LIMITING ENROLLMENT

There are several ways to limit enrollment in Yale College courses. Check with your departmental registrar to determine the best method, as many departments have established application processes. In addition to department applications, instructors may create their own informal process, such as with a Qualtrics survey or by asking interested students to reach out via email. It is also possible to include enrollment information in the course descriptions.

Many departments use the Preference Selection Tool to manage enrollment before the start of the term. The Preference Selection Tool is an online service for students to rank multiple sections of a course, or multiple courses of a particular family (e.g., first-year seminars). Seats are distributed to students through lottery and are often placed directly on the student’s schedule. Ask your departmental registrar about the Preference Selection Tool; if your department is interested in implementing this service they should contact the University Registrar’s Office at registrar.asc@yale.edu.

The new registration system offers a formal permission request and grant process for limited enrollment courses. See Managing Your Limited Enrollment Course on the Registration website for more information.

It is helpful for students to know the selection criteria for limited enrollment courses. This information helps students decide whether or not to apply and may reduce the number of applications you have to read. It is important to post syllabi on Canvas, and include in them detailed and clear criteria for admitting students.

Such selection criteria can include:

- A list of prerequisites.
- A statement about the number of students who may be admitted to the course.
- A declaration that the course is open only to majors, or a statement specifying that the course is open, for example, only to juniors and seniors.
- A form on the Canvas site from the instructor asking for more information from interested students.
- An application available through the departmental office or on Canvas.

The Registrar’s Office does not, student by student and schedule by schedule, verify that a student has received permission from an instructor to enroll in a limited-enrollment course. If the name of any student who does not have the instructor’s permission to take a course appears on the class list (that appears on Canvas after the add/drop period), the instructor should notify the Registrar’s Office to drop the student from the course. Similarly, the Registrar’s Office does not check whether or not a student has met the prerequisites for a course. It is up to the instructor to ascertain that a student has the appropriate preparation.