Low-Enrollment Course Sections – Email to heads

Colleagues:

You probably remember my requests before the start of every fall and spring semester to review the course sections offered by your units in which few students have enrolled.  For reference, I have repeated the usual information about this process in the following section.  Feel free to skip that section and go directly to “This Semester’s Review.”

**Reference Information**

To use instructional resources more efficiently, the provost issued regulations several years ago regarding low-enrollment sections and classes.  The attached pdf provides the text of those regulations.  Appendix C of the regulations is incomplete, but the only important point is that HHS set the minimum enrollment for an undergraduate section not at 15, the default in Provost Regulation UEAC-01, but at 10.  This matches the minimum enrollment for an undergraduate class (see Provost Regulation UEAC-02).  We set the minimum enrollment for a graduate class (50000-level or higher) at 5, the same as the value in the regulation.

Only the first regulation calls for a review of the enrollment in course sections every semester.  More specifically, this regulation calls for sections of undergraduate lecture and online classes with low enrollments to be canceled unless a temporary waiver of the regulation is approved by the provost or his designee. Variable-title courses are exempt from the provost’s regulation.

**This Semester’s Review**

Jenna Rickus, the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning, sent me the attached spreadsheet, which shows some sections taught in West Lafayette by five HHS units (HK, HSCI, NUR, NUTR, and SLHS) that currently have fewer than 10 students enrolled.  (Variable-title courses are exempt from the provost’s regulation, so they are not included on the spreadsheet.) The current enrollments of sections listed on the spreadsheet are likely to be very close to those they will have at the start of the fall semester because nearly all continuing and beginning students have registered for the fall.  Therefore, please review each section and enter responses in the ACTION and RATIONAL columns. One option for ACTION is to Cancel the low-enrollment section, which, if done now, gives the few students enrolled in it time to identify alternative classes. However, before canceling any section, please check with your unit’s lead/coordinating academic advisor to be sure that the cancellation would not have serious negative effects on students.

Alternatively, you are free to choose “Request a Temp(orary) Waiver” as the option for ACTION.  If you choose that option, please indicate your RATIONAL/reason for doing so.  I hope the abbreviated reasons in the dropdown box are clear, but let me know if you have questions about them.

After adding the appropriate entries for the sections of your units’ classes, please save the spreadsheet and send it to **Gloria Powell by tomorrow, Thursday, August 1**.  I apologize for the shortnotice, but Ididn’t receive the information from the vice provost until Monday afternoon.  I didn’t send it to you immediately because I was confused by the final entries on the spreadsheet.

**New This Semester: Purdue in Indianapolis (PIN) Course Sections**

You see that for the first time the list of low-enrollment course sections includes six sections that will be taught in Indianapolis.  None of the sections has the same subject abbreviations of our West Lafayette courses, and they have 4-digit rather than 5-digit course numbers.  However, someone has linked these courses to three HHS units: HSCI, HTM, and PUBH.  I hope the heads of these units know more about these course sections than I do, because I have not been told exactly which courses by which HHS units are being offered at PIN this fall.

I can explain, I think, the Notes that two of the sections are “Faculty consortium course already cancelled.”  I believe that “faculty consortium” refers to PIN courses that are taught by faculty whose primary appointment is with Indiana University in Indianapolis.  I don’t know whether that means the other courses are taught by Purdue-West Lafayette faculty or that they are faculty-consortium courses that have not been canceled.

However, I assume the distribution of the spreadsheet by the vice provost means that the heads of HSCI, HTM, and PUBH are being asked whether the other four PIN course sections with few students registered for them should be canceled.  If you are one of those heads, you are implicitly being asked to make decisions about those courses as well as about your West Lafayette courses.  If you can, please enter your responses in the ACTION and RATIONAL columns of the spreadsheet, save it, and send it to Gloria.  If you don’t think you can, or that you should, please put a brief explanation in the NOTES column.  Either way, your response is needed tomorrow, **August 1**, to meet the vice-provost’s deadline of Friday for returning the completed spreadsheet to her.

Thanks,

Tom

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