

# **Procedures Regarding Limiting Enrollment in an Undergraduate Program March 1, 2006**

**Purpose:** This information is intended to set forth the basic procedures by which an academic undergraduate department may seek and gain approval to limit enrollment of students. This process involves attention to both curricular and resource matters. The guidelines are intended to ensure that all appropriate administrators and all affected campus offices review the implications of limited enrollment proposals, and that interested students, high schools, and community college counselors have adequate notice and sufficient time to prepare for the change in the enrollment policies of a Brockport program.

**What is a Limited Enrollment Program:** An undergraduate program is designated as a *limited enrollment program* when the number of qualified students interested in a particular program exceeds the number of available spaces that the College can accommodate in the major/program given the instructional resources and physical capacity of the College.

*Limited Enrollment Program* status requires final approval by the President's Cabinet, and those programs designated as limited enrollment are then authorized to implement procedures and/or criteria approved by the Academic Priorities Committee (APC) to manage their enrollments.

## **A. General Guidelines**

1. The resource implications for the limited enrollment program should be addressed primarily by the dean of the school in which the program seeking the limit is offered and the provost.
2. Unless otherwise mandated by law, accrediting agency, or other external authority, a request to limit enrollment must be primarily based upon limitations in the requesting program's resources.
3. The program applying for limited enrollment must consult the Directors of Undergraduate Admissions, Academic Advisement, Registration and Records, and the Transfer Articulation Coordinator early in the process to identify possible implementation issues.
4. The Office of the Provost, in collaboration with the APC, will provide guidelines for the institutional data to be supplied by those programs requesting limited enrollment and the rationale validating the intended outcome. The same data shall be required for either a new application or a renewal of limited enrollment status. Examples of data may include: college enrollment by first and second major, average class size, advisement loads, general education courses offered through a particular program, credit hours, financial impact of reducing enrollment, etc.
5. Any limited enrollment program should be publicized by the program and the Offices of Undergraduate Admissions, Transfer Articulation, and Marketing/Communications at least six months prior to implementation. Implementation shall generally commence no earlier than the first term (fall or spring) which is at least six months after approval by the President's Cabinet.

6. The program limiting enrollment shall be expected to assume responsibility for any additional processing required for the implementation. Additional resources needed should be addressed by the dean and provost at the time of the request to limit enrollment.
7. Once a limited enrollment policy is implemented, it applies to all students seeking admission to the program regardless of which *Undergraduate Studies Catalog* is being used to satisfy other requirements.

#### **B. The Process for Submitting a Proposal for Limiting Enrollment**

1. The process begins with the program submitting a request and justification for limited enrollment to the dean of its school.
2. The dean shall discuss with the provost the resource implications of the application. At the conclusion of the dean/provost discussions, the provost shall in a timely manner forward a letter of recommendation to the dean indicating concurrence or non-concurrence with the request for limited enrollment.
3. Following the dean's and provost's consideration of resource issues, the program seeking to limit enrollment shall prepare a proposal to be reviewed by the APC (or a designated subcommittee that may include representatives from all divisions), followed by consideration from the President's Cabinet.
4. The program will be notified of recommendations in a timely fashion after *each* stage of deliberations (Provost, APC, President's Cabinet).

#### **C. The Limited Enrollment Proposal**

1. The proposal to limit enrollment should include statements from the dean of the school and from the provost supporting or opposing limited enrollment on the basis of resources.
2. The proposal should include justification for the need to limit enrollment, justification for the proposed enrollment management process, and a description of how limited enrollment would be implemented.
3. Although resource matters are addressed primarily by the dean and provost, the proposal should include data showing the minimum/maximum number of students feasible with existing resources.
4. The proposal must include a statement of limited enrollment to be inserted in the next *Undergraduate Studies Catalog*. The statement must include:
  - a. A description of the methods to limit enrollment.
  - b. Provisions for transfer students.
  - c. When applicable, the deadline for application and the date for notification to the student.
5. Supplementary Admissions Criteria for Consideration in Limiting Program Enrollments.  
Each proposal shall include supplementary admissions criteria which may be used in screening applicants. Following are suggested, although not all-inclusive, criteria that may be considered when limiting program enrollments. When departments are considering such criteria for increasing

requirements and reducing numbers of majors, it is strongly recommended that the authors keep in mind issues of simplicity, consistency, fairness and ease of implementation.

