Chapter 3: Creating Classes

Welcome to Chapter 3 of the Attendance Manager Cloud Tutorial. In this segment we will go over creating classes. Creating classes and enrolling students is very easy to do, and Attendance Manager Cloud is very flexible to fit a variety of classroom and school environments. With this flexibility, we encourage our users to think about how students will move between classes and/or progress through your program. Some consideration in this at the start will make the movement of students in the future very easy. We will show some examples of this later on in this chapter.

Classes are found under the Classes tab. In that tab, List will show all of your classes and Rollover is for managing student movement between terms which we will touch on later. So for now, we will simply go to Add which will take you to the new class screen.

The required fields to be entered are indicated by a red asterisk.

1. The Title you create for your class should be a strong descriptor of your class that has meaning to you. Examples might be "Intro to Cosmetology" or "Sophomores Fall 2023". Naming your class is important and will be touched on later when we discuss different ways of managing your classes going forward.
2. Class ID is simply an identifying number, possibly defined by your school, that serves as a unique identifier internally in the database.
3. Start and End dates of your class need to be entered. It should be noted here that these dates are not simply informational. These dates actually define the days in which student clock times will be accepted, and as such you should pay particular attention to entering dates that encompass the days in which you want to allow student clock times.
4. Schedule is not a required field but can be used if you want to limit the times of day in which students can clock in or out. You can create a schedule for this class or select from any pre-defined schedules that you have already created. If you do add a schedule, that schedule can be used to determine tardies and absences. It should be noted that adding a schedule here may create a bit more oversight on your part, especially if it is common for students to get "extra time" by working outside of class hours.
5. The Attendance Terminal field is used if you are using a fingerprint or bar code card Attendance Terminal for student clock-ins. This will be discussed in a subsequent chapter called Setting Up Your Attendance Terminal.
6. The Instructor field is where an instructor name from a drop down list of users can be selected.

Let's now jump into a few examples of how classes can be named and created dependent upon your school and your personal preferences. Three different scenarios are presented…

1. The first scenario is **Open Entry / Open Exit**. In this environment, classes are considered "always open", and students can enter and exit at any time. This might be more common to private schools that have the flexibility to provide such programs. To create a class for this environment, you would simply name your class whatever you would like, for example what is being taught, like "Medical Assisting" or "Cosmetology". And since this class is Open-Entry / Open-Exit, the start date can be any date and the end date can be way off into the future. What we have created here is essentially a continuously running class into which students are enrolled and then completed.

2. A second example is a more rigid approach that we will call **Traditional Quarters and Semesters**. Think of this as the traditional high school / college model of offering classes. New classes are created at each grading period (quarter, semester, or year) and students move from one class to another at the turn of each grading period. Typical Class Title here might be something like "Intro to Cosmetology Fall 2023". With this scenario, each class would end at the turn of each grading period and then new classes created. Many tools exist in the system for moving students between classes which are discussed in a subsequent chapter called Managing Classes.

3. A third example offered here is sort of a hybrid of the first 2 examples sometimes called **Cohort or Lockstep**. This concept may be referenced by many different names, but it is the concept of a group of students going through a program as a group. Each group of students will remain together (with some possible drops and additions) over a 1-, 2-, or 3-year educational program and then graduate together. This may be a formal designation within your school or it may be done informally, created by you as the instructor to match your preferred method of tracking your students. An example of this might be a group of sophomores starting a cosmetology program that will be tracked together until they graduate as seniors. The Title field in this scenario might be "Graduating Class of 2026". With this example, the end date would be June of 2026. It should be noted that a class name can be changed at any time, and this becomes very applicable in this scenario. It's not uncommon for our users to name a class Sophomores 23-24 and then next year simply rename that class to be Juniors 24-25. The class title remains a descriptive term for that group of students.

In the next chapter, Enrolling Students, we will cover how to enroll students into a class. Please refer to additional chapters of training on our website.