

## Curricular Planning

One of the sets of tasks that may seem most bureaucratic to a new chair is responding to the Registrar's requests to edit the course catalog, provide the list of courses to be offered next year, and review and edit the course schedule for the coming semester. These important tasks require attention to detail, it is true, and administrative assistants can often assist chairs in making sure all the I's are dotted and the T's crossed. However, editing the course catalog and setting the course schedule, not to speak of proposing new courses to the Curricular Policy Committee, are more than just bureaucratic tasks. In doing so departments set their curriculum, which has implications for majors, for the faculty who teach the courses, and for students well beyond the major who often take a course to satisfy a requirement in another department or to pursue an interest.

In this section we provide information about the CPC course approval process, typical interactions with the Registrar's Office about the course catalog and schedule, and the College's understanding about course enrollment management. In working with colleagues to set the course schedule, chairs should be attentive to issues of balance and fairness in any individual colleague's teaching responsibilities. (How many introductory courses versus how many advanced? Will colleagues' course enrollments be more or less balanced across the department or lopsided so that one colleague has 100 students while another has 15? Are colleagues able to teach their specialties?). They also need to ensure that sufficient seats are available to first-year students while avoiding scheduling many courses that are likely to under-enroll. The Provost expects that courses should enroll at least five students to be viable.

When considering the introduction of new courses, chairs are expected to review course proposals with attention to the place a course fills in the departmental curriculum, the appropriateness of prerequisites, and the availability of adequate library and instructional technology resources for the course. The chairs should not just "sign off" on new course proposals, but carefully consider the value of a new course for the collegiate and departmental curricula as well as the individual faculty member's career development. Similarly, chairs must exercise discretion in the scheduling of courses, not simply acceding to colleagues' requests to be able to teach specialized courses and/or to teach at the most preferred time periods. Establishing clear departmental procedures about course scheduling can benefit everyone by having clear rules in place about who can teach when, how many sections of certain courses must be offered annually, and so forth.