

Columbia College

Guidelines for Minimum Section Enrollment

Purpose

Effective enrollment management requires a delicate balance between the breadth of course offerings required to meet student needs and the cost of offering those courses. When managed well, enrollments in the majority of courses are strong enough to support a limited number of necessarily-small offerings. The purpose of this document is to establish guidelines as to the threshold of viability for an individual course. That is, the numbers below should not be viewed as across-the-board targets, but rather they should represent occasional exceptions. Deans shall schedule course offerings to minimize the number of low-enrolled classes and shall adjust offerings during registration as necessary to improve efficiencies. For example, two identical lecture classes with 18 students each may be combined into one with 36 even though each one technically meets the “Standard” criterion below.

Timeline (Aligned with expectations of YFA/YCCD Contract Article 7.2(b))

First Decision – A decision to *keep*, *conditionally keep*, or *cancel* each section shall be made at least one week prior to the start of the term based on the enrollment guidelines below. For full-term Fall classes, this decision shall be made by Friday at 5 pm (ten days prior to the start date). For full-term Spring classes, this decision shall be made on the first workday in January or Friday ten days prior to the start of the term, whichever is later. Special consideration will be given to course sections with a documented slow fill history. Per Article 7.2(b) of the YFA/YCCD contract, a part-time faculty member shall be paid for one class meeting up to a maximum of three hours at his/her hourly rate for any course kept beyond this date.

Second Decision – Courses conditionally kept will meet for the first class session. If enrollment has risen to satisfy the conditions below, then the class will continue. If not, the class will be cancelled. The dean shall have discretion to conditionally extend the enrollment period to the end of the first week if additional enrollment can be reasonably expected. A part-time faculty member in such a class will be paid for the additional class sessions met during the first week. A **final decision** for each section shall be reached by the first class session of the second week of the semester at the latest.

About bumping – When the above decisions result in bumping a part-time faculty member from a class, the date of the bumping shall determine the payment per Article 7.2(b).

Minimum Size and Criteria – Each individual section shall meet one of these criteria. Stacked and cross-listed sections (same times, but with shared load) shall utilize their combined enrollment to meet these standards.

1. **Standard = 18 students.** General college courses with no enforced prerequisite and/or introductory courses required for a major.
2. **Sequential = 15 students.** Courses with an enforced prerequisite and/or intermediate or advanced courses required for a major.
3. **Special Consideration** will be given to courses or sections on a case-by-case basis and may result in enrollment of less than 15 students, with approval of the Vice President of Instruction. Such consideration shall be categorized as either a *condition* or an *exception*. Deans shall provide a *description of any condition* and an *action plan to restore enrollments for any exception*.

Special Considerations

A. Conditions

- a. First offering of a new course
- b. Specified outreach courses, e.g. “Classes at the Calaveras Outreach Site shall have at least 12 students.”
- c. Courses limited by equipment, space, or safety considerations
- d. Courses whose class size maximums are mandated by program standards
- e. Courses whose course outlines reflect approval for a class size less than 15

B. Common Exceptions

- a. Courses offered at specific time periods in an attempt to provide course offerings to specific populations of students. (For example, other sections of a course are offered, yet this one is the only section offered in the evening).
- b. The section is required to maintain a full-time instructor’s load obligation indicated in the YFA/YCCD Contract and no other options are available.
- c. The section is required to support student progression toward completion of their major. The course is required for a major, is the only section of the course being offered, and...
 - i. Is the last course in the sequence or the final component of the major?
 - ii. Is the only section of the course offered in the academic year?
 - iii. Is a unique program important to local industries?

This document was last updated by the YFA and Columbia College administration in Fall, 2019, in accordance with Article 4.9.1 of the YCCD/YFA Contract.