

Making Effective Course Requests

Important Details in the Schedule of Classes

Priorities: Many courses prioritize subsets of students for enrolling in the course. For example, seniors, juniors, and majors are often given priority in upper-level core courses (e.g., "1=SR, JR HIST" means senior and junior history majors have priority). First-year students and sophomores often have priority in introductory level courses ("1=SO, FR"). A priority of '0' means a student will not be enrolled unless he or she has special permission from the instructor (e.g., "0=Senior" means a senior will not be enrolled).

Fill: "H" means the course has a high probability of filling. "L" means the course has a low probability of filling.

How the Computer Processes Course Requests

The computer attempts to register all students for up to 2.5 courses before any student receives a full schedule. Once a student receives 2.5 courses the computer ceases action on the course request form, moving on to the next student.

The enrollment program makes five passes through each student's course requests. On its first pass through the data, the computer automatically enrolls students with Special Permission Access Codes (SPACs). On the second pass, it tries to enroll every student in 2.5 courses. If a course has first priorities (1 =) it considers only students who match those priorities. On the third pass, the program tries to give students a full schedule; once again, though, it considers only those who match the first priorities. On the fourth pass, the program attempts to give students a full schedule. If there are second priorities listed for a course (2 =), it only considers students who match those priorities. On its last pass, the program attempts to fill schedules. It considers all students except those who are excluded (0 =).

The student's first primary choice is scanned first. If that course is available and the student matches the first priority (1=) the student is enrolled in the course. If the course is full, the computer moves on to the student's alternate selections in Primary 1. If the course has space but your priority does not match, the request is put on "hold" to be considered on a later pass. The program then goes on to the next primary request.

Strategies for Requesting Courses

Requesting High Demand Courses: If you request courses with a high probability of filling, they should be listed as Primary 1 or 2 so the computer sees them on its first pass through the registration data.

Don't get stuck on hold. If you request as primary choices courses with priorities that do not match you, you can get stuck on hold. The program will not consider you for enrollment in that class or its alternates until it has considered the requests from those who match the priorities.

Alternates, Alternates, Alternates: To receive the fullest possible schedule, you must list alternates. The only situation where an alternate is unnecessary is if you have a SPAC.

Grouping Primary and Alternate Requests: There are several ways to do this, some of which are more effective than others:

- **Area Requirement:** If you need a course from a particular area you should list your first preference as a primary and then request alternates from the same area.
- **Competence (W, S, Q):** If you need to fulfill a W, S, or Q requirement you can choose courses in that particular competence. Again, choose the course you prefer and then select alternates in the same competence. W-Certification must be completed by the end of sophomore year. Q - Certification must be completed by the end of junior year. S-Certification must be completed by the end of senior year.
- **Special Permission Courses:** These courses are processed first regardless of where you place them.