

## Abstract

This article proposes a system for generating possible *University Classes Schedules*. It uses multi-agent negotiation to find satisfactory solutions to the problem, while trying to consider *personal preferences* of the represented people and institutions.

# 1 Implementation

## 1.1 University Classes

A class is an event, that brings together a *group of students*, and a *professor* in certain *classroom* in order to learn/teach the specified *discipline*. It happens periodically, usually weekly, at the established *day of week* and *time*.

A *discipline* should describe an atomic (not dividable) educational activity. For example, if the students are required to take a normal class and also do some specific laboratory practice, then two disciplines should be created, one of them describing the required lab equipment.

```
data Discipline = Discipline { disciplineId           :: String
                             , disciplineMinutesPerWeek :: Int
                             , disciplineRequirements   :: Set Requirement
                             }
deriving (Typeable, Show, Eq, Ord)
newtype Requirement = Requirement String deriving (Show, Eq, Ord)
```

For inner usage, the classes are divided into

- *abstract* — without day and time;
- *concrete* — with full time information.

```
class (Ord c, Show c, Typeable c) =>
  AbstractClass c where classDiscipline :: c -> Discipline
                        classGroup      :: c -> GroupRef
                        classProfessor  :: c -> ProfessorRef
                        classRoom       :: c -> ClassroomRef
                        classNumber    :: c -> Word

class (AbstractClass c, DiscreteTime time) =>
  ConcreteClass c time | c -> time
  where classDay      :: c -> Day
        classBegins  :: c -> time
        classEnds    :: c -> time

data Class      = ∀ c time. ConcreteClass c time => Class c
data SomeClass = ∀ c      . AbstractClass c      => SomeClass c
```

The “System.Time.Day” is redefined, dropping the “Sunday”.

**data**  $Day = Monday \mid Tuesday \mid Wednesday$   
 $\mid Thursday \mid Friday \mid Saturday$   
**deriving** ( $Eq, Ord, Enum, Bounded, Ix, Read, Show$ )

The classes are negotiated by the interested parties: 1) students / groups, 2) professors, 3) classrooms. Each negotiation participant has a *timetable*, holding a schedule for one week, that repeats throughout the academic period. The *timetable* is actually a table: the columns represent days of week; the rows — discrete time intervals. Actual timetable structure may vary, as can be seen in figure 1.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
08:30 – 09:00						
09:00 – 09:30						
09:30 – 10:00						
10:00 – 10:30						
10:30 – 11:00						
11:00 – 11:30						
11:30 – 12:00						
⋮      ⋮						

(a) Timetable without recesses.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
08:30 – 09:10						
09:15 – 09:55						
10:05 – 10:45						
10:50 – 11:30						
11:40 – 12:20						
12:25 – 13:05						
13:15 – 13:55						
⋮      ⋮						

(b) Timetable with recesses.

Figure 1: Possible *timetable* structures.

**class** ( $Ord\ t, Bounded\ t, Show\ t, Typeable\ t$ )  $\Rightarrow DiscreteTime\ t$  **where**  
 $toMinutes \quad :: t \rightarrow Int$   
 $fromMinutes :: Int \rightarrow t$   
**data**  $SomeTime = \forall t. (DiscreteTime\ t) \Rightarrow SomeTime\ t$   
 $someTimeMinutes (SomeTime\ t) = toMinutes\ t$   
**instance**  $Eq\ SomeTime$  **where**  $(\equiv) \quad = (\equiv) \quad \text{‘on’ } someTimeMinutes$   
**instance**  $Ord\ SomeTime$  **where**  $compare = compare \text{ ‘on’ } someTimeMinutes$   
**class** ( $DiscreteTime\ time$ )  $\Rightarrow Timetable\ tt\ e\ time \mid tt \rightarrow time$

--

```

, tt → e
, e → time

where listEvents :: tt → [e]
      eventsOn :: tt → Day → [e]
      eventsAt :: tt → time → [(Day, e)]
      eventAt :: tt → Day → time → Maybe e

```

One should distinguish the resulting timetables, shown in figure 1 and the timetable, held an agent during the negotiation. The first one is immutable and is the result of agent's participation in the negotiation. The set of such timetables, produced by every the participant, is the **university schedule** for given academic period.

