

AP 4023 Establishment and Modification of Course Caps

References: Title 5 §§53200-53206; Title 5 §53002; Education Code Section 70902; SLOCCCD Board Policy 2305; Accreditation Standard IV.B.1.(b)(e)

Definitions

1. A Course Cap is the maximum limit for student enrollment established for all sections of a course and listed on the Course Outline of Record (COR) in CurricUNET for each course.
2. An Enrollment Maximum is the total number of students that can enroll in a section of a course due to classroom size, campus site, or modality. Fill rates for individual sections of a course are to be determined by the enrollment maximum for a course, not the course cap, because the course cap may be higher than the classroom size allows.
3. Course caps, preexisting or revised, are the maximums for student enrollment for a given course across all campus sites. Where physical limitations at a particular campus site make accommodating an established course cap maximum impossible, a lower enrollment maximum may be used for that course for that location without modifying the maximum course cap that is listed on the COR for a given course across all campus sites and modalities.
4. Modality specific terms will be used when a course has been approved in Distance Education mode. Since a face-to-face (f2f) modality (even excluding enrollment maximum differences because of room space) may be lower than the Course Cap (if the DE modality is higher) and a face-to-face modality may not be an Enrollment Maximum since these are dependent on classrooms, it is possible to have a f2f number that is neither a course cap nor enrollment max. Therefore, "Face-to-Face Modality Limit" and "DE Modality Limit" will be the terms used when distinguishing between modality limits. Once the course has been approved in DE mode the CurricUNET will automatically add the following categories on the COR to be populated after course cap approvals.

Course Cap _____

Face-to-Face Modality Limit _____

DE Modality Limit _____

The Principles and Procedure for Course Cap Proposals

1. Faculty members may propose course caps for new courses and course cap modifications for existing courses in their disciplines to the Curriculum Committee for consideration based on the criteria outlined below with the consent of their fellow department and/or division faculty and with appropriate documentation. No course caps will be changed administratively without first following due process as outlined in the following procedure, including consultation with appropriate department faculty and review and approval by the Curriculum Committee.

2. Starting in Fall 2015, faculty members will be asked to review existing course caps established on the CORs in CurricUNET for each of the courses in their disciplines and select their course caps to be consistent with the pedagogical and safety standards of the college as established by College-wide Standardized List of Course Cap Definitions and Standard Variance Procedure contained within this procedure. In addition, faculty may be encouraged by the Workload Committee to meet efficiency targets in their departments, which may include a review of course caps with attention to a department efficiency plan. This procedure will enable departments to modify their course caps to achieve their efficiency targets as established by the Workload Committee.
3. The Standardized List of Course Cap Definitions (Appendix A) contains categories of courses offered at Cuesta College with Course Category Descriptions and Standard Course Cap Ranges, which must be consulted and used as the basis for new or modified course cap proposals.
4. As of Fall 2015, if an existing course cap falls within the standard course cap range for the category of the course, this course cap will not need to be modified or justified but will need to be recorded as part of the implementation process. However, if a faculty member would like to modify their existing course cap by lowering a course cap within the same Standard Course Cap Range or within a different course cap category and range, this will require justification with use of the Standard Variance Procedure as explained below. Note that any proposals to raise course caps from existing numbers will not need to be justified or follow the below procedure.
5. For the initial implementation of this procedure, the Curriculum Committee will create a process and timeline for all departments to review course caps and if necessary propose a course cap modification within the guidelines of the definitions and procedure established in this document. As a supplement to this procedure and as a means to manage the large volume of course cap change proposals, the Curriculum Committee will develop and publish a schedule of course cap reviews by department starting in fall 2015.
6. Faculty members may propose and defend a new course cap or modification of an existing course cap by submitting a new course proposal or a major course modification proposal to the Curriculum Committee for review with use of one of two procedures, each described briefly below:
 - a. Use of College-wide Standardized List of Course Cap Definitions (Appendix A): Faculty may propose a course cap for a new or modified course from within the standard range for a course within a matching category. Course cap modification proposals to lower an existing course cap must consider their department efficiency plan and/or efficiency targets as established by the Workload Committee.
 - b. Use of the Standard Variance Procedure for Course Cap Modifications: Faculty members may propose and defend a course cap that lowers their existing course cap or varies from the Standardized List with use of objective and subjective criteria, efficiency plan data, and supporting documentation as explained in the Standard

Variance Procedure below.

