

Syllabus Plus Users Information Update – End of Year 2005 Edition 12

Introduction

This newsletter is for users of Syllabus Plus Timetabling software across campus, and anybody else who might be interested in the program.

Current Syllabus Plus Issues

2006 Database

The 2006 database is now open to all users. If you have not accessed it yet, you will need to download a fresh image off the server (Don't forget that the service is 'sdbeven'). If you are having any problems at all accessing your 2006 image, please feel free to contact our office.

Increase to Image Timeout Duration.

Up until now, a Syllabus Plus image was only valid for 7 days before it 'expired'. Once an image has expired, the only way to once again access the database is to download a fresh image from the server. This is however a rather time consuming (not to mention frustrating) process.

The major reason as to why there is a timeout is to prevent a user's image being too 'out of synch' with the database. This can potentially lead to network problems when a user with old and seriously mismatched data on their image tries to connect to the Syllabus Plus database.

As the timetable is now constructed, and bookings are now being placed on the system at a reasonably steady place, we have decided to trial extending the expiration period for images to 21 days. This will be especially useful for less frequent users of the program, who will not be caught out as often with an expired image.

Downloading Syllabus Plus After Christmas

As mentioned above, the image timeout duration has now been extended to 21 days. This means that you will not need to download an image after the Christmas break (unless of course you are lucky enough to be taking an extra couple of weeks off.) If you do find that you are having any problems connecting or downloading a fresh image after the Christmas break, please feel free to contact our office.

Syllabus Plus Upgrade

Our office had made tentative plans to upgrade Syllabus Plus from version 3.4.0 to 3.5.0. In order to minimise disruption to users, we investigated the possibility of setting the upgrade works to take place in the couple of days before and/or after the Christmas break. Due to the unavailability of technical support over this time frame however, the upgrade has now been deferred. It has now been set to take place in the three days after the Easter break (19th-21st Apr). There is a possibility that the database may be out for a couple of days over this period. Let us know if you would have any major problems with this.

Syllabus Plus Tip – Colour Coded Scheduling

When we make a new booking or class, or are looking to move an existing activity around, it is often difficult to find a suitable timeslot and/or location in which to place the activity. One of the best ways of identifying why your activity is unable to be scheduled at a particular time is to view its ‘constraints’ (or restrictions on how the class can be scheduled) using a colour code.

1. Select ‘Timetabler’ then ‘Activities’ from the main menu
2. Scroll through to select the Activity that you are interested in scheduling or moving
3. Go to the timetable tab in the Activity screen (1.)

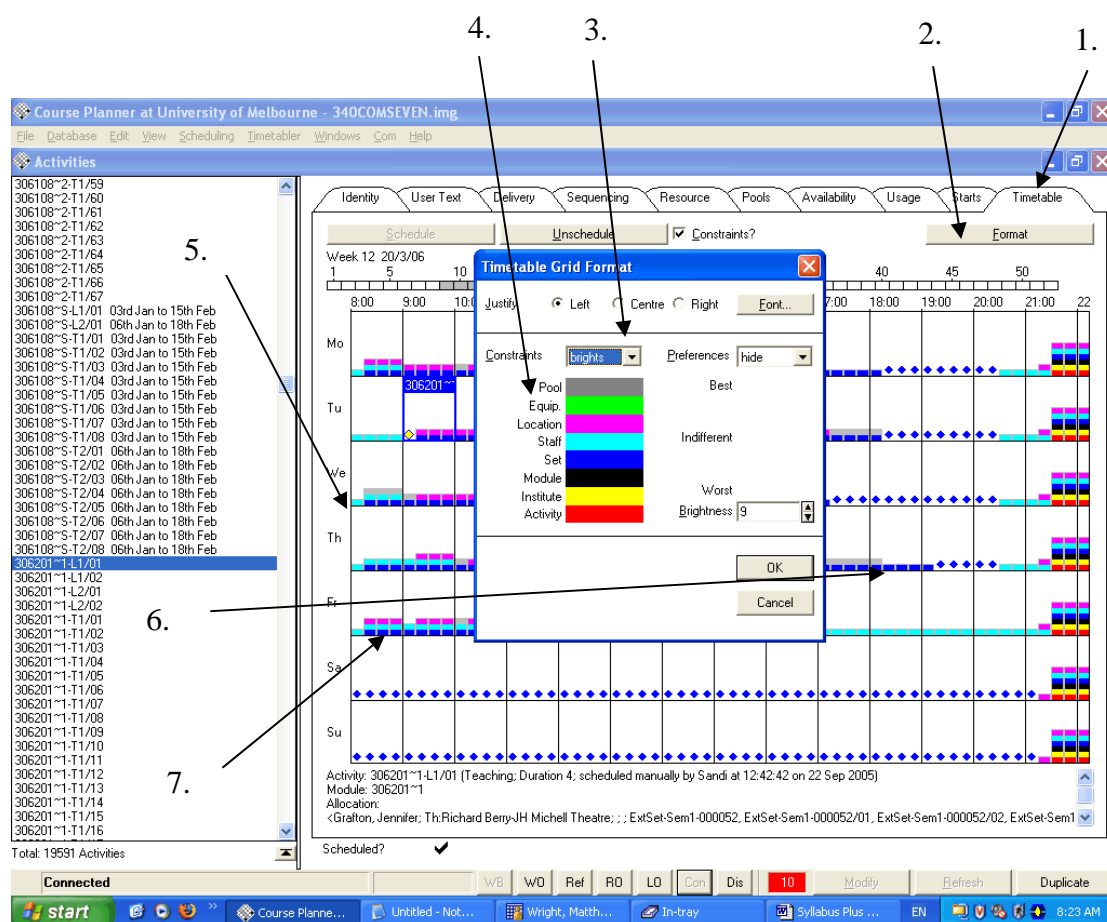


Fig 1. Selecting Bright Constraints.

4. Select ‘Format’ in the top right corner of the screen (2.)
5. The ‘Timetable Grid Format’ window should open up. From the constraints drop down box, select ‘brights’ (3.). (You can select ‘greys’, ‘darks’ or ‘pastels’ instead, but ‘brights’ is generally easiest to read).
6. A colour code for the constraints will then appear (4.).
7. Click on ‘OK’ and save your image.

As can be seen in the example above, the 306201 class cannot be rescheduled Wednesday at 8am (5.) because of Staff unavailability, nor on Thursdays at 6:15pm (6.) because of a Student Set clash, nor on Fridays at 8:30 (7.) due to Student Set, Staff and Location problems.

Contact Us

Please feel free to get in touch with us if you have any feedback
sa-timetable@unimelb.edu.au , or give us a call.

Sandi Robertson – Timetable Coordinator x49689

Matt Wright - Timetabling Systems Support x43690

Kamila Kaniski – Timetable Officer x47699

Chris Thornton – Manager, Timetabling, Venue & Conference Management x48858

The Timetable Office wishes you all the very best for the Summer Break! Merry Christmas!