During the negotiation, an agent's inner timetable gets changed on the fly, in order to record agreements made. This means that we are dealing with *side effects*, that need to be explicitly denoted in Haskell. The following definition leaves it free to choose the monad abstraction for those effects.

```

class (DiscreteTime time, Monad m) =>
  TimetableM tt m e time | tt → time
                        , tt → e
                        , e → time

where putEvent :: tt → e → m tt
      delEvent :: tt → e → m tt
      ttSnapshot :: (Timetable ts x time) => tt → m ts

```

## 1.2 Negotiating Agents

As it was mentioned before, the schedule is formed in a negotiation between *professors*, *groups* and *classrooms*. To distinguish those three types of participants, agent's role is introduced. The role: 1) identifies the kind of person/entity, represented by the agent; 2) defines agent's reaction on the messages received; 3) defines agent's goal.

A *representing agent* is a computational entity, that represents a *real person or object* in it's virtual environment. In current case, it represents one's interests in a *negotiation*. Such an agent must

- (1) pursue the *common goal* — it must consider the common benefits, while being egoistic enough to achieve it's own goal;
- (2) respond to the messages received in correspondence with (1);
- (3) initiate conversations (send messages, that are not responses), driven by (1);
- (4) become more susceptible (less egoistic) with passage of time.

```

data NegotiationRole = GroupRole
                        | FullTimeProfRole
                        | PartTimeProfRole
                        | ClassroomRole
deriving (Show, Typeable)

```

### 1.2.1 Common Goal

Agent's own *goal* represents its egoistical interests. They may (and will) contradict another agent's interests, thus creating *incoherence*. The general rule in this case is to strive for solutions, benefiting the whole schedule. Because the schedule doesn't yet exist as a whole during the negotiation, an agent should consider instead the benefits, obtained by itself and the rest of the agents.

The *common goal* is incorporated in the *contexts* mechanism, and is discussed in Section 1.3.7.

### 1.2.2 Messaging

Is this section really needed?

## 1.3 Coherence

The coherence mechanism is based on [?]. It uses the *contexts* as means of separating (and further prioritizing) different *cognitive aspects*. The contexts used are based on *BDI* agent architecture.

The *combined coherence* is used as a measure of goal achievement. It's combined of coherence values, calculated by agent's contexts.

### 1.3.1 Information and Relations

The coherence is calculated over an *information graph*, that represents some aspect of agent's knowledge. The nodes of the graph are some *pieces of information* and the edges represent some *relations* between these pieces.

```

newtype IGraph = IGraph (Set Information)
graphNodes :: IGraph → [Information]
graphNodes (IGraph inf) = Set.toList inf
graphJoin :: IGraph → [Information] → IGraph
graphJoin (IGraph inf) new = IGraph (inf ∪ Set.fromList new)
fromNodes :: [Information] → IGraph
fromNodes = IGraph ∘ Set.fromList
relationOn :: IRelation a → IGraph → RelValue a
relationOn rel (IGraph inf) = ⊥ -- TODO

```

The proposed system makes use of the following information:

1. **Personal knowledge**, known only by one actor.

- (a) **Capabilites**: information about what an agent can do, what kind of arrangments it can make.
- (b) **Obligations**: information about *strong restrictions*, imposed over the agent.
- (c) **Preferences**: information about *weak restrictions*.

2. **Shared knowledge**, obtained in the negotiation.

- (a) **Others' capabilities** — information about the counterpart agents, that are known to be (un-) capable of doing something.
- (b) **Classes proposals**:
  - i. **Abstract** — has no specific time assigned.  
**Concrete** — has a specific time defined.
  - ii. **Complete** — references all three representing agents: a *group*, a *professor* and a *classroom*.  
**Partial** — references less then three representing agents.
- (c) **Classes decisions**:
  - i. **Class acceptance** — a mark for *accepted classes proposals*. Only *complete* proposals can be accepted; all the three mentioned agents must accept it, or none.
  - ii. **Class rejection** — a mark for *ignored classes proposals*, a result of *yield* decision, discussed in Section ??.

```

data InformationScope = Personal | Shared
-- "Ord" instance is mainly needed to create "Set"s.
class (Typeable i, Eq i, Ord i) => InformationPiece i
  where type IScope i :: InformationScope
class (InformationPiece i, Personal~IScope i) => PersonalInformation i
class (InformationPiece i, Shared~IScope i) => SharedInformation i
  where sharedBetween :: i -> Set AgentRef
-- -----

instance Eq SomeClass where
  (SomeClass a) == (SomeClass b) = cast a == Just b
  -- TODO
instance Ord SomeClass
instance InformationPiece SomeClass where
  type IScope SomeClass = Shared
instance SharedInformation SomeClass
-- -----

instance Eq Class

