COURSE SELECTION PERIOD

Course selection period is the time at the beginning of every term during which students choose courses for that term. Prior to the first day of classes, students are expected to create a preliminary schedule containing three or more course credits. During the course selection period, students are encouraged to edit their schedules by removing courses in which they are no longer interested and adding courses they are actively considering. Course Demand Statistics (https://ivy.yale.edu/course-stats) will reflect how many students have placed a course on their schedule, and show daily enrollment trends. Course selection period typically extends from seven to ten class days from the first day of classes in a term. At the conclusion of this time, students’ course schedules are due in the office of their residential college dean. Freshman schedules are due first, sophomore and junior schedules next, and senior schedules last. Once a student’s course schedule has been submitted, no additions may be made to his or her election of courses except by special permission of the Committee on Honors and Academic Standing. Late schedules are fined.

THE CONDUCT OF CLASSES DURING COURSE SELECTION PERIOD

When the Yale College Committee on Teaching and Learning examined the course selection period, it concluded that “a course selection period …is pedagogically superior to a system of pre-registration.” The excerpts that follow, drawn from the text of the committee’s report to the Yale College Faculty, contain suggestions for the conduct of classes during course selection period.

The course selection period …enables [students] to think carefully about their education and to fashion a program through deliberation and consultation rather than simply conformity to a set of curricular guidelines. Further, the course selection period provides faculty with a class of enthusiastic students who have chosen a particular course with a good sense of its character and requirements.

Although the present course selection period offers these advantages, it has produced difficulties as well…. Students and faculty lose time while material from earlier meetings is repeated for the benefit of late arrivals to a course. In seminars, instructors find class discussion lags because students, still choosing courses, have not prepared assigned readings.

Preferable in principle to pre-registration, the course selection period in its present form could nonetheless be substantially improved upon. Together, faculty and students have created a spiral of hesitation that delays the start of education each term…. Clearly [these] delays …must be limited as far as possible…. The calendar does not consist of a course selection period followed by the term.

On the first day of classes it should be the normal practice of all instructors to distribute a complete syllabus of lecture topics, readings, and assignments. Instructors should not delay their presentation of material in class, repeat that material, or postpone the assignment of readings and papers. Even the first day of class should have as much real content as is possible after organizational matters have been arranged.

Students, for their part, should …recognize that they are responsible for the prompt completion of all work assigned during the course selection period and that it is unfair to the class as a whole to expect instructors to repeat material for the benefit of late arrivals.