



Arts and Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

POLICY: Faculty Workload and Course Enrollment Management

DATE: March 22, 2024

I. PURPOSE

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Dean’s Office and the faculty members and instructional staff in CAS units share a commitment to providing the highest quality education to our students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The college and all departments and academic programs have a shared interest in ensuring that teaching resources are allocated and used responsibly. To effectively serve our students and meet our financial obligations, the college and departments must work together to manage the curriculum and maintain fiscal responsibility. Accordingly, it is imperative that all units make optimal use of the teaching capacity of their faculty members and instructional staff.

The purpose of this policy is to provide an institutional framework for departments and academic programs in the College of Arts and Sciences in the areas of faculty workload and course enrollment management.

This policy applies to all units within the College of Arts and Sciences. The college policy is subordinate to related policies outlined in the [University of South Carolina Faculty Manual](#). In cases of inconsistencies between this policy and the university, state, or federal policies, the university, state, or federal policy rules are the final authority.

II. FACULTY WORKLOAD

A. Faculty Workload Expectations and Review

1. Per the Faculty manual, the base teaching load of Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Professional faculty members is 4:4 (12 credit hours per semester) for a 9-month appointment. Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Professional faculty members in all departments and academic programs must teach in accordance with the annual faculty workloads indicated in their letters of appointment unless a decrease or increase has been approved by the unit head in consultation with the Office of the Dean. Professional faculty and adjuncts may teach up to two additional courses (a total of 6 courses or 15 credit hours per semester) with written permission of the unit head. Professional faculty and adjuncts may not exceed 6 courses per semester without additional written permission from the unit’s Associate Dean. Professional faculty with joint appointments must receive written approval

from both the primary and secondary units.

2. Unit chairs and directors are responsible for ensuring that faculty workload expectations are met and that any changes are reviewed and approved by the Office of the Dean.
3. The college will evaluate all units' curricular plans and faculty workload assignments during the annual planning process to ensure that faculty members are meeting college and departmental obligations. This review will consider faculty absences due to sabbaticals and other leave agreements and adjust the average teaching expectations accordingly.

B. Faculty Workload Standards

Faculty members and instructional staff must teach courses that meet the minimum enrollment guidelines identified in this policy. Courses at risk of low enrollment should be reviewed during each department's curricular planning stage and strategies should be discussed to minimize the number of low enrollment courses offered.

Alternative classes should be identified for all faculty members and instructional staff assigned to course sections at risk of under-enrollment.

III. COURSE ENROLLMENT MINIMUM STANDARDS

Course enrollment minimum standards in the college are established by the Office of the Dean based on course delivery method.

All college courses must meet the minimum standards specified below unless approved for a Low Enrollment Waiver as outlined in Section IV of this policy.

A. Traditional or Face-to-Face Lecture Courses

Minimum enrollment standards for **traditional or face-to-face lecture courses** offered during the fall and spring are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
700 or above	8 students per section
500 and 600	10 students per section
300 and 400	12 students per section
100 and 200	15 students per section

Compensation for approved low enrollment courses not part of the normal faculty teaching load (winter/summer session, overloads, etc.) will be adjusted according to the following scales:

Course Level	100% compensation	75% compensation	50% compensation
700 or above	14 or more	10	7
300-600	20 or more	15	12
100 - 200	24 or more	18	12

Low enrollment waivers, course cancellations, and all compensation adjustments must be approved in advance by the Office of the Dean (See **Section IV**). Departments are expected to monitor course enrollment throughout the semester.

B. Distributed Learning or Online Lecture Courses, Hybrid or Other Modality Courses

Minimum enrollment standards for **distributed learning or online lecture courses** offered during the fall, spring, and summer are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
700 and above	8 students per section
300-600, including associated lab sections	20 students per section
100 and 200, including associated lab sections	24 students per section

Compensation for approved low enrollment courses not part of the normal faculty teaching load (winter/summer session, overloads, etc.) will be adjusted according to the following scales:

Course Level	100% compensation	75% compensation	50% compensation
700 or above	8 or more	6	4
300-600	20 or more	15	12
100 - 200	24 or more	18	12

C. Laboratory Courses

Given variations in room size and required safety measures, lab sections should contain a minimum of 14 students or 80% of maximum enrollment, whatever number is higher.

D. Cross-Listed and Concurrent Courses

1. Enrollment for **cross-listed and concurrent traditional or face-to-face courses** includes all students who meet at the same time, in the same location, and with the same instructor of record, regardless of the course designator or course number under which they are enrolled.

Enrollment for **cross-listed and concurrent online or hybrid courses** includes the total number of students enrolled in the course with the same instructor of record, regardless of the course designator or course number under which they are enrolled.

2. Any cross-listed or concurrent course that does not meet minimum enrollment standards and does not receive a Low Enrollment Waiver must be cancelled or taught as an uncompensated overload.

E. Team Teaching

1. Team taught courses must enroll enough students to meet minimum enrollment requirements for **all** instructors of record. For fall and spring semesters, enrollment standards for courses with **two** instructors of record are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
700 or above	16 students
300-600	40 students per section
100 -- 200	48 students per section

2. Team taught classes that do not meet minimum enrollment standards for both instructors of record must be changed to single-instructor courses or instructors must teach the course as an overload.

F. South Carolina Honors College (SCHC) Courses

South Carolina Honor's College courses are considered part of a faculty member's regular teaching load. The minimum enrollment standards in this policy, however, do not apply to SCHC courses. Course scheduling for SCHC courses is coordinated by the Office of the Dean. The college is committed to supporting the needs of the SCHC and to offering SCHC courses where possible. No SCHC course should be cancelled without Office of the Dean approval.