```

```

instance Ord Class
instance InformationPiece Class where type IScope Class = Shared
instance SharedInformation Class

-- -----

data Information =  $\forall i.$ InformationPiece  $i \Rightarrow$  Information  $i$ 
collectInf :: (Typeable  $a$ )  $\Rightarrow$  Information  $\rightarrow$  Maybe  $a$ 
collectInf (Information  $i$ ) = cast  $i$ 

instance Eq Information where
  (Information  $i_1$ )  $\equiv$  (Information  $i_2$ ) =
    case cast  $i_1$  of Just  $x$        $\rightarrow x \equiv i_2$ 
                     -            $\rightarrow$  False

instance Ord Information where
  (Information  $i_1$ )  $\leq$  (Information  $i_2$ ) =  $\perp$ 

-- -----

newtype Needs = Needs (Set Discipline)
deriving (Eq, Ord, Show, Typeable)
newtype CanTeach = CanTeach (Set Discipline)
deriving (Eq, Ord, Show, Typeable)
instance InformationPiece Needs
instance InformationPiece CanTeach

```

The *binary relations* connect some information pieces, assigning to the edge some value. The *whole graph relations*, on the other side, are applied to the graph as a whole and produce a single value.

The relations used, as well as the information in the graph, depend on the *context*.

```

data RelValBetween  $a$  = RelValBetween {
  relBetween    :: (Information, Information)
  , relValBetween ::  $a$ 
}

type RelValsBetween  $a$  = Map (IRelation  $a$ ) [RelValBetween  $a$ ]
newtype RelValWhole  $a$  = RelValWhole  $a$ 
unwrapRelValWhole (RelValWhole  $a$ ) =  $a$ 
type RelValsWhole  $a$  = Map (IRelation  $a$ ) (RelValWhole  $a$ )

-- -----

class InformationRelation  $r$  where relationName ::  $r$   $a \rightarrow$  String
class InformationRelation  $r \Rightarrow$ 
  BinaryRelation  $r$  where
    binRelValue :: (Num  $a$ )  $\Rightarrow$   $r$   $a \rightarrow$  Information  $\rightarrow$  Information  $\rightarrow$  Maybe  $a$ 
class InformationRelation  $r \Rightarrow$ 
  WholeRelation  $r$  where

```

```
wholeRelValue :: r a → IGraph → a
```

```
-- -----
data IRelation a = ∀r.BinaryRelation r ⇒ RelBin (r a)
                | ∀r.WholeRelation r ⇒ RelWhole (r a)
relName (RelBin a)    = relationName a
relName (RelWhole a) = relationName a
instance Eq (IRelation a) where (≡) = (≡) ‘on’ relName
instance Ord (IRelation a) where compare = compare ‘on’ relName
type RelValue a = Either [RelValBetween a] (RelValWhole a)
```

### 1.3.2 Contexts

In order to use contexts for information *coherence assessment*, the concepts of *context-specific information graph* and *assessed information* are introduced. The context-specific graph holds the information, already known/accepted by the agent, and is relevant for the context in question. The assessed one is *assumed* during the evaluation process.

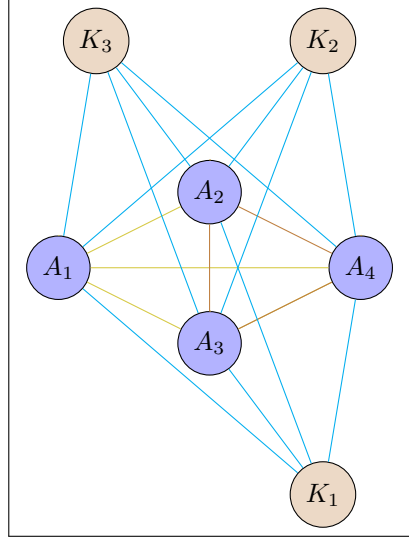


Figure 2: Binary relations within an information graph. One can distinguish the relations between the assessed information pieces and the relations between assessed and the known ones.

