

College of Health, Education, and Social Transformation Course Scheduling, Enrollment Guidelines, and Course Cancellations Policies

New Mexico State University (NMSU) is a distinguished land-grant and high-research active university in the State of New Mexico. Our policies, procedures, and guidelines must represent the highest standards. No one-size-fits-all policy can be applied to determine a minimal enrollment threshold for every course that facilitates the realization of NMSU LEADS 2025 goals and the HEST strategic plan.

The need for quality programs to define appropriate course enrollments that optimize student learning is particularly relevant. This is not to suggest that absolute minima should not be required, but rather, it is the College of HEST's leaderships disposition that effective and well-thought-out programs/departments would be able to offer the highest quality experiences for their students if they were able to identify courses that were capable of large enrollments that could reasonably offset the expense of providing low-enrollment courses (e.g., graduate-level courses, laboratories, focused study courses, etc.). Thus, the extent to which departments could offer large enrollment classes would, in some way, dictate the minimal enrollments in other, smaller enrollment courses. Therefore, having a robust university system (**Goal 4**) will allow us to enhance student success and social mobility (**Goal 1**) by offering relevant degree programs and classes characterized by classroom management policies that support student-learning outcomes and are not governed simply by the university's financial implications.

I. HEST Course Enrollment Considerations

1. In consultation with the College Dean's Office, unit leaders should determine a threshold for each course considering level (graduate, upper division, lower division), course delivery, course content, accreditation requirements, cost of instruction, and SLOs.

Example: The university reimburses summer courses that break even or are profitable. For undergraduate courses, the break-even point is 15 students, and for graduate courses, 10 students.

2. Develop course schedule (course offerings each semester, number of sections, etc.) based on student needs. Unit leaders should use Ad Astra align function and historical enrollment figures when deciding course offerings for the academic year. Academic units should strive to submit course schedules for the

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year in the Fall semester before the start of the new academic year (i.e., Summer 24, Fall 24, and Spring 25 would be submitted Fall 23).

3. Unit leaders and the Associate Dean for Academics will monitor courses that repeatedly have low enrollment and take appropriate action that might include:
 - a. Review the number of course sections offered (online and face-to-face) and reduce the number of sections.
 - b. Offer one time per academic year or every other year (establish a course rotation)
 - c. Increasing the seating capacity in full sections.
 - d. Cross-list the course with another section (online, graduate section, etc.)

II. Canceling: Action for Canceling Low-Enrollment Courses

1. Any undergraduate and graduate course with less than the determined threshold (15 for undergraduate; 10 master's; 5 specialist/doctoral) will be canceled no less than two weeks before the start of the instruction.
 - a) This timeline gives students sufficient time (14-16 days) to find other classes before the last day to add a class.
 - b) This allows students time to enroll in a sufficient number of credit hours not to jeopardize financial aid, scholarships, or graduate assistant positions.
2. As an alternative to cancellation of low enrollment courses, determine if multiple sections can be combined (online and face-to-face courses).
3. Although department/unit heads monitor enrollment throughout registration, the Dean's Office will notify/remind unit leaders three weeks before the beginning of instruction via Ad Astra of low-enrollment courses. Unit heads will respond to how courses will be handled:
 - a) Cancel the course: When a course is canceled, academic units will notify registered students of the course cancellation. Students will be provided with suitable course alternatives when possible. Academic units will then initiate the course cancellation through the CourseLeaf system.
 - b) Keep the course with an approved justification by the unit leader.

III.

IV. There are exceptions to canceling classes due to low enrollment. The following are accepted rationales:

1. Cross-listed with other courses that raise the registration over the determined threshold (this includes cross-listed courses with the NMSU Global campus).
2. Courses that are required for graduation that year.
3. Students require the course to graduate for that semester.
4. Licensure/endorsement courses that are offered on time an academic year or every other year.
5. Accreditation requirement (i.e., a low faculty-student ratio course is required for accreditation).
6. The average number of students being taught across the faculty member's course load is equal to the minimum number of students equivalent to that course load (i.e., assigned two undergraduate courses, minimum average enrollment must be 15).
7. A new course is being offered for the first time.
8. The course is taught with funds outside of I&G.