

**San Diego Mesa College
Academic Affairs Committee
Position Paper #4
Revised: March 2012
Title: Class Capacity - CAP**

Approved by the Academic Senate: March 26, 2012
Approved by President's Cabinet: April 17, 2012

The establishment of a class capacity (CAP) for each class offering should be made in a systematic and considered fashion. In light of new contract language, the following recommendations for a procedure and criteria for establishing equitable CAPs are made to the President's Cabinet for consideration and approval.

I. Process:

- A. The CAP assigned to each section offered at San Diego Mesa College shall be reviewed by the department chair and appropriate manager periodically.
- B. According to the AFT Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Section 7.6 (Please see below.) decisions regarding class size and class cancellation shall be made by the appropriate manager after consultation with the department chair.

AFT-Guild, Local 1931 - College Faculty: (7/1/05 - 12/31/08)

ARTICLE VII - WORK LOAD - 7.6 CLASS SIZE AND CLASS CANCELLATIONS:

"Decisions regarding class size and class cancellation shall be made by the appropriate manager after consultation with the department chair. Class section capacities shall be established and set prior to enrollment. In circumstances in which the department chair concludes that the decision of the appropriate manager does not meet program needs, the chair may request further review by the Vice President.

Effective spring semester 2007, with respect to English 101 classes, the District will implement a class size limit of 25 (twenty-five). Effective spring semester 2008, the District will implement a class size of 25 (twenty-five) students for all English 105 and 205 courses."

- C. It is expected that department chairs would consult with department faculty.
- D. In circumstances in which the department chair concludes that the decision of the appropriate manager does not meet program needs, the chair may request further review by the Vice President of Instruction (VPI).

II. Rationale:

- A. A regular review of the appropriate capacity of each section is a healthy process which will allow adjustments to take place in a rational, uniform, and timely manner.
- B. The dean, in consultation with the department chair, can put the recommendations in the perspective of the college's overall objectives and goals.
- C. Individual circumstances can be explained and agreed upon relative to meeting the criteria established in this document.
- D. The VPI's review of the recommendations will ensure campus wide conformity to uniform standards.
- E. This is a joint effort designed to ensure uniformity and fairness.

III. Criteria:

- A. It is recommended the following criteria be used by the department chairs when recommending CAPs for sections offered each scheduling cycle, as well as by the deans and the VPI when evaluating recommended CAPs.
 1. Pedagogical Issues:
 - a. Pedagogical issues including method of instruction and the nature of the course work should be the primary consideration.
 - b. Issues involving the review of class assignments such as term papers and creative projects should be included.
 - c. These issues will be decided by consensus of the program Faculty including the department chair.
 2. Safety and Adherence to Laws and Regulations:
 - a. Safety and adherence to laws and regulations concerning occupancy limit (Legal Occupancy Limit) are a primary concern.
 - b. No student or Faculty member can be placed at risk due to class size relative to facility capacity.
 - c. Facilities Services should verify laws and regulations concerning the Legal Occupancy Limit for each room in cooperation with the Fire Marshall and post the Legal Occupancy Limit in each room.

- d. At the beginning of each semester, department chairs should remind Faculty not to exceed the Legal Occupancy Limit posted by Facilities Services.
- 3. Room and Lab Capacity, and Limitation of Services:
 - a. Room and lab capacity such as the number of lab or computer stations available will necessarily limit class size.
 - b. Proper staffing of support personnel, adequate funding of supply materials, and maximum number of students accepted on field trips will necessarily limit class size.
- 4. Regulatory Issues:
 - a. Regulatory issues (such as compliance with ADA regulations) may govern class size by statute or the rules of a sanctioning body.
- 5. Accreditation and Articulation:
 - a. Accreditation and articulation to other institutions may establish maximum class size.
- 6. Caps for Distance Education and Online Courses:
 - a. Caps for Distance Education and Online Courses shall be determined according to the AFT Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Section 7.12.3 (Please see below):
AFT-Guild, Local 1931 - College Faculty: (7/1/05 - 12/31/08)
ARTICLE VII - WORK LOAD - 7.12.3 DISTANCE EDUCATION:
"Class section capacity for distance education courses shall be established prior to the beginning of the enrollment period for each course and shall be governed by the provisions of Article VII, Section 7.6, above. The class size of a distance education course shall be computed by summing the total enrollment from all of the sites where the particular course is being received."
- 7. WSCH to FTEF Ratios:
 - a. District and campus productivity goals and assignments are to be met in order to maintain financial stability.
 - b. Careful consideration is recommended to maintain the largest possible class size consistent with criteria #1 through #6 above.

IV. Justification:

- A. The task is to achieve educational standards of excellence while also maintaining overall WSCH to FTEF ratios and financial stability.

V. Guidelines for Exceptions:

- A. Exceptions in which a class size is significantly larger than the established CAP may be appropriate.
 - 1. Reasons for these exceptions may include special circumstances such as program growth strategies and supporting small class sections by allowing other large class sections.
 - 2. The important issue is that these large classes are exceptions to the established CAP and do not establish a new CAP for the course.
 - 3. During the census period, the CAP may be reasonably exceeded to accommodate un-enrolled students hoping to add the course.

Last draft #4 – May 5, 2000

Rewrite 9/23/03 w/ attachment: Presented to President's Cabinet, November 17, 2003 with no comment or action.

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