To assess some information, it's propagated through the contexts, in the *specified order*, that stands for contexts priority. Each context should have a *coherence threshold* specified; after the assessed information's coherence has been estimated, it's compared against the threshold and either **Success** or **Failure**

is returned, along with the evaluated coherence value. The information, that has successfully passed a context, is propagated further; otherwise the failure is returned.

```

class Context (c :: * → *) a where
  contextName      :: c a → String
  contextInformation :: c a → IO IGraph
  contextRelations  :: c a → IO [IRelation a]
  contextThreshold  :: c a → IO a

  combineBinRels    :: c a → RelValsBetween a → Maybe (CBin a)
  combineWholeRels  :: c a → RelValsWhole a → Maybe (CWhole a)
  combineRels       :: c a → CBin a → CWhole a → a

newtype CBin a = CBin a
newtype CWhole a = CWhole a
data AssessmentDetails a -- TODO
data SomeContext a = ∀c. Context c a ⇒ SomeContext (c a)

-- -----

type AnyFunc1 res = ∀a. a → res a
mapEither :: AnyFunc1 r → Either a b → Either (r a) (r b)
mapEither f (Left a) = Left $ f a
mapEither f (Right a) = Right $ f a
assessWithin' :: (Context c a) ⇒
  [Information]
  → c a
  → IO (Maybe a, AssessmentDetails a)

assessWithin' inf c = do
  contextInf ← contextInformation c
  contextRels ← contextRelations c
  let assumed = contextInf 'graphJoin' inf
  (bins, whole) = partitionEithers
    $ (λr → mapEither ((,) r) $ r 'relationOn' assumed)
    <$> contextRels
  assessed = do rBin ← c 'combineBinRels' Map.fromList bins
  rWhole ← c 'combineWholeRels' Map.fromList whole
  return $ combineRels c rBin rWhole
  return (assessed, ⊥)

-- -----

data AssessedCandidate a = AssessedCandidate {
  assessedAt :: SomeContext a
  , assessedVal :: Maybe a
  , assessedDetails :: AssessmentDetails a
  }
data Candidate a = Success { assessHistory :: [AssessedCandidate a]

```



--

```

                                , candidate    :: [Information]
                                }
      | Failure { assessHistory :: [AssessedCandidate a]
                                , candidate    :: [Information]
                                }

-- -----

assessWithin :: (Context c a, Ord a) =>
  Candidate a -> c a -> IO (Candidate a)
assessWithin f@Failure { } _ = return f
assessWithin (Success hist c) cxt = do
  (mbA, details)  <- c 'assessWithin' cxt
  threshold      <- contextThreshold cxt
  let ac = AssessedCandidate (SomeContext cxt) mbA details
  return $ if mbA > Just threshold
    then Success (ac : hist) c
    else Failure (ac : hist) c

```

Some contexts might also be capable of *splitting* information graphs into *valid candidates* – the sub-graphs, that are *valid* at the context. The candidates can be assessed by the rest of the contexts.

```

class (Context c a) => SplittingContext c a where
  splitGraph :: c a -> IGraph -> IO [Candidate a]

```

### 1.3.3 Capabilities

The capabilities context handles question “Am I able to do it?”. It’s main purpose is to discard immediately any proposal that would never be accepted.

- *Group*: “Am I interested in the discipline?”
- *Professor*: “Am I qualified to teach the disciple?”
- *Classroom*: “Do I suit the disciple?”, “Do I have the capacity required?”

An agent should mark any other agent, that has declined some proposal for *capabilities* reasons, describing the reason. It should further avoid making same kind of proposals to the incapable agent.

```

data family Capabilities (r :: NegotiationRole) :: * -> *
data instance Capabilities GroupRole a = GroupCapabilities {
  needsDisciplines :: [Discipline]
}
data instance Capabilities FullTimeProfRole a = FullTimeProfCapabilities {
  canTeachFullTime :: [Discipline]
}

```

```

}
-- -----

data CanTeachRel a = CanTeachRel
instance InformationRelation CanTeachRel where
  relationName _ = "CanTeach"
instance BinaryRelation CanTeachRel where
  binRelValue _ a b =
    let v ds c = if classDiscipline c ∈ ds then 1 else 0
    in case collectInf a of
      Just (CanTeach ds) → let
        r1 = case collectInf b of Just (SomeClass c) → Just $ v ds c
        r2 = case collectInf b of Just (Class c) → Just $ v ds c
        in r1 <|> r2
      _ → Nothing
-- -----

data NeedsDisciplineRel a = NeedsDisciplineRel
instance InformationRelation NeedsDisciplineRel where -- TODO
instance BinaryRelation NeedsDisciplineRel where -- TODO
-- -----

-- Every capability must be coherent. 0*X = 0
combineBinRelsStrict _ bRels | null bRels = Nothing
combineBinRelsStrict _ bRels = Just ∘ CBin ∘ product
  ∘ concatMap (map relValBetween)
  $ Map.elems bRels

combineWholeRelsStrict _ wRels | null wRels = Nothing
combineWholeRelsStrict _ wRels = Just ∘ CWhole ∘ product
  ∘ map unwrapRelValWhole
  $ Map.elems wRels

combineRelsStrict _ (CBin b) (CWhole w) = b * w
-- -----

instance (Num a) ⇒ Context (Capabilities GroupRole) a where
  contextName _ = "Capabilities"
  contextInformation = return ∘ fromNodes ∘ (:[])
    ∘ Information ∘ Needs
    ∘ Set.fromList ∘ needsDisciplines
  contextRelations _ = return [RelBin NeedsDisciplineRel]
  contextThreshold _ = return 0
  combineWholeRels = combineWholeRelsStrict
  combineBinRels = combineBinRelsStrict
  combineRels = combineRelsStrict
instance (Num a) ⇒ Context (Capabilities FullTimeProfRole) a where
  contextName _ = "Capabilities"

