UMASS LOWELL POLICY: Course Cancellations
Effective: 11/1/16

The following policy is intended to guide deans and department chairs in determining when to cancel an under-enrolled course to achieve greater efficiency:

1. Minimum Enrollment Guidelines:
   1. Minimum enrollment of 11 for undergraduate seminars, capstone courses or designated service-learning courses
   2. Minimum enrollment of 15 for all other undergraduate courses
   3. Minimum enrollment of 12 for masters-level courses
   4. Minimum enrollment of 8 for PhD-level courses

2. Department chairs must petition their dean to request exceptions to this policy. All exceptions require permission of the dean and the vice provost for student success. Consideration will be given to major requirements, room availability, and impact on ratings indicators.

3. Process (in accordance with MSP contract provision of 6-weeks notice of a schedule change for FT faculty*):
   1. Department chair and dean begin monitoring enrollments during the advising period. When possible, cancel or combine sections early to minimize disruption of faculty planning.
   2. The registrar’s office will provide chairs with a list of all under-enrolled classes two weeks prior to the six-week deadline. The chair will work with the dean to make decisions regarding under-enrolled sections. Options may include:
      1. Combining sections
      2. Selectively increasing enrollment in one or two sections (with approval of the provost’s office)
      3. Canceling sections that are not required courses
   3. If the class is taught by a FT faculty member:
      1. Seven weeks prior to the first day of classes, the department chair will notify the faculty member of low enrollment and begin discussing options for the faculty member’s schedule in case of cancellation.
      2. Six weeks prior to the first day of class, the department chair will notify the faculty member of class cancellation and will re-assign him or her to another class currently assigned to an adjunct faculty member. If no such alternative exists, the full-time faculty member will be assigned an additional course in the subsequent semester. (Routine failure of a FT faculty member’s courses to meet enrollment minimums is a basis for unsatisfactory performance. Thus, the chair and dean will work with the faculty member to assess and resolve this unsatisfactory situation).
4. If the class is taught by a PT faculty member:
   1. There is currently no contractual obligation to notify adjunct faculty of class
cancellation by a certain date; however, such faculty should be notified as
soon as possible if a course is in danger of being cancelled or if they may lose
a teaching assignment due to the redeployment of a full-time faculty member
or a senior adjunct. Costs incurred for delayed course closure will affect
operating funds available to that department.

5. To ensure minimum disruption to faculty and students, all decisions regarding course
cancellations should be final within two weeks of the start of classes, unless the
registrar’s office has requested that certain sections remain open due to anticipated
enrollment of new students.

* The MSP granted waivers to the 6-week deadline for courses scheduled for Spring and Fall of
2016. If a waiver is granted, department chairs should make final decisions about schedule changes
for FT faculty no later than three weeks before the start of classes and notify affected adjunct
faculty as soon as possible.