

GUIDELINES ON LOW ENROLLING CLASSES AND CANCELLATIONS

This document provides guidelines for departments and colleges on two areas: standards for minimum enrollments and procedures for when and under what circumstances scheduled classes may or may not run when minimum enrollments are not met. The need for these guidelines arises from our continuing commitment to student success and progress towards degree, balanced against State requirements for accountability and efficiency in higher education.

- *Procedures for course cancellations are effective immediately, and will be followed for Summer 2020 and beyond.*

ENROLLMENT MINIMA

State of Ohio legislation on efficiency and affordability in higher education mandates that each state institution develop and implement enrollment minima for all courses; all courses that fall under the threshold for two consecutive semesters must be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

The Provost's office has reviewed current practices at Cleveland State University, and has established the following "minimum enrollment standards." These minima are:

Fall and Spring Terms:

100/200-level class: 15

300/400-level class: 10

Master's-level class: 7

Doctoral-level class: 5

Summer Terms:

Undergrad: 10

Graduate: 7

Affected courses and exceptions:

The above minima apply to regularly-scheduled classroom instruction, including lectures, discussion, and seminars. They do not apply to labs; studio courses; tutorials; independent studies; internships; clinicals; practicums; thesis; or doctoral research or dissertation.

Cross-listed courses:

Enrollment minima in cross-listed courses will be determined based on the *combined* enrollment, using the minima for the course with the most students enrolled as the basis (e.g. if the graduate section is larger than the undergraduate, then the graduate minimum would apply).

Programs will be asked to review all classes that do not meet these minima prior to the start of each term. In cases where a course has low enrollment, but where cancellation would cause students to be delayed significantly in their progress towards graduation or where other circumstances justify its maintenance, programs can make a request to their Dean's office to

allow the course to run despite low enrollment. If the College/School Dean's office believes the request is merited, the Dean's office can seek approval from the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. All requests to allow low enrolling courses need to reach the Vice Provost two weeks prior to the start of the term. Low enrollment courses that do not have approval to run from the Dean's Office and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs will be cancelled by the registrar at the end of this period.

In all cases, units that cancel courses should make every effort to contact students who are displaced by course cancellations and to accommodate those students in other classes and otherwise ensure that they remain on track to graduate on time.

COURSE CANCELLATIONS

Departments should carefully review schedules to ensure that date, time, and instructor information are as accurate as possible **prior** to the start of enrollment. ***Once course schedules have been opened up for registration, all schedule changes or cancellations must be carefully evaluated in order to minimize negative impact on students.*** Consideration should be given to the timing in relation to the start of the semester; the number of students enrolled; and the rationale.

- 1. After registration begins, up until 6 weeks prior to the start of the term:**
 - a. Cancellations or significant schedule changes (different day or time) for any enrolled classes requires approval of the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs
 - b. An explanation of why the change/cancellation must be made should be provided.
 - c. If the request is approved, all students in the class must be personally contacted and directed to an alternative.

- 2. 6 weeks prior to the start of the term, up to 2 weeks prior to the start:**
 - a. Prior to each semester, the University Registrar will notify departments of the dates for reviewing course enrollments and dates for cancellations. During this time period all courses should be carefully reviewed.
 - b. Courses that are *under-enrolled* based on the minima outlined above should be evaluated to determine the impact on student progress towards degree if the course is cancelled.
 - c. Requests to allow low enrollment courses to be offered must be approved by the Dean's Office and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs; courses that do not meet enrollment minima and are not essential to degree progress should be cancelled.
 - d. If a course is to be cancelled, all students in the class must be personally contacted by the department or college advising office and directed to an alternative.
 - e. *Low enrollment courses that do not have approval to run from the Dean's Office and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs will be cancelled by the registrar at the end of this period.*

3. Two weeks or less before the start of the term:

- a. Any requests for schedule changes or cancellations during the last 2 weeks prior to the semester, or during the first week of classes, must be approved by both the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs.
- b. Schedule changes or cancellations during this time frame will be approved **ONLY UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**.
- c. *If a course is to be cancelled, all students in the class must be personally contacted and directed to an alternative.*

Programs and Deans' offices should monitor low enrollment courses to determine if any courses are cancelled repeatedly. If such classes are identified, Dean's offices should work with programs to reduce the frequency with which those courses are offered, to modify or suspend programs where this is a problem, and/or to reduce the number of sections offered to more accurately match the demand for the course.

Enrollment patterns in all programs will be periodically reviewed by the Provost's Office as part of ongoing program prioritization. A program that finds it necessary to regularly schedule and offer low enrollment courses suggests that there is insufficient demand for the program, so that the program may be re-evaluated for suspension.