```

```

contextInformation = return ◦ fromNodes ◦ ([:])
                  ◦ Information ◦ CanTeach
                  ◦ Set.fromList ◦ canTeachFullTime
contextRelations _ = return [RelBin CanTeachRel]
contextThreshold _ = return 0
combineWholeRels = combineWholeRelsStrict
combineBinRels   = combineBinRelsStrict
combineRels      = combineRelsStrict

```

### 1.3.4 Beliefs

The beliefs is a *splitting* context, that uses as it's internal knowledge: 1) *state of the timetable*, that represents *best* candidate, generated until now; 2) *interesting* proposals, both generated by agent itself and received from the others, that are preserved throughout agent's lifetime.

**Assessing** yields one of three values

$$\begin{cases} -1 & \text{if two proposals intersect in time} \\ 0 & \text{if both proposals have the same } \textit{abstract} \text{ part} \\ 1 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

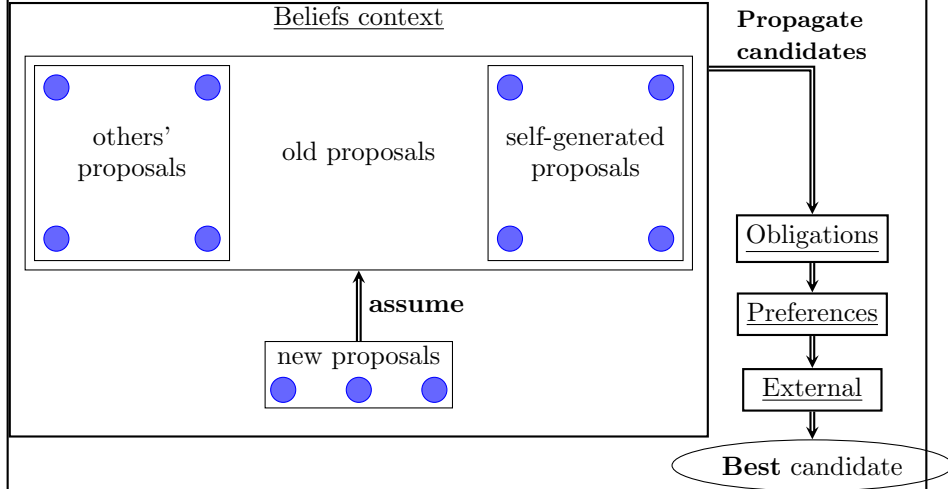


Figure 3: Assessing proposal coherence, starting from *Beliefs* context.

The assessment of *concrete proposals* (containing concrete classes) in the graph consists in

--

1. *assuming* the proposal information;
2. *splitting* the assumed information graph into valid candidates;
3. *propagating* of the candidates through the rest of the contexts;
4. comparing the *best candidate* with the previous *best*.

The proposal is called *interesting* and is accepted (and the assumed graph becomes the new information graph of *beliefs* context) if it's assumption causes better candidate generation. It's rejected otherwise (and the assumed graph is discarded).

**Splitting** is a process of extraction of *acceptable* sub-graphs, that compares the coherence values at graph's edges against a threshold. The splitting can be achieved with one of two following strategies:

1. *Joining* proposals while validness is preserved.
2. *Partitioning* of proposals until validness is achieved.

First strategy is used in this project, due to less memory consumption (it doesn't have to generate or store big invalid graphs, that would be present at the first steps of the second strategy).

The splitting is implemented as follows:

Let  $C = \{c\}$  be a set of *class proposals*.

