

TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM
SYSTEM OPERATING STANDARD

No. ES.4.03	Page 1 of 6	Effective Date: 10/21/05
DIVISION: Educational Services		
SUBJECT: Conducting Classes with Less Than Ten Students		
AUTHORITY: Minute Order #45-03		
PROPOSED BY:		
TITLE: Vice Chancellor for Educational Effectiveness		Date: 10/24/05
RECOMMENDED BY:		
TITLE: Executive Vice Chancellor		Date: 10/24/05
APPROVED BY:		
TITLE: Chancellor		Date: 10/24/05

STATUS: Approved by BOR 10/21/05

HISTORICAL STATUS: Approved by MC 09/20/05
 Revised 09/01/05
 Approved by MC 04/09/03
 Updated 2/10/03
 Approved by MC 04/27/00
 Reviewed 03/23/00
 Reviewed 10/12/94
 Approved 02/02/81 by Minute Order #3-81
 Revised 04/20/93

POLICY

It is the policy of Texas State Technical College to conduct classes with ten or more students to maintain operational efficiency. However, classes of less than ten students may be held if the Board of Regents considers them to be necessary and justifiable and approves their continuation.

The Board of Regents considers a class of less than ten students to be necessary and justifiable if the class is:

- operated on a cost-recovery basis;
- a required course that is necessary for graduation;
- required for students to maintain the proper sequence of courses in order to progress through their programs of study;

- offered as part of a new program;
- the only section of a course that is offered in the term at that location;
- offered for the first time;
- mandated for TASP remediation;
- limited by laboratory facilities;
- taught by faculty on a voluntary basis as excess load without additional compensation;
- scheduled to allow students to complete a program that is being terminated; or
- alternatively scheduled in the evening or on a weekend.

The chancellor's designees will review enrollment data prior to the census dates designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and take all necessary action to ensure that the small classes offered on each campus are only those that conform with this policy.

PERTINENT INFORMATION

The State of Texas General Appropriations Act contains special provisions for conducting classes with less than ten students that apply to components of Texas State Technical College. These provisions state that TSTC is to offer only courses that are considered economically justified in the considered judgment of the Board of Regents. The Board is to adopt policies that specify the conditions under which classes of less than ten students by headcount are considered necessary and justifiable. The Board is to direct the chancellor or other officials to review enrollment data prior to the designated Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) census date and take all necessary action to ensure that the small classes offered on each campus are only those that conform to established policies on small classes. Each school term, each campus is to prepare for submission to the Board of Regents a small class report showing the department, course number, title of the course, and name of the instructor. The Board is to review enrollment records as necessary to ensure that the classes offered are economically justified and in compliance with Board policy.

The THECB categorizes classes with less than ten students according to the justifications for conducting those classes. These guidelines are found in the THECB's Rules and Regulations and are written to comply with sections of the Texas Education Code relating to reporting (TEC 51.403[d]). Although the THECB small class justifications are set forth for use by public senior colleges and universities, TSTC incorporates these justifications into its policy and operating requirements for small classes.

THECB guidelines for public senior colleges and university specify that a small class may be offered if it:

- is a required course for graduation (the course is not offered each semester or term, and, if canceled, may affect the date of graduation of those enrolled);
- is a required course for majors in this field and should be completed this semester (or term) to keep proper sequence in courses;
- is a course in a newly established degree program, concentration, or support area;

- is part of a set of interdepartmental (cross-listed) courses taught as a single class by the same faculty at the same station, provided that the combined courses do not constitute a small class;
- is a first-time offering of the course;
- is class size-limited by accreditation or state licensing standards;
- is class size-limited by availability of laboratory or clinical facilities; or
- is voluntarily offered by a faculty member in excess of the institutional teaching load requirement and for which the faculty member receives no additional compensation.

The THECB defines an organized class as one whose primary mode of instruction is lecture, laboratory, seminar, or distance learning. A small class is an undergraduate level class with less than 10 registrations and a graduate level class with less than five registrations.

TSTC defines a small class as any class or group of students with less than ten students as of the official census date of the semester in which there is a teacher and the class meets in a scheduled location at a specified time according to the official class schedule. This definition does not apply to students enrolled in courses with individualized instructional methods such as clinical, co-op, internship, etc.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Each semester, the Presidents or the Presidents' designees will schedule all classes in accordance with TSTC policies and procedures. The Executive Vice Chancellor will prepare a list of small classes and a request that the Board of Regents approve the continuation of these classes, in accordance with established procedures. The Board maintains the responsibility and authority to approve the continuation of all classes with less than ten students.

OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

1. Each academic year, the Executive Vice Chancellor will establish for each college a target for small classes as a percentage of all classes held in a semester, consulting with the colleges in determining this percentage.
2. Prior to the official census date of each semester, the Presidents or their designees will review enrollment data and take all necessary action to ensure that the small classes offered on each campus are only those that conform with established policy and operating requirements on small classes. Although a small class satisfies the conditions contained in this System Operating Standard, the college's chief instructional officer may elect not to conduct the class.
3. Following the official census date of each semester, the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor will prepare a report of all classes meeting with less than ten students and forward it to the Presidents or their designees for final review and action.

4. The following types of classes with less than ten students will be excluded from the small class report:
 - a. continuing education classes (CE academic level);
 - b. non-transcribed classes (NT credit type);
 - c. classes with a section status of Pending or Cancelled;
 - d. classes with instructional methods of Clinical (CLN), Coop (COP), Internship (INT), Practicum (PRC), and Distance Learning (DL1-5);
 - e. classes with ten or more students registered as of the census date of the class; and
 - f. classes that are crosslisted if the combined enrollment total is ten or more students.

5. Crosslisting is the process used to designate class sections that meet concurrently, sharing meeting times and faculty. Students may enroll in only one of the sections that are crosslisted.

To be excluded from the small class report, the total enrollment of a set of crosslisted sections (global enrollment) must be at least ten students. Crosslisted class sections will count as one combined section for purposes of the small class report.

Sections may be crosslisted using the following criteria.

- a. The decision to crosslist two or more sections should be made at the time the term schedule of classes is created.
 - b. The decision to crosslist sections is based on sound instructional practices, i.e., the sections being crosslisted can be taught concurrently without detriment to student learning.
 - c. If a student might schedule two or more of the sections being considered for crosslisting, the sections should not be crosslisted.
 - d. Sections cannot be crosslisted if the same student is registered in more than one of the sections.
 - e. Crosslisted sections may be either interdepartmental or intradepartmental in nature.
 - f. Classes carrying semester credit hours (SCH) and training credit (Continuing Education Units-CEU) may be crosslisted.
 - g. The lecture and/or lab components of all crosslisted sections must meet at the same time, except for web-based distance learning.
 - h. The lecture and/or lab components of all crosslisted sections must meet in the same place, except for distance learning.
 - i. The primary instructor of record must be assigned and teach a lecture and/or lab in all crosslisted sections that meet at the same time and same place.
 - j. Faculty loads may be adjusted up or down based upon faculty assignment to crosslisted sections.
-
6. The small class report will include the college, subject, course number, course title, and name of the instructor. It will consist of two parts.

- a. Part I will list classes with seven, eight, or nine students meeting at a scheduled time and place with a teacher of record. These are the classes that are considered to be operating on a cost-recovery basis.
- b. Part II will list classes with six or fewer students. These classes must meet the criteria under which small classes are considered to be necessary and justifiable, as stated in the Board of Regents policy and restated here.

These classes will be listed by category on the report, using one of the following justification codes.

- Code 11. Required for graduation. The course is not offered each semester or term and, if cancelled, will negatively affect the date of graduation of those enrolled.
- Code 12. Proper sequence in program progression. The course is required for majors in the field and should be completed within the term to maintain the proper sequence of courses.
- Code 13. New program. The course is part of a new program start-up. After three years, this code cannot be assigned to small class sections of this course.
- Code 14. Single section offered for term. This is the only section of this course scheduled for the term at a specific location.
- Code 15. First offering. The course is being offered for the first time.
- Code 16. Mandated remediation. The course complies with State of Texas requirements for TSI remediation as stipulated in the current TSTC Texas Success Initiative Plan. This code can be assigned only to those courses coded specifically for TSI remediation.
- Code 17. Limited laboratory facilities. The course is size-limited by the availability of specialized laboratory or clinical facilities.
- Code 18. Faculty excess load without compensation. The class is offered on a voluntary basis by a faculty member and is in excess of the teaching load requirement and for which the faculty member receives no additional compensation.
- Code 19. Phased out program. The course is part of a program that is being terminated and is scheduled to allow current students to complete the program.

- Code 20. Alternative scheduling. The course is scheduled after 5 pm and/or on a weekend day.
7. The Executive Vice Chancellor will prepare a request that the Board of Regents approve the continuation of the small classes, in accordance with established procedures.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The fulfillment of this System Operating Standard will be judged by the following criteria.

1. College procedures are established and implemented to identify small classes before the official census date and to reduce those classes to a minimum by combining, rescheduling, or closing sections.
2. The number of classes with three students or less is kept to an absolute minimum.
3. The percentage of small classes at each college is within the target percentage established annually by the Executive Vice Chancellor.
4. Reports are prepared in a timely manner and in accordance with procedures.

COLLEGE OPERATING PROCEDURE

COLLEGE		Page 1 of
OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY:		
APPROVED BY:		
TITLE:		Date
FORWARDED TO SYSTEM OFFICE ON		