

November 21, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

The Educational Policy Committee (EPC) supports a four-student minimum enrollment per course (or course section) beginning Spring 2015 and will next evaluate this practice in Fall 2015. To guide the college's ongoing experimentation with this practice, the EPC offers guidelines (below) that promote sensible, collaborative decisions on case-by-case bases. Importantly, the EPC wishes to emphasize that a section enrollment below four will initiate a *conversation* among the instructor, chair/program director, registrar, and VPAA/DoF. This conversation may lead to a variety of outcomes. For example, efforts to raise course enrollments may succeed, or the instructor may opt to offer a different course, or compelling curricular contexts may result in running the course with fewer than four students.

We offer our draft outline of the practice. Please note that this is a work in progress, and we expect that the practice will improve based on our community's experiences. The EPC plans to report outcomes of this practice each semester.

Practice, guidelines, and timetable:

Right after Webtree and the first day of schedule adjustment, the registrar will send an email to each instructor and chair/director whose course or section has an enrollment of 0, 1, 2, or 3.

Next, a conversation with the registrar will encourage the instructor and chair/director to consider multiple options. For example, to raise enrollment, the Registrar's Office, department/program, and instructor may immediately use social media, targeted emails, web pages, and other means to encourage additional students to enroll; adjustments to the course title, description, schedule (days and times) may ensue; or a different course may be offered immediately. All actions should happen in the one-week window of schedule adjustment, where time is of the essence.

Overall, on a case-by-case basis, the registrar and VPAA/DoF will work with the instructor and chair/director to decide whether to run the course or to replace it. Decisions will be made within or shortly after the end of the one-week-long schedule adjustment period.

During add-drop at the start of each semester and through the end of the second week of classes, the registrar will monitor enrollments several times a week in order to support instructors of courses whose enrollments dip below four. Courses will normally not be cancelled at such a late date unless enrollments drop to zero or one, or the instructor is in a three-course fall semester.

Under no scenario will a full-time (5 course) instructor be asked to teach 4 courses in one semester or 6 courses in one year.

Please continue to send your questions and thoughts to any EPC member.

Sincerely,

2014-15 Educational Policy Committee

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