McCausland College of Arts and Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

POLICY: Faculty Workload and Course Enrollment Management

DATE: July 20, 2026 (Revised)

I. POLICY

The McCausland College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office and the faculty members and instructional staff in College units share a commitment to providing the highest quality education to our students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The College and all departments and academic programs have a shared interest in ensuring that teaching resources are allocated and used responsibly. To effectively serve our students and meet our financial obligations, the College and departments must work together to manage the curriculum and maintain fiscal responsibility. Accordingly, it is imperative that all units make optimal use of the teaching capacity of their faculty members and instructional staff.

The purpose of this policy is to provide an institutional framework for departments and academic programs in the McCausland College of Arts and Sciences in the areas of faculty workload and course enrollment management.

This policy applies to all units within the McCausland College of Arts and Sciences. The College policy is subordinate to related policies outlined in the University of South Carolina Faculty Manual. In cases of inconsistencies between this policy and the university, state, or federal policies, the university, state, or federal policy rules are the final authority.

II. FACULTY WORKLOAD

A. Faculty Workload Expectations and Review

1. Per the Faculty Manual, the base teaching load of Tenured, Pre-tenure, and Professional-track faculty members is 4:4 (12 credit hours per semester) for a 9-month appointment. Tenured, Pre-tenure, and Professional-track faculty members (FTE faculty) in all departments and academic programs must teach in accordance with the annual faculty workloads indicated in their letters of appointment unless a decrease or increase has been approved by the unit head in consultation with the Office of the Dean.

2. Professional-track faculty and temporary faculty (TFAC) may teach up to two additional courses (a total of 6 courses or 18 credit hours per semester) with written permission of the unit head. Professional-track faculty and TFAC may not exceed 6 courses or 18 credits per semester without additional written permission from the unit's Associate Dean. Professional-track faculty with joint appointments must receive written approval from both the primary and secondary units.

3. Unit chairs and directors are responsible for ensuring that faculty workload expectations are met and that any changes are reviewed and approved by the Office of the Dean.

    a. Winter Term courses are considered a compensated overload for an FTE faculty member and are not part of their normal fall or spring teaching load. Any exception to this must be approved by the Office of the Dean.

4. The College will evaluate all units' curricular plans and faculty workload assignments during the twice-yearly planning process to ensure that faculty members are meeting college and departmental obligations. This review will consider faculty absences due to sabbaticals and other leave agreements and adjust teaching expectations accordingly.

B. Faculty Workload Standards

Faculty members and instructional staff must teach courses that meet the minimum enrollment guidelines identified in this policy. Courses at risk of low enrollment should be reviewed during each department's curricular planning stage and strategies should be discussed to minimize the number of low enrollment courses offered.

Alternative classes must be identified for all faculty members and instructional staff assigned to course sections at risk of low enrollment.

Faculty may not teach more than one 3-week course at a time without approval from the Office of the Dean.

III. COURSE ENROLLMENT MINIMUM STANDARDS

Course enrollment minimum standards in the College are established by the Office of the Dean and based on course delivery method. All College courses taught as part of a faculty member's teaching load must meet the minimum standards specified below unless approved for a Low Enrollment Waiver as outlined in this policy. Courses which do not meet the terms of this policy must be cancelled or offered as individualized instruction.

Low enrollment waivers and all compensation adjustments must be approved in advance by

the Office of the Dean (See **Section V**).

Departments are expected to monitor course enrollment throughout the registration period and coordinate with the Office of the Dean as needed.

The following standards apply to all courses below the 700 level. For courses numbered 700 and above, please refer to the College's policy on Course Enrollment Management – Graduate Level Courses.

A. Traditional or Face-to-Face Lecture Courses

Minimum enrollment standards for **traditional or face-to-face lecture courses** offered during the **fall and spring** are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
100 and 200	15 students per section
300 and 400	12 students per section
500 and 600	10 students per section

Compensation for approved low enrollment courses taught by TFAC or by FTE faculty teaching outside of the normal faculty teaching load (compensated overload) will be adjusted according to the following scale:

Course Level	100% compensation	75% compensation	50% compensation
100 and 200	15 or more	12	8
300 and 400	12 or more	9	6
500 and 600	10 or more	8	5

B. Distributed Learning Courses

Distributed Learning courses include all online lecture courses, hybrid or other modality courses, and all Winter and Summer Session Courses

Minimum enrollment standards for distributed learning (DL) courses are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
100 and 200, including associated lab sections	24 students per section
300-600, including associated lab sections	20 students per section

Compensation for approved low enrollment courses taught by TFAC or by FTE faculty teaching outside of the normal faculty teaching load (compensated overload) will be adjusted according to the following scale:

Course Level	100% compensation	75% compensation	50% compensation
100 & 200	24 or more	18	12
300 - 600	20 or more	15	10

C. Laboratory Courses

Given variations in room size and required safety measures, lab sections must contain a minimum of 14 students or 80% of maximum enrollment, whichever number is lower.

D. Cross-Listed and Concurrent Courses

1. Enrollment for **cross-listed and concurrent traditional or face-to-face courses** includes all students who meet at the same time, in the same location, and with the same instructor of record, regardless of the course designator or course number under which they are enrolled.

   Enrollment for **cross-listed and concurrent online or hybrid courses** includes the total number of students enrolled in the course with the same instructor of record, regardless of the course designator or course number under which they are enrolled.

2. Any cross-listed or concurrent course that does not meet minimum enrollment standards and does not receive a Low Enrollment Waiver must be cancelled or taught as an uncompensated overload.

