

Policies and Procedures for Enrollment Capacity

Policy and Procedures for Establishing or Changing the Enrollment Cap of an Undergraduate Major

1. Policy

Based on its land-grant traditions of service and access, according to its mission statement, Auburn University will provide students broad access to the institution's educational resources. Therefore, as a basic principle, students who are currently enrolled should be allowed access to the majors of their choice, subject to constraint of educational resources, including insufficient numbers of faculty to provide a quality learning experience to all who wish to enroll.

The major with an enrollment cap is one which receives or expects to receive more applications for major status from fully qualified students than the program can accommodate without endangering the quality of instruction offered. Setting an enrollment cap differs from establishing additional admission standards in that admission standards address the competencies that a student needs to be successful in a desired field whereas setting an enrollment cap establishes the process to fill a limited number of seats from among all students qualified for the program.

The intent of the procedure and criteria is to assure that capped majors are identified (a) after appropriate review at the school/college level, (b) are appropriate and fair to students seeking the major, and (c) are assessed for their potential effect on other programs.

2. Process

1. All proposals for beginning, continuing, or discontinuing an enrollment cap on the major will be initiated in the unit responsible for the major, reviewed and approved by the school/college responsible for the degree in which the major resides, and forwarded to the Office of the Provost on the standard form for consideration by the Enrollment Cap Oversight Committee.
2. The Enrollment Cap Oversight Committee is comprised of the provost or designee (chair), Senior VP for Student Affairs or designee, chair of the University Senate, chair of Academic Standards, and a representative from the SGA.
3. If the proposal directly affects other units or impacts related programs in other schools/colleges, the school/college of the unit originating the proposal must circulate it to the other colleges/schools for review and comment prior to submission to the Enrollment Cap Oversight Committee. The receiving units shall comment in a timely manner, not to exceed one month.
4. Proposals will be reviewed by the Enrollment Cap Oversight Committee to assure that they satisfy the criteria of this policy. The Committee will send its recommendation to the provost and vice president for academic affairs, who will make the final decision.
5. Authorized changes in the high-demand status of majors shall be published in the next edition of the Bulletin.
6. Once approved, programs may request an additional review if there is a change within the department that warrants a change in the approved proposal.

3. Criteria for Creation of an Enrollment Cap on a Major

The proposal must include adequate academic justification. The responsible program shall report its capacity for new majors along with the specific factors which constrain capacity. Some illustrative factors which may constrain capacity are listed below.

- Limits are required to maintain a high quality of instruction.
- Physical facilities and resources are limited, especially when specialized facilities cannot be augmented (such as laboratories or studios).
- Limits are required by professional accreditation requirements.
- Special skills or abilities are required to complete courses in the major (for example, performing arts such as dance, musical performance, or creative art), and the resources to impart such skills are limited.
- What additional resources (if any) would allow the department to meet the demand for the major without restricting entry?

4. Criteria for Selection of Students to Enter a Capped Major

Faculty of a high-demand major must establish and apply uniform criteria for selecting among all qualified applicants (whether native or transfer) those to be admitted to the majors. In the event all applicants have met selection criteria, then those students judged by the faculty to be most excellent with respect to the criteria should be those selected. Selection criteria should be demonstrably related to successful completion of the major and should conform to the following guidelines:

1. Proposed selection criteria must be consistent with school/college and University policies and regulations.
2. Selection criteria may include a grade point average (GPA) in a specific course or group of courses related to successful completion of the major. (An overall GPA is not specific to the major and may not be included as a selection criterion.)
3. Statements of purpose may be included as selection criteria.
4. Documentation of special skills, abilities, or experiences necessary to complete the major may be selection criteria.
5. Selection may be based on consideration of more than one type of criteria (for example, not just grade point average in a special course or group of courses) and must be supported by appropriate rationale.