7. Faculty proposals for new course caps and for modifications to existing course caps will be reviewed by the Course Caps Sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee. This sub-committee will review each proposal to determine whether or not the rationale for the proposed course cap is supported by appropriate documentation and is consistent with the established criteria for course cap proposals before making a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee as to whether or not the course cap proposal should be approved. Each faculty member who proposes a course cap modification must consult with other departmental faculty, their division chair, and their dean, as they are asked to do for all curriculum proposals.
8. Each course cap proposal for a new course or major course modification will be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for their review and possible approval through the curriculum approval process in CurricUNET regardless of whether or not the proposal has been approved by the dean or VP of Academic Affairs.
9. The Curriculum Committee will review Course Caps Sub-committee recommendations before considering approval of new course or course modification proposals.
10. If the Curriculum Committee approves a new course proposal or a major course modification to change a course cap, then the course cap and all supporting documentation will be submitted to the Workload Committee as a formal recommendation for the latter committee's consideration and approval.
11. If the Workload Committee does not accept the course cap recommendation from the Curriculum Committee and instead recommends a different course cap, the Workload Committee will be required to provide in writing the rationale for their decision to the Curriculum Committee, who will in turn forward the committee's rationale to the proposing faculty member and his/her department and/or division. The faculty member will have an opportunity to appeal the Workload Committee decision, if necessary, by providing further documentation and rationale to the Curriculum Committee to support objective and subjective criteria and efficiency data for the course cap proposal. This appeal will be considered by the Curriculum Committee for a final recommendation to the Workload Committee. If the discipline faculty member does not elect to appeal the Workload Committee decision, then the Workload Committee course cap recommendation will become the official cap for student enrollment for that course and will be listed as such on the Course Outline of Record (COR), effective the following semester after approval.
12. In addition, if the Workload Committee recommends a course cap modification to an existing course that has not been recently reviewed by the Curriculum Committee for a course modification or has not been proposed recently for modification by a faculty member, then the faculty member(s) within that discipline will be contacted to review the Workload Committee proposal and will be encouraged to submit a course modification proposal to the Curriculum Committee for a course cap change according to the above procedure, starting with step #1 above. The Curriculum Committee will not make a recommendation to the Workload Committee in response to their course cap modification

proposal until after discipline faculty have had an opportunity to use the above process to propose a course cap modification for review. If the discipline faculty member(s) does/do not respond to a Workload Committee proposal to modify a course cap, then the Workload Committee course cap recommendation will become the official cap for student enrollment for that course and will be listed as such on the Course Outline of Record (COR), effective the following semester after approval.

13. If the Workload Committee approves the Curriculum Committee recommendation for a new or modified course cap, this approved course cap will become the official cap for student enrollment for that course and will be listed as such on the Course Outline of Record (COR), effective the following semester after approval.
14. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee is responsible for reporting all approved course caps modifications and new course caps as part of the regular curriculum report to the Board of Trustees for final district-wide approval. If there is a conflict between a Curriculum Committee recommendation and a Workload Committee decision regarding one or more course cap proposals, this will be reported to the Board of Trustees along with the rationale provided by the Workload Committee and a summation of the results of a faculty appeal process. Please reference Article 5.8 in the Collective Bargaining Agreement for more information.
15. Once initial college-wide Caps are reviewed and established using the new standardized list and variance procedure, each additional proposal for a course cap with rationale and appropriate documentation should be submitted by faculty as part of either a new course proposal or course modification proposal to the Curriculum Committee for their consideration and approval.
16. The DE Modality Limit and Face-to-Face Modality Limit will be the same as the Course Cap unless a variance for one modality is requested and approved. A variance procedure must be requested and/or proposed for either Face to Face or Distance Education if one is being proposed at a lower number than the Course Cap. If a variance is granted, the resulting modality limit will be noted underneath the Course Cap on the course outline of record. For example, if the Distance Education Modality is lower than the Course Cap, then both will be listed on the COR as illustrated by the following example:

