

406.6 - Low Enrolled Course Cancellation

Purpose:

Bismarck State College holds that optimal learning and maximum efficiency occurs within courses that are not too small nor too large. Divisions must be able to cancel a course if the enrollment is too low to support optimal learning as well as to provide adequate time for a student to be placed within a replacement course.

Procedure:

Divisions should carefully review schedules to ensure that date, time, and instructor information are as accurate as possible prior to the start of enrollment. Once course schedules have been opened for registration, all schedule changes or cancellations must be carefully evaluated to minimize negative impact on students. Consideration should be given to the timing in relation to the start of the semester, the number of students enrolled, and the rationale related to the course needs for student success.

Course Cancellation Timeline

Open Enrollment up to Two Weeks Prior to Course Start

Courses that are under-enrolled should be evaluated to determine the impact on student progress towards degree if the course is cancelled. Communication regarding the impact of the decision on student progress and potential course substitutions or replacements will occur between the assistant dean and the dean, with consultation from professional advisors and faculty as needed. If the faculty member is full-time, review will also include the impact on the faculty member's full-time workload. If there is a need for adjustment to full load, schedule adjustments will be implemented at the time of cancellation.

Requests to allow low enrollment courses to be offered must be approved by the Dean's Office and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Courses that do not meet minimal enrollment – typically fewer than 10 students and are not essential to degree progress should be cancelled.

If a course is to be cancelled, all students in the class must be personally contacted by the professional advisor (by email, text, phone) and directed to an alternative course option. Collaboration with Student Advising may be necessary to ensure students remain on track for timely degree completion. Students who do not select an alternate course option will be



administratively dropped, resulting in no transcript record and a full (100%) reduction of charges.

Two Weeks Prior to Course Start up through the First Week of Class

Any requests for schedule changes or cancellations during the last two weeks prior to the semester, or during the first week of classes, must be approved by both the Division Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Schedule changes or cancellations during this time frame will be approved only under exceptional circumstances. If a course is to be cancelled, all students in the class must be personally contacted by the professional advisor (by email, text, phone) and directed to an alternative course option. Collaboration with Student Advising is required to ensure students remain on track for timely degree completion. Students who do not select an alternate course option will be administratively dropped, resulting in no transcript record and a full (100%) reduction of charges.

Academic Deans and their Assistant Deans should monitor low enrollment courses to determine if any courses are cancelled repeatedly. If such classes are identified, the schedule should be built to reduce the frequency with which those courses are offered. Additional review should be given to modify or suspend programs where this situation persists beyond multiple semesters, and/or to reduce the number of sections offered to match the demand more accurately for the course. Enrollment patterns in all programs will be periodically reviewed by Academic Affairs as part of ongoing program prioritization. A program that finds it necessary to regularly schedule and offer low enrollment courses suggests that there is insufficient demand for the program which must be addressed within the program review process.

References:

History of This Procedure:

First procedure: August 6th, 2025.

Approved by VPAA Alicia Uhde on August 6th, 2025.