E. Team Teaching

1. Team taught courses must enroll enough students to meet minimum enrollment requirements for **all** instructors of record for fall and spring semesters, enrollment standards for traditional or face-to-face courses with **two instructors of record** are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
100 and 200	30 students per section
300 and 400	24 students per section
500 and 600	20 students per section

2. Enrollment standards for distributed learning courses during the fall and spring semesters and for all summer and winter session courses, with **two** instructors of record are:

Course Level	Minimum class size
100 - 200	48 students per section
300 - 600	40 students per section

3. Team taught classes that do not meet minimum enrollment standards for both instructors of record must be changed to single-instructor courses or instructors must teach the course as an uncompensated overload.

F. South Carolina Honors College (SCHC) Courses

South Carolina Honors College courses are considered part of a faculty member's regular teaching load. The minimum enrollment standards in this policy, however, do not apply to SCHC courses. Course scheduling for SCHC courses is coordinated by the Office of the Dean. The college is committed to supporting the needs of the SCHC and to offering SCHC courses where possible. No SCHC course should be cancelled without Office of the Dean approval.

G. Faculty-Led Education Abroad Courses

Guidance for Faculty-led Education Abroad courses, including enrollment standards, is provided in the college Education Abroad Policy.

IV. COURSE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

A. Early Identification

All departments and programs must monitor course enrollments during registration to identify courses at risk of low enrollment. Early identification allows time for the efficient reassignment of faculty and instructional staff in the event of course cancellation. This also provides students with sufficient time to adjust their semester schedule.

B. College-Level Review During Registration Period

1. The college will conduct regular formal reviews of course enrollments throughout the academic year. For the spring semester, enrollment reviews will begin in November. For the summer and fall semesters, enrollment review will begin in April and continue until the end of Freshman Orientation. Course enrollments will also be checked at the beginning of each semester or session as follows:
    - Two weeks before the beginning of classes
    - One week before the beginning of classes
    - One week after classes begin

At each stage, departments and programs will be contacted by the Office of the Dean regarding courses that are under-enrolled or in danger of cancellation.

2. After notification from the college, units should review each under- enrolled course carefully, considering the nature of the course, the role of the course in the larger curriculum, and past enrollment patterns.

3. Units may request a Low Enrollment Waiver for a particular course or request to cancel the course in accordance with **Section V**. This request should be submitted as early as possible. If it is clear that a course will not produce sufficient enrollments, early cancellation provides the greatest opportunity for students to find alternative courses and for faculty and instructional staff to be reassigned.

4. Units will receive an update on course enrollments two weeks before classes begin. Units that have not already done so may request a Low Enrollment Waiver for a particular course or request to cancel the course at that time.

5. One week before classes begin, courses that do not meet enrollment minimums and do not have an approved Low Enrollment Waiver will be cancelled by the College. TFAC are rarely compensated for courses cancelled by this deadline.

6. TFAC teaching under-enrolled courses and FTE faculty teaching under-enrolled courses as an overload that are granted Low Enrollment Waivers are subject to reduced compensation in accordance with **Section III**.

7. Low Enrollment Waivers, course cancellations, and all compensation adjustments must be approved by the Office of the Dean.

C. Mid-Semester Review and Annual Planning

Departments and programs are expected to monitor course enrollment throughout the semester and each academic year. In collaboration with the Office of the Dean, units should regularly review and evaluate courses that fall below minimum enrollment levels for consecutive semesters or multiple academic years in terms of frequency of offering and relevance to curricular needs.

V. WAIVERS AND EXCLUSIONS

A. Low Enrollment Waivers

Departments may seek a Low Enrollment Waiver for specific courses based on pedagogical requirements. Possible considerations for requesting a Low Enrollment Waiver include (but are not limited to):

- Pedagogical reasons for small classes
- Courses required for timely progress toward a degree
- Course sizes limited by physical space, equipment, or safety standards
- Courses recently introduced into the curriculum.

1. Waiver requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and will consider the nature of the course, its role in the curriculum, and the relationship of the course to faculty workload standards. Waivers will usually only be approved for the specific semester requested.

2. Waiver requests must be approved prior to the start of the course. Units may not make an offer of employment or assign an under-enrolled course before approval of the Low Enrollment Waiver request. After approval, departments will be required to monitor and evaluate the course based on the criteria approved in the waiver.

3. Courses that have failed to meet enrollment standards for previous offerings will rarely be given additional waivers.

B. Exclusions

The following types of courses are normally taught as individual student instruction or supervision and not included as part of faculty load. As such they are excluded from the low enrollment waiver policy:

- Independent study
- Directed research
- Internship supervision, except in cases where coordination of an internship program has been approved in writing by the College as acceptable faculty load. In those instances, College approval will include a statement regarding enrollment standards for the course.

C. Waiver, Cancellation, or Reduced Compensation Request Procedures

1. Units can request approval for a Low Enrollment Waiver, a course cancellation, or reduced compensation via an email to Karen Thompson in the Office of the Dean.

2. The emailed request must include the name and number/section of the course, instructor of record, and a brief justification. The request must copy the unit chair or director.

VI. RELATED POLICIES

University Policy ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses
CAS Policy: Faculty Salary Savings (August 2025)
CAS Policy: Faculty Course Buyouts (August 2025)
CAS Policy: Faculty-Led Education Abroad
Instructional Compensation Guide
Course Enrollment Management – Graduate Level Courses