Course Cap __40__
Face-to-Face Modality Limit __40__
DE Modality Limit _35__

Also, if the Face to Face Modality Limit is lower than the Course Cap due to a higher Distance Education Modality Limit, then both will be listed on the COR as illustrated by the following example:

Course Cap _40__
Face-to-Face Modality Limit _35__
DE Modality Limit _40__

Standard Variance Procedure for Course Cap Proposals

1. If a faculty member would like to defend a new or modified course cap that varies from the Standardized List of Course Caps Definitions, faculty will use the following standard variance procedure and submit a major course modification to the Curriculum Committee based on the criteria as explained below.
2. If a faculty member would like to defend an enrollment maximum based on modality that differs from the course cap, then the faculty member will use the following standard variance procedure and submit a major course modification to the Curriculum Committee based on the criteria as explained below.
3. Course cap proposals must be justified with at least two of the below criteria, one of which must be from the objective criteria category as labeled below. Additionally, every proposal must list how the proposed variance fits into the division's efficiency plan as established in the program's IPPR Template. Under each criterion below, suggested examples are provided of the types of data that may be used to justify a modification to a course cap. Justifications shall include supporting documentation.
4. If the course meets Objective Criteria A below with relevant documentation, then no further justification is necessary.
5. Objective Criteria
 - a. Health, Safety, or Legal Requirements (If relevant documentation is submitted to prove that a health, safety, or legal requirement justifies a course cap, then this data is all that is necessary to support a course cap variance from the college standardized range).
 - 1) Professional or industry requirements to maintain safety
 - 2) Supervision requirements: Number of students who can be safely supervised by available faculty and/or staff within a classroom when the students are undertaking hazardous activities or working with hazardous equipment.
 - b. Standard Disciplinary Practice
 - 1) Professional organization recommendations
 - 2) Academic publication recommendations
 - 3) Course caps for similar course at a minimum of 5 California community college districts
 - c. Course Assessment Data and Analysis
 - 1) Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment data and analysis of course
 - 2) Annual Program Review data and analysis of course
 - 3) Comprehensive Program Review data and analysis of course

6. Subjective Criteria

a. Course Modality

- 1) Lab courses vs. combined lecture and lab courses – course caps may be determined differently for labs, which may have different limitations compared to lecture-only courses.
- 2) Distance education courses – modality-specific pedagogical methods may impact the course cap limitations.

b. Instructional Delivery

- 1) Nature of classroom activities based on discipline of study
- 2) Nature of interaction between instructor and students
- 3) Use of and frequency of assigning group work and/or group projects

c. Student Assessment

- 1) Types and/or amount of individual assignments, projects, and/or papers to assess
- 2) Methods of student assessment, feedback, or evaluation
- 3) Course-level or Program-level Student Learning Outcomes
- 4) Course objectives in the COR

7. Each proposal for a course cap that varies from the Standardized List must be supported and/or justified with appropriate documentation. Section D below is required for all variance proposals, unless the course meets Objective Criteria A as explained above. Based on the criteria for the modification of course caps listed below, the appropriate documentation to support a proposal to change a course cap must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Comparative research of caps for similar courses at a minimum of 5 other California community colleges; and
- b. Recommendations or requirements from a discipline-specific professional or academic publication or organization; and/or
- c. Course specific documentation, such as course syllabus, assignment criteria, course and/or program SLOs, and course objectives.
- d. Explanation and data showing how proposed cap fits into the department's efficiency plan
 - 1) Enrollment and Success Data
 - a) Enrollment at the course's census
 - b) Success Rate
 - c) Fill Rate
 - d) Number of sections offered
 - 2) Current Cap and Proposed Cap

3) Partial cross listing circumstances

Approved:

Effective Date:

APPENDIX A

Standardized List of Course Cap Definitions

- **Note:** The below course cap standard categories do not apply to course caps that are determined by regulatory agencies, safety, or contractual agreements with the district.
- **Note:** Cross-listed courses can have individual caps that add up to a total that is in line with the appropriate category below.

