

## **Resolution 2007-13. On Endorsing the Recommendations of the Priority Registration Task Force**

The Faculty Council resolves:

The Faculty Council endorses the Proposal for Priority Registration developed by the Priority Registration Task Force, as amended by the Council to limit the seats available for priority registration in each section to 15%. The amended text of the proposal is as follows:

"Proposal for Priority Registration

### Rationale

Some groups of undergraduate students encounter unusual challenges in our registration system that inhibit their academic progress and threaten their timely graduation. For example, students with physical or learning disabilities may require reasonable accommodations in order to reduce barriers to their academic success. Education majors in teaching programs spend the second semester of their senior year off campus as student teachers, and during their junior and senior year must complete specific courses required for certification in their areas of specialization. Nursing students must spend significant amounts of time in clinical rotations in order to meet licensure requirements. Varsity athletes must fit their class schedules with their practice/competition schedules so that they can make progress toward their degrees as required by the University and the NCAA. This proposal suggests a process for priority registration that provides a flexible but transparent approach to these issues.

### Mechanism

A process for determining how students qualify for priority registration is described in subsequent paragraphs. Those students who qualify for priority registration will be allowed to register ahead of their cohort. UNC has adopted a new registration ordering plan in which the order in which students register is based on the number of semesters completed. Students who qualify for priority registration would receive the earliest assignment times for their semester cohort. In other words, a sophomore who receives priority registration would register before other sophomores but not before any juniors or seniors.

The Registrar will convene a Priority Registration Advisory Committee (the PRAC) that will meet each semester to review the student groups who have been recommended for priority registration. Members of the PRAC will be appointed by the Registrar and will include faculty, students, and administrators representing a range of interests and expertise. We recommend that the PRAC include some individuals who have had experience in educational policy, academic advising, and disability services.

Each semester, prior to the start of registration, an official who has responsibility for students who are potentially eligible for priority registration (e.g., a Dean, Director, or Department Chair) will send the Registrar a list of students who are recommended for priority registration and a rationale for the need for priority registration given the demands of the students' activities. The Registrar will forward these rationale statements to the PRAC along with a tally of the number of

students being proposed (i.e., the Registrar will not give PRAC an actual list of names). In the interest of transparency and accountability, the PRAC's meetings will be open to the public, and all rationale statements and tallies as well as the PRAC's decisions will be publicly available. Having received advice from the PRAC, the Registrar will adjust assignment times for those students who are selected for priority registration.

The PRAC will review summary data regarding the operation of priority registration (e.g., the specific courses that are selected during priority registration) and suggest modifications to the Priority Registration Policy as needed. The Registrar will consult with the PRAC and seek advice from the Educational Policy Committee regarding any amendments to the Priority Registration Policy. The Registrar will present an annual report to the Educational Policy Committee indicating the number of students who were granted or denied priority registration, and evaluating whether course selection during priority registration appears to be serving its intended purpose.

The Priority Registration Policy proposed here will be in effect for a trial period of four years. After four years, the Registrar will request that the Educational Policy Committee in collaboration with Faculty Council review how well the policy is working and make a formal recommendation regarding whether the policy should be continued as is, modified, or allowed to lapse.

#### Limitations

As a general rule, we recommend that no more than 15% of the seats in each section be available for priority registration. The Registrar and the PRAC will monitor the distribution of priority registration students across sections to determine whether any sections are being selected disproportionately. If significant over-enrollment occurs in selected courses, the Registrar will work with the department involved so that seat availability in selected courses is capped at 15% during the next priority registration.

#### Eligibility for Priority Registration

Priority registration will be extended to undergraduate students who encounter unusual challenges in our registration system that inhibit their academic progress and threaten their timely graduation. It is difficult to establish an a priori definition of "unusual", but the Priority Registration Task Force has identified three groups that would be exemplars of these unusual registration challenges. Thus, these student groups are eligible to be considered for priority registration if the students in the group meet any of the following conditions:

- The student engages in an activity that formally represents the University and by virtue of that representation is required to attend practices and events during hours in which classes are offered (e.g., varsity athletes during a semester in which the student's practice obligation is at the NCAA maximum of 20 hours per week);
- The student is enrolled in a degree program requiring that at least one semester be spent off campus (e.g., student teaching), that specific courses in Arts and Sciences be successfully completed in order to obtain licensure (e.g., Education majors), or that

requires significant time be devoted to clinical practice (e.g., nursing, allied health, etc);  
or

- The student has a disability for which priority registration is an approved accommodation. Other groups that may have comparable registration challenges may be proposed for priority registration by an official who has responsibility for their program (e.g., a Dean, Director, or Department Chair), and these groups will be reviewed by the PRAC. Individual students may not apply directly to the Registrar for priority registration.

Other groups that may have comparable registration challenges may be proposed for priority registration by an official who has responsibility for their program (e.g., a Dean, Director, or Department Chair), and these groups will be reviewed by the PRAC. Individual students may not apply directly to the Registrar for priority registration."