

# S U F F O L K

## C O M M U N I T Y C O L L E G E

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Provosts J. Barham, J. Braxton, S. LaLima, P. Yarborough

**FROM:** Lawrence H. Poole *LHP*  
Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

**DATE:** June 2, 1997

**RE:** GUIDELINES FOR CLASS CANCELLATION

The Deans of Instruction and I have been working on preparing guidelines for the master schedule and class cancellation decisions. The attached guidelines have been through a number of reviews and each of the deans has circulated them on their campuses. I am asking that the deans use these guidelines during the upcoming academic year. If, as we work with the guidelines, there are any problems, we can make adjustments to them in the future. I believe this is a step forward in providing some consistent guidance as to how we manage class sizes and class cancellations. The deans and I appreciate your support in having these guidelines used on each of the campuses.

LHP:sa

Attachment

cc: President Cooper  
Vice Presidents Ricioppo, ~~Carrier~~, Weissberg  
Deans of Instruction Arrigon, Canniff, Manning



## GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF MASTER SCHEDULE AND CLASS CANCELLATION DECISIONS

1. In general, you should aim for as high a divisional/area utilization rate as is compatible with academic quality and integrity. It is understood that the highest rate of utilization should apply to entry-level courses, particularly those with multiple sections. More flexibility is needed for upper-level courses that have prerequisites.
2. The overall desired utilization rate may vary from division/area to division/area or from department to department within a division/area. A goal of 90% utilization for a division would be ideal, but may not be a realistic goal for some division/areas at this time. The best course of action would be to review utilization rates for your division/area in recent years and strive to improve that figure for the upcoming year so that progress towards the 90% goal is made.
3. The higher the overall utilization rate for your division/area, the more justification you will have for requesting exceptions to the general guidelines for individual courses or sections in your area.
4. As a general rule, entry-level courses with a class limit of 30 or higher should not be allowed to run with less than 15 students. Where there are multiple sections of an entry-level course, an especially high utilization rate is demanded and it is conceivable that even a section with 15 students might have to be canceled.
5. Courses (e.g. developmental and honors courses) with a limit of 15 or 20 students should be allowed to run with fewer than 15 students, subject to a review of overall seat availability for that course. However, unless there are clear extenuating circumstances, classes of this type with single-digit enrollment should not be allowed to run.
6. Upper-level courses with prerequisites should have a minimum of 12 students enrolled. If more than one section is offered, the minimum enrollment figure should in certain cases be higher than 12.
7. Subject to the guidelines stated above, every effort should be made to run required courses in a program. However, if such a course has low single-digit enrollment, it may have to be canceled and other opportunities, such as independent study, may have to be offered to students in the program who need the course in question that particular semester. It must be noted, of course, that independent study should not normally substitute for regular course work and should be utilized only as a last resort. In determining whether a single section of a required course with low enrollment should be canceled, special attention should also be paid to the factor of whether or not the course in question is available and running at another campus.

8. When required courses in a program tend to have low enrollment, it may be due to the fact that they are being offered too frequently. In that case, it may be necessary to offer them only once a year, on a rotating basis. It should also be noted that when a continued pattern of low enrollment in required courses (even third and fourth semester courses) in a program is discerned, it may be necessary to start giving serious thought to either doing a major overhaul of that program or deactivating it.
9. While the general guidelines for minimum enrollment should always apply, some allowance should sometimes be made for classes offered at so-called "undesirable" times (e.g. Monday - Friday or Wednesday - Friday at 2:00 p.m.) Extensive cancellation of such sections will discourage students and faculty from thinking of those time-slots as a true part of the Master Schedule.
10. When making tough decisions on class cancellations, always ask yourself the great Aristotelian question: What would a reasonable person do in this case?

**NOTE:** These guidelines have been reviewed for uniformity and approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

/sa.hd  
3/31/97 guidelines/master schedule