

Instructor Permission Policy – College of Arts and Sciences – Fall 2009

Policy

Instructor Permission is not to be used as a means of managing a waitlist for a course that has reached its enrollment cap; fully-enrolled courses should remain open to online student enrollment until the end of the add/drop period. In unusual situations, it may be in the best interests of both the students and instructor to control student enrollment in a course once it has filled. In these situations, a faculty member can request that their course be closed to registration and a waitlist managed. Requests should be made to the department chair or program director and, if justified and approved, forwarded to the Dean's Office for review and, if approved, implementation by the Registrar.

Process to Place Instructor Permission on a Course

- Instructors needing to manage a waitlist should submit the online course change request form, requesting instructor permission and justifying the need to restrict enrollment in this manner (based on the criteria detailed below)
- Chairs and Directors review and either deny or approve of the request, forwarding their decision either back to the instructor or to the Dean's Office (adding justification, if necessary) – again, this review must be based on the criteria detailed below
- Dean's Office will review the request and forward to the Registrar (if approved) or back to the Chair (if not approved)
- Direct requests for instructor permission made to the Registrar or Dean's Office will be returned to the Dept Chair or Program Director without action

Criteria for using Instructor Permission to control enrollment

1. *Enrollment control is needed to ensure access to a course by students needing the course to graduate in order to fulfill major or minor requirements.*
2. *Enrollment control is needed to ensure access to a course by students needing the course to graduate in order to fulfill distributive requirements for their degree.*
3. *Enrollment control is needed to ensure access to the course so as to ensure timely progress of students through major or minor requirements.*
4. *Enrollment control is needed to ensure that students have the stated prerequisites for the course (prerequisites essential to student success in the course).*

5. *Temporary enrollment control is needed due to the impending cancellation of a course.*
6. *Restrictions have been used for enrollment control but are unable to ensure access by the target student population.*

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- My course filled on the 3rd day of registration; can I put Instructor Permission on the course and manage a waitlist?
 - *Generally, no. Even courses that fill early-on have some attrition (often 10-20%) between registration and the start of the semester. Students interested in the course should be told that it is likely that seats will open up and that they should monitor the course enrollment and enroll as soon as they see a vacancy.*
- But I have told students who emailed me that I would put them on a waitlist. What do I tell them?
 - *Explain that you are unable to maintain a waitlist and that they should look for openings in the class between now and the start of the semester, and enroll as soon as they see an open space in the course.*
- I would like to give the students at the top of my waitlist preference in getting into my course because I know that they are particularly interested in the subject area and will make the class better. Is this an acceptable reason to use Instructor Permission?
 - *Alas, no. With an open enrollment system, students are empowered to make choices as to which courses they enroll in. Faculty, however, are not able to select in advance the specific students who enroll, only the general characteristics (level major, minor, etc.) of the students who are allowed to enroll. There may very well be a highly qualified student who is equally as interested in your course as those at the top of your waitlist, but who is waiting for an opening in order to enroll (rather than contacting you to get onto a waitlist). You might also consider the following: why should it be acceptable to hand-pick the last few students who get into your class but not the first group of students who enroll? All students should be able to follow the enrollment process and have the same opportunity to enroll in your class.*
- What kind of control do I have over who is able to enroll in my classes?

- *Restrictions can select for the class year (first-year, sophomore, etc.), major, minor, College or School, and degree concentrations. So, if you wished, you could restrict enrollment in your course to majors in your department who have senior status. If there is a huge demand for your course, this kind of restriction could be placed on your course during registration week only and then (if there are remaining seats in the course) opened up to a more general population. We can also put restrictions on AFTER the course fills so that only those students in a restricted group are able to enroll in the seats that open up.*
- What if there is a student who doesn't meet the restrictions I've put on my course that I would like to be able to have a chance to enroll in a seat that may open up?
 - *You can issue that student an override – but only override the restrictions (do NOT override capacity unless you wish to allow them to enroll ahead of everyone else!).*
- I would like to put permission on my course so that seniors who need this particular course to graduate are able to have priority in enrolling in the class as seats open up. Is this acceptable?
 - This is acceptable if restrictions are used and are still not able to ensure proper access.
 - Example: if seniors need the course, then enrollment can be restricted to just seniors – **permission is not needed;**
 - Example: if seniors with a particular major or minor need the course, then enrollment can be restricted to just that group – **permission is not needed;**
 - Example: if enrollment needs to be restricted to seniors with a particular major or minor *who have not already taken a course satisfying the requirement, then permission is the only way to ensure this group of students has priority access to this course - **permission is needed and acceptable.***
- My class is full on the first day of the semester and I have a bunch of students attending the class who are not able to enroll; can I put Permission on the class and then override these students into the class as students drop?
 - *This has been allowed in the past, but with the pressure of tighter enrollments across all departments, this has led to students being closed out of courses when there has been space available. Students do use the first week of classes to*

readjust their schedules, for a variety of reasons, and this has often resulted in it being almost impossible for students in this situation to gain access to courses that show available seats. In many situations like this, students shop around and attend many courses and can then get overrides into more courses than they can enroll in, leaving some students unable to get into available spaces. An open enrollment system allows students to make these changes without tying up overrides that close other interested students out of your course.

Recall that you always have the ability to override someone into your class immediately by overriding capacity (use this only if you either have the excess capacity in your classroom and/or you are certain that there will be some attrition that brings the enrollment back down to the cap).

- I have found students are adding my class near the end of the add/drop period and have missed some of the first graded assignments; can I put Instructor Permission on my course to prevent students from enrolling after the course has graded assignments due?
 - *The add/drop period includes the first 10 instructional days of the semester. During the first five days, faculty cannot halt open enrollment based on these criteria. However, for the last five instructional days of the add/drop period, the Catalogue states that an instructor may halt open enrollment in their course:*

“if material may not be made up (e.g. laboratories) and if the absence of this work would seriously affect the quality of the student's educational experience.”

This is not a blanket approval for using Permission to restrict enrollment, however. In most cases, students missing the first week or two of classes can easily make up the work, as long as they are informed of the requirements and given the opportunity (not unlike how you would treat an excused absence during the semester). In unusual circumstances where it is impossible for the student to makeup the work (situations which, if encountered during the semester, would likely end up with the student receiving an incomplete), Permission can be used to ensure that students do not enroll at a time when it is impossible for them to be successful in the course.