room for a class you intend to go through the optimization process. Using the magnifying glass will provide you with all the available choices listed above. This would be any class that requires a general purpose classroom but is not pre-assigned or meeting remotely. You are **not required** to select a feature characteristic for a course that you are scheduling into one of your scheduling priority classrooms. You are **not required** to select a feature characteristic at all if the instructor does not have a preference. The box can be left blank if this is true.

Again, when a class goes through the optimization process, 25Live's priority is always the best room utilization. After 25Live establishes an acceptable room utilization, it will process the room characteristics requested. If it cannot find one, another room without those characteristics will be

assigned. It is suggested that you limit your characteristic preferences to one or two. Add more characteristics by using the plus button just as you would to add more than one instructor.

Who do I contact if I have questions?

Contact the University Registrar's Scheduling Office at scheduling_office@unc.edu with any questions.