It is important that departments work closely with the directors of Undergraduate Admissions, Academic Advisement, and Registration and Records in selecting one or more of these criteria:

- a. Create a program application. Establish a separate application process for high demand programs similar to Nursing, Social Work and Education. Personnel and procedures would then need to be assigned to a) make decisions and evaluate applicant qualifications b) communicate with applicants, c) handle administration and monitoring of the program, d) provide timely and accurate advisement to applicants, e) handle all appeals and complaints, and f) process all paperwork changing intended majors to approved majors.
- b. Establish and enforce firm deadlines for college admission applications to limited enrollment programs in the Undergraduate Admissions Office. Consider "file completion" and/or "deposit" deadlines rather than initial application deadlines.
- c. Require program prerequisites or foundation course sequences be completed prior to acceptance.
- d. Cap the number of accepted transfer students. Determine the maximum number of students to be admitted after careful monitoring by the academic department of retention numbers, graduate enrollments, graduation numbers, projected yields, and department resources.
- e. Establish a moratorium/limit on spring semester admits (fall admits only).
- f. Establish a program specific minimum overall GPA requirement for admission or enrollment into a program. (Will require College Senate to rescind policy that prohibits this.)
- g. Require community college students to have completed the associate's degree before admission. Give priority in admissions to limited enrollment programs to students who have completed an associate's degree.
- h. Reduce/eliminate 2nd baccalaureate degrees in limited enrollment programs.
- i. Designate selected major courses as "majors only" to restrict enrollment.
- j. Suspend or limit special admits to limited enrollment programs.
- k. Require completion of specified lower-division general education requirements for lower-division transfer students.
- l. Enforce probation/dismissal policy more strictly for limited enrollment programs. Suspend/limit administrative reinstates.
- m. Use auditions, portfolios, recommendations, work experience, exam scores or other supplemental evaluations.
- n. Use gateway course(s), with specific passing grade requirement to continue in the program.
- o. Require completion of a certain number of credits prior to program admission.

#### **D. Renewal of Limited Enrollment**

Justification for a program continuing its limited enrollment policy shall be addressed every five years. Should demographic or enrollment shifts cause decreased enrollments, department chairs, in consultation with their dean, may suspend the enrollment cap. As with an initial application, the dean and provost will need to discuss the resource implications of continuing limited enrollment. Approval for continuation or modification to the limited enrollment procedure is recorded in the minutes of the President's Cabinet and is disseminated as appropriate.

#### **E. Following are enrollment-related issues that should be taken into account when considering enrollment limitations to programs:**

1. Make efforts to ensure that freshmen have adequate access to all programs since many freshmen are unsure of their future majors and/or may choose to enter Brockport as “undeclared” and explore options. Clearly informing incoming applicants of higher standards and selectivity for limited enrollment programs, however, is highly recommended and may reduce applications from less-prepared students.
2. Exercise extreme caution when considering *transfer* GPA in any admissions decision to a program. Rationale for not including transfer GPA as an admissions requirement:
  - a. Many Admissions decisions are made when most transfers have courses in progress, making GPA only temporary and in flux.
  - b. Transfers frequently have more than one transfer college, with many from three or more colleges. Which GPA would we use? Newest, highest, combined? Combined GPA’s are not calculated anywhere at the time the Admissions decision needs to be made. (i.e., a student dismissed from Cortland with 1.2 GPA after 6 semesters then attends one semester at MCC with 2.5 GPA).
  - c. At many community colleges, GPA's are recalculated as students change programs, removing from GPA calculations all courses no longer relevant to the new program. Transcripts then are not a true reflection of previous coursework. (i.e. potential students do poorly in one program, change programs, and start with a clean slate for GPA)
3. There needs to be careful and on-going communication with major transfer feeder colleges to inform them of all proposed changes and to provide accurate transfer course articulation to assist transfer students in arriving at Brockport well informed and well prepared.
4. Dual Admits (2 + 2 students) are already “Brockport” students even though they complete their first two years at their community college.
5. The expanding requirements of Brockport’s general education program (SUNY and local requirements), combined with increasing programmatic demands imposed from outside accrediting bodies, should be considered.
6. Consider a fall-back major/minor to minimize impact when upper division prospective majors are denied admission to a program (particularly important for transfer students). Consider someone having to answer the question "What am I supposed to do now?" For example, students not reaching the required GPA to complete the physical education/teacher certification program have the option to still complete the liberal arts physical education major (no certification). Students not meeting the GPA requirement for criminal justice can opt to complete another major such as sociology, complete a criminal justice minor, and still reach their career goals.
7. Consider the impact of capping strategies in a high demand program on other majors.
8. Consider all options for program delivery, such as flexible and year-round (summer) scheduling, distance learning and use of technology, using facilities and personnel imaginatively.
9. Consider strategies to improve graduation rates and/or reduce time to graduate, particularly in credit rich programs.

N.B. The source document for this policy is from Northern Illinois University. This document is modified with permission from NIU.