G. Faculty-Led Study Abroad Courses

In addition to the guidelines below, faculty are required to work with [the USC Education Abroad Office](#) to ensure compliance with all University requirements including:

[ACAF 2.08: Faculty/Staff-Led Overseas Programs for Students](#)

[ACAF 2.10: Financial Arrangements for Faculty/Staff-Led Overseas Programs](#)

Faculty Led Programs should also use Marketplace for all financial transactions. [Marketplace account](#)

1. **Minimum Enrollments:** Study Abroad courses are treated similarly to traditional or face-to-face lecture courses (see Section III A).
2. Compensation for approved low enrollment courses not part of the normal faculty teaching load (winter/summer session, overloads, etc.) will be adjusted according to the scales listed in section III A.
3. **Required Approval:** All Faculty-Led Study Abroad courses must be approved by the Office of the Dean in collaboration with Education Abroad. Please see [Steps for Faculty Members Developing Study Abroad Courses](#) regarding steps for approval.

IV. COURSE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

A. Early Identification

All departments and programs should monitor course enrollments during registration to identify courses at risk of low enrollment. Early identification allows time for the efficient reassignment of faculty and instructional staff in the event of course cancellation. This also provides students with sufficient time to adjust their semester schedule.

B. College-Level Review During Registration Period

1. The college will conduct regular formal reviews of course enrollments throughout the academic year. For the spring semester, enrollment reviews will begin in November. For the summer and fall semesters, enrollment review will begin in April and continue until the end of Freshman Orientation. Course enrollments will also be checked at the beginning of each semester or session as follows:
 - Two weeks before the beginning of classes
 - One week before the beginning of classes
 - One week after classes begin

At each stage, departments and programs will be contacted by the Office of the Dean regarding courses that are under-enrolled or in danger of cancellation.

2. After notification from the college, units should review each under-enrolled course carefully, considering the nature of the course, the role of the course in the larger curriculum, and past enrollment patterns.
3. Units may request a Low Enrollment Waiver for a particular course or request to cancel the course in accordance with Section IV below. This request should be submitted as early as possible. If it is clear that a course will not produce sufficient enrollments, early cancellation provides the greatest opportunity for students to find alternative courses and for faculty and instructional staff to be reassigned.
4. Units will receive an update on course enrollments two weeks before classes begin. Again, units may request a Low Enrollment Waiver for a particular course or request to cancel the course at that time.
5. One week before classes begin, courses that do not meet enrollment minimums and do not have an approved Low Enrollment Waiver will be cancelled by the college. Temporary faculty (TFAC) are rarely compensated for courses cancelled by this deadline.
6. Temporary faculty (TFAC) teaching under-enrolled courses that are granted Low Enrollment Waivers are subject to reduced compensation in accordance with Section IV below.
7. Low Enrollment Waivers, course cancellations, and all compensation adjustments must be approved by the Office of the Dean.

C. Mid-Semester Review and Annual Planning

Departments and programs are expected to monitor course enrollment throughout the semester and each academic year. In collaboration with the Office of the Dean, units should regularly review and evaluate courses that fall below minimum enrollment levels for consecutive semesters or multiple academic years in terms of frequency of offering and relevance to curricular needs.

V. WAIVERS AND EXCLUSIONS

A. Low Enrollment Waivers

1. Departments may seek a Low Enrollment Waiver for specific courses based on pedagogical requirements. Possible considerations for requesting a Low Enrollment Waiver include (but are not limited to):
 - a. Pedagogical reasons for small classes;
 - b. Courses needed to meet Carolina Core requirements;
 - c. Courses required for timely progress toward a degree;
 - d. Course sizes limited by physical space, equipment, or safety standards, including Study Abroad courses with logistical factors affecting enrollment capacity;
 - e. Undergraduate courses in smaller academic units such as interdisciplinary programs;
 - f. Graduate courses required in departments where cohorts are consistently smaller than minimum enrollment standards; and
 - g. Courses recently introduced into the curriculum.
2. Waiver requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will consider the nature of the course, its role in the curriculum, and the relationship of the course to faculty workload standards. Waivers will usually only be approved for the specific semester requested.
3. Waiver requests must be approved prior to the start of the course. Units may not make an offer of employment or assign an under-enrolled course before approval of the Low Enrollment Waiver request. After approval, departments will be required to monitor and evaluate the course based on the criteria approved in the waiver.
4. Courses that have failed to meet enrollment standards for previous offerings will rarely be given additional waivers.

B. Exclusions

The following types of courses are excluded from the low enrollment waiver policy:

- Independent study
- Directed research
- Internships
- x98 or x99 series courses
- South Carolina Honors College courses

C. Waiver, Cancellation, or Reduced Compensation Request Procedures

1. Units can request approval for a Low Enrollment Waiver, a course cancellation, or reduced compensation via an email to Associate Dean [Christy Friend](#) or [Christy Stephens](#), Academic Resources Manager in the Office of the Dean.
2. The emailed request should include the name and number/section of the course, instructor of record, and a brief justification that indicates whether or not the course is a major or Carolina Core requirement. The request should copy the unit chair or director.

Related Policies

[University Policy ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#)

[CAS Policy: Faculty Salary Savings \(December 2019\)](#)

[CAS Policy: Faculty Course Buyouts \(November 2020\)](#)