$A_i = \{a_i\}$  be a set of *acceptable candidates*, composed of  $i$  proposals.

$A = \bigcup_i A_i$  be a set of *acceptable candidates*.

1. Each single candidate is acceptable:  $A_1 = \{[c] \mid \forall c \in C\}$ .
2. Form  $A_2$  by extending each candidate  $[c'] = a_1 \in A_1$  with  $c \in C$ , if and only if  $c'$  and  $c$  do not intersect. If  $A_1 \neq \emptyset$ , then try to form  $A_2$ .
- $\vdots$
- i. Form  $A_i$  by extending each candidate  $[c'_1, \dots, c'_{i-1}] = a_{i-1} \in A_{i-1}$  with  $c \in C$ , if and only if  $\forall c' \in a_{i-1}$ ,  $c'$  and  $c$  do not intersect. If  $A_i \neq \emptyset$ , then try to form  $A_{i+1}$ .
- $\vdots$
- n.  $A_n = \emptyset \implies$  all the *acceptable candidates* were generated. Done.

---

```

data Beliefs a = Beliefs { knownProposals :: IORef IGraph
                           , bestCandidate   :: IORef (Candidate a, a)
                           }

data TimeConsistency a = TimeConsistency

instance InformationRelation TimeConsistency where
  relationName _ = "TimeConsistency"

instance BinaryRelation TimeConsistency where
  binRelValue _ i1 i2 = do
    Class c1 ← collectInf i1
    Class c2 ← collectInf i2
    let sameParticipant = classGroup c1    ≡ classGroup c2
        ∨ classProfessor c1 ≡ classProfessor c2
        ∨ classRoom c1    ≡ classRoom c2
        sameDay = classDay c1 ≡ classDay c2
        timeIntersects x y = classBegins x ≤ classBegins y
                           ∧ classEnds x ≥ classBegins y
        intersect = sameParticipant
                  ∧ sameDay
                  ∧ (timeIntersects c1 c2 ∨ timeIntersects c2 c1)
    return $ if intersect then 0 else 1

instance (Num a) ⇒ Context Beliefs a where
  contextName _      = "Beliefs"
  contextInformation = readIORef ∘ knownProposals
  contextRelations _ = return [RelBin TimeConsistency]
  contextThreshold _ = return 0

  combineWholeRels = combineWholeRelsStrict
  combineBinRels   = combineBinRelsStrict
  combineRels      = combineRelsStrict

instance (Num a) ⇒ SplittingContext Beliefs a where
  splitGraph b gr = do
    iGraph ← readIORef $ knownProposals b
    let cNodes = catMaybes $ collectInf <$> graphNodes gr
        consistent x y = binRelValue TimeConsistency x y ≡ Just 1
        extendCandidate Failure { } = []
        extendCandidate Success { candidate = inf } = do
          c ← cNodes
          [Success { assessHistory = [], candidate = graphNodes gr ++ [c] }
           | all (consistent c) inf
          ]
        a1 = Success [] ∘ (:[]) <$> cNodes
    return $ fix (λf (acc, last) → let ext = concatMap extendCandidate last
                                in if null ext
                                then acc

```

) (a1, a1)

else f (acc ++ ext, ext)

### 1.3.5 Obligations

Obligations determine the rest *strong restrictions* over the classes. Possible obligations might depend on agent's role and are usually determined by the institution. For example: maximum classes per day, lunch recess, lower/upper class time limit, two classes must/cannot follow etc.

### 1.3.6 Preferences

Preferences determine *weak restrictions*, that are intended to be set by the represented person (the institution in case of the classroom).

The context should disminus its influence over time to avoid possible over-restrictions due to conflicting personal interests.

### 1.3.7 External

External contexts take into account the *opinions* of the agents that are referenced by the solution candidate. It is responsible for *common goal* assessment. The assessment must be *objective* — it must give no preference to agent's own interests.

### 1.3.8 Decision

## 1.4 Agent

Here follows *agents* implementation.

```
class AgentComm ag where
class (AgentComm ag) => CommAgentRef ref ag where
  agRef    :: ag -> ref ag
  agComm :: ref ag -> ag
data AgentRef = forall ref ag. CommAgentRef ref ag => AgentRef (ref ag)
-- -----
data GroupRef    = GroupRef    String deriving (Show, Eq, Ord)
data ProfessorRef = ProfessorRef String deriving (Show, Eq, Ord)
data ClassroomRef = ClassroomRef String deriving (Show, Eq, Ord)
```