



FOUNDED: 1906

LOCATED: Bowling Green, KY

ENROLLMENT: 21,000

OFFERING: More than 170 undergraduate programs and 50 graduate programs

"We saved \$185,000, in 2010, on utility and electrical costs alone. This figure doesn't include related costs such as janitorial and other services."

—Jessica Steenbergen  
Scheduling Applications  
Coordinator  
Western Kentucky University

## WKU SAVES \$185,000 IN ENERGY COSTS DURING ONE SUMMER

When Western Kentucky University's former Provost, Dr. Barbara Burch, suggested the idea of consolidating summer schedules, the university immediately started assessing opportunities. Jessica Steenbergen, Scheduling Applications Coordinator, walked through the buildings and created controls in every single room and lab space. Next, they picked the three least efficient buildings and shut them down for the summer. By consolidating classes and activities into other buildings, WKU saved between \$50,000 and \$70,000 during this pilot year.

Steenbergen was proud of their success, but knew they could do more. In 2010, WKU more than doubled its savings by shutting down five academic buildings from mid-May to mid-August. Steenbergen used the Astra Schedule Optimizer to schedule the academic sections into the remaining buildings. "So far, I have not had any trouble finding spaces with the smaller summer room inventory," Steenbergen notes. She also reports, "We saved \$185,000, in 2010, on utility and electrical costs alone. This figure doesn't include related costs such as janitorial and other services."

Trying to improve every year, 2011 brought more changes. Not only is Steenbergen repeating the same building closures, but WKU's president implemented a 7:30 am – 3 pm work day during the summer (as opposed to the regular 8 am – 4:30 pm day). Additionally, the facilities management team receives a weekly report, through Astra Schedule's automated report subscriptions, showing all activities occurring in each room. This allows them to schedule air conditioning based on when the rooms are being used— no air is running in any space unless it is being used for an activity.

### Executive Support

Steenbergen is in a good position to make positive changes on her campus. "Since I report directly to the provost, who is both driving and supporting these efforts, making these changes has been easy. I haven't had to go through multiple levels of authority for approval." She and the current Provost, Dr. Gordon Emslie, are both excited about what the future may bring. WKU is working toward a more centralized scheduling process to alleviate room ownership issues and continue to increase savings.



