POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 1.3143

DIVISION: Academic Affairs

TITLE: Priority Registration Schedule

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I. Purpose and Scope

Since 1966, Western Kentucky University has followed a registration schedule based on degree level and classification, i.e., graduate, post-baccalaureate undergraduate students and seniors can register before juniors, etc. More recently, various groups of students have been granted permission to register on the first day of the registration period for each term, due to special scheduling needs and/or as a benefit of belonging to that group. The registration schedule exists to ensure an orderly process of course registration, offering students the opportunity to enroll in courses needed for continued progress towards timely graduation. This policy establishes a framework for establishing registration priority and ensuring students have appropriate access to courses.

II. Policy

A. Registration Priority

1. Registration priority (access to the course registration system) is based on students' degree level and classification. Graduate students, post-baccalaureate undergraduate students and seniors have the highest registration priority (earliest access). Within each undergraduate classification, priority is based on the total number of credit hours earned at the time of registration. The Office of the Registrar determines semester/session-specific registration schedules within this framework.

2. Prescribed groups of students, under the direction of the group administrator/advisor, may petition the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) for special priority registration status. Two tiers of special registration priority are recognized (see III.A.1 below). If granted, special priority status remains in effect for up to five academic years (see III.A.4 below), at which

time the group's administrator/ advisor is required to renew the request in order to receive consideration for continued special priority registration status.

3. Special priority registration status allows all members of the student group to register immediately following graduate students, post-baccalaureate undergraduate students and seniors. Tier 1 groups have higher registration priority than do Tier 2 groups.

B. Course and Credit Limits During Registration

1. Enforcement of course load limits occur in two phases; each phase follows the approved registration priority and established registration schedule. Phase I consists of the priority registration period, as published in each term's Registration Guide. Phase II, open registration, begins immediately following the last published date for priority registration and continues through late registration for each semester/session.

2. In order to provide all students a reasonable opportunity to enroll in classes that are critical to their degree progress, during Phase I, the following limits apply regarding the number of courses and credits in which undergraduate students may enroll:

    a. graduate students, post-baccalaureate undergraduate students and seniors – no limit

    b. all other students receiving priority registration – 18 hours.

3. During Phase II, undergraduate students may add additional courses and credits up to the limits established by the university and published in the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalog.

III. Procedure

A. Registration Priority

1. The CAD will undertake a comprehensive review of student groups' special priority registration status every five years. At this time, all student groups holding active special priority registration status will be required to request renewal of that status if desired. New requests for special priority registration status will be considered as they arise. Two categories of special priority registration will be considered:

    a. Tier 1– for student groups deemed to have special scheduling needs that necessitate priority registration status, and;

    b. Tier 2 – for student groups deemed to warrant priority registration status as a benefit to students belonging to that group.

2. Student groups petitioning for new or continued special priority registration status should provide an estimated number of students impacted, along with a rationale for special priority registration status.

3. The CAD will review each request for special priority registration status to determine whether a given group should receive special priority registration status and, if so, whether the status should be Tier 1 or Tier 2.

4. New proposals for special priority registration status will be accepted and considered from student groups in years other than those during which the CAD undertakes its comprehensive five-year review; however, such proposals granted special priority registration status by CAD are required to request renewal of that status, during the next comprehensive review cycle in order to receive consideration for continued special priority registration status.

B. Grant-Funded Programs for Special Groups Including Priority Registration

1. All grant proposals that fund instructional programs in which priority registration is regarded as an important, or crucial component shall identify this in the routing sheet.

2. PIs are responsible for presenting their request to CAD in a timely manner to facilitate the decision-making process. CAD will make all reasonable effort to provide a review of the request pertaining to such grant proposals in time for proposal submission deadlines.

3. Priority registration for grant-funded programs shall be in effect for the duration of the grant, or five years, whichever is less.

4. In the event that CAD is unable to review a proposal in time for a grant submission deadline, the Assoc. Provost for Research and Graduate Education may, after consultation with the Provost, allow the proposal to be submitted including priority registration, but this factor may have to be renegotiated at the time of award if CAD deems that priority registration is inappropriate.

IV. Reason for Revision

November 2015

Non-substantive changes as part of the five-year policy review per Policy 0.000V Policy on Policies.

March 2022

Non-substantive changes as part of the fifth-year policy review per Policy 0.000V Policy on Policies.

November 2023

Updated Section 2.B.2.b. to reflect 18 hours instead of 16 hours.

V. Related Policies