

UMass Amherst Course Enrollment Management Guidelines

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Is a course automatically cancelled if it does not meet the guidelines minimum of 12 for undergraduate courses and 6 for graduate courses?**
 - No. The purpose of these guidelines is not to develop a rigid structure. It is to encourage appropriate usage of faculty teaching that respects disciplinary diversity.
 - Accordingly, Heads/Chairs will work with their Dean to develop a management plan for courses that frequently fall below the guideline minima. This may include cancellation whenever enrollment is low, a one-time exemption for the upcoming semester, or other plans as developed by the department.
- 2) Can exemptions to these guidelines occur?**
 - Yes. Department Heads/Chairs can request exemptions from the Dean of the School/College. The deans are responsible for ensuring that we are making appropriate use of faculty teaching time.
- 3) What are the responsibilities of the department Head/Chair and faculty in this process?**
 - The department Head/Chair and faculty (i.e., curriculum committee) are central to the discussions and development of a management plan for course delivery including courses that chronically have lower student enrollments. The management plan may include revision of the curriculum, offering courses less frequently, and other methods appropriate to the department and School/College.
- 4) Many doctoral programs admit small numbers of students and will find it difficult to meet the six person threshold. How will we handle graduate courses?**
 - The university recognizes the broad disciplinary diversity that exists and that one-size does not fit all. Departments and Schools or Colleges are encouraged to develop course management plans that can assist smaller doctoral programs with their instructional delivery.
 - An exemption request can be made, and Deans should be particularly attentive to those involving smaller doctoral programs, so as not to disrupt the required course delivery or to require doctoral programs to increase in size.
- 5) How will the upper level courses in small undergraduate majors be handled?**
 - Undergraduate majors with a small number of majors can also develop a management plan for courses to assist in instructional delivery. In addition, Heads/Chairs have the opportunity to request exemptions to the minimum enrollment guidelines.
- 6) How are independent studies, internships, individual capstone projects, senior theses, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and unique accrediting-body requirements (i.e., size of clinical practicums) handled under these guidelines?**
 - These individualized instructional opportunities are not guided by the minimum course enrollment management guidelines. The guidelines apply to a "course" defined as regularly scheduled, on-load, non-CPE courses of at least three credits.

7) How are cross-listed courses between departments treated?

- If a course is cross-listed under two departments with different course rubrics (i.e., different departmental rubrics) the enrollments in the various course sections will be added together creating one enrollment total for the cross-listed course. For example, Comp Lit 319, English 319, and Judaic Studies 319 are a single cross-listed course taught by one instructor with different enrollment totals within each of these sections. Although one or even all of these sections may fall below 12 students enrolled, none of the sections will be cancelled when the combined enrollment is 12 or more.

8) How are cross-listed courses at both the UG and G level treated?

- If a course has sections offered at both the UG and G level (i.e., WGSS 493S and WGSS 693S) the enrollments of both sections will be added together to create one total enrollment for the course.

9) Do these guidelines apply to courses offered through Continuing and Professional Education (CPE courses)?

- No, these guidelines apply to a credit-bearing course of at least three credits offered through the University campus. CPE courses are handled separately, and are under the supervision of the appropriate Deans and the Vice Provost for Continuing and Professional Education.

10) When will the decision to cancel a class be made?

- Monitoring by department Heads/Chairs and the relevant Dean's office can begin as soon as course enrollments take place, keeping in mind course enrollment time periods for new students (first-year and transfer) and graduate students. The instructor of record should be informed about a cancellation no later than 14 calendar days before the start of the semester.

11) How is a faculty member's teaching dealt with if their course is cancelled?

- Decisions regarding the teaching activities of instructors are made in consultation between the department chair/head and the faculty member.