	Course Category	Standard Course Cap Range	Course Category Description
LECTURE COURSES			
1	Large Lecture	55-110	The primary mode of instruction is lecture with minimal use of in-class group discussion activities. Although students may be asked questions by the instructor, students primarily learn by receiving information from lecture and assigned reading materials. Student understanding of material is evaluated primarily with the use of objective exams. Students may also be asked to complete one or more writing-based individual or group assignments, but these are primarily assessed for content knowledge and format rather than for essay/paragraph structure or a demonstration of writing skills development.
2	Small Lecture	40-50	The primary mode of instruction is a combination of lecture and in-class group discussion activities to develop analytical, computational, and critical reasoning skills. Student understanding of material may be evaluated primarily with the use of objective exams, but group projects and individual papers may also be assigned but primarily assessed for content knowledge and format rather than for essay/paragraph structure or a demonstration of writing skills development.
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSES			
3	Facilitated Learning	30-40	The primary mode of instruction is the facilitation of individual and group analytical, computational, and critical reasoning skills development. While the instructor may conduct interactive lectures, the goal is to engage the students to practice their analytical and critical reasoning skills in whole class discussions and activities. The focus of instruction may also include the direction, supervision, and evaluation of in-class group and/or individual presentations that also engage the students to practice and develop their analytical and critical thinking skills. Student understanding of course material and skills development may be partially evaluated with objective exams but is primarily evaluated with the use of group projects and individual papers assessed for the demonstration of advanced analytical and critical reasoning skills, organization, essay/paragraph structure, and overall writing skills.
4	Communication Skills	28	The primary mode of instruction is the facilitation of communication skills development. While the instructor may lecture, the goal is to provide direction, supervision, and evaluation of individual and/or group presentations that engage the students to practice and develop their critical and analytical thinking skills with formal speech communication. Multiple speaking assignments are assessed for critical and analytical reasoning, structure, style, and method of delivery.
5	Writing & Reading Skills	28	The primary mode of instruction is the facilitation of critical thinking writing, and reading skills development. Students are asked to complete three or more paper assignments totaling a minimum of 6000 words,

		which are assessed for a demonstration of analytical, critical thinking, and research skills; essay/paragraph structure; style; and other writing skills. The focus of instruction may also include the direction, supervision, and evaluation of group presentations assessed for critical understanding of the literature assigned in the course.	
6	Skills / Field Studies	20-30	The primary mode of instruction is the facilitation of skills development with use of either one of the following: 1) individualized, continual feedback on regular student artistic, musical, problem solving, technical, language acquisition, and/or career-technical practice; or 2) the coordination of internship and/or field studies opportunities; both of which may include the supervision of students at different locations.
7	Basic Skills Instruction	20-25	The primary mode of instruction is the facilitation of remedial writing, reading, math, and language acquisition skills needed for college success. These courses are designated as basic skills courses but also include ESL courses. Regular one-on-one individualized instruction is the focus of basic skills courses for student skills development.
LAB COURSES			
8	Lab – Large	35-50	The primary mode of instruction of these lab courses is to teach, supervise and assist students as they complete classroom activities that help them learn the discipline of focus. Such lab instruction includes answering student questions and providing guidance, feedback, and encouragement of skills development. Large lab classes may also include an aide or assistant to effectively manage, assess, and meet student needs.
9	Lab – Small	20-30	The primary mode of instruction of these lab courses is to provide extensive individualized instruction and extensive evaluation of course content on a regular basis with a focus on strategic classroom activities related to problem-solving skills development, career technical skills development, scientific experimentation, and other skills development. Small lab classes may also include supervision of the use of heavy equipment and hazardous materials.