

## Class Size Policy

Date Proposed: October 17, 2014  
Date Recommended by CAPC: October 30, 2014  
Date Approved by Provost:

**Please note:** This policy applies to our current curriculum. The policy will be revisited when WCU's new general education curriculum is initiated.

The range of numbers listed after each category of course offerings suggests the maximum class size.

1. **100-/200-Level courses:** 30 - 300. Wide range here is due to the disciplinary variation in these introductory level courses. Some departments (e.g., Science, Social Science) must service a large number of students; the courses they offer at this level are often General Education requirements or prerequisites required by several majors, thus numerous students need these courses in order to move ahead with their program. However, other departments (e.g., Public Affairs, Humanities, Foreign Language) that offer discussion and interactive format classes at these lower levels will be most successful in achieving their learning objectives when class sizes are kept to 30 or less.
2. **300-/400-Level courses:** 15 - 40. At this level, the assignments are generally more complex and students need more attention. The learning goals require students to apply theory and to develop their practice. Class sessions often involve discussion and student presentations.
3. **Writing Emphasis (W) courses:** Limit of 25. The goals in W courses and the requirements for multiple drafts, detailed professor feedback, peer reviews and opportunities to revise, require a smaller class size. There was strong agreement across departments on this limit.
4. **Courses with a field-based component requiring supervision, courses with limited availability of field placements, and courses that include a service-learning component:** 15- 20. Some courses require more/less site visits and/or some require particular field placements. If numbers are too high, students will not receive enough supervision/visits from faculty and/or the professor might be unable to place all of the students.
5. **Courses requiring limited materials or space (e.g., labs, performance-based, experiential, art):** 20-32. Maximum class size will be determined by available space or materials.
6. **Online courses:** 15-25. Online courses require a substantial amount of individualized electronic communication, and that can become time consuming if class size is too large.
7. **Blended courses:** 15-40. Similar issue as online courses (large amount of individualized electronic communication) but since some classes are face-to-face, class size could be somewhat larger than completely online courses. Class size should reflect the relative proportion of face-to-face classes to online instruction.
8. **Graduate courses:** 15-25. At the graduate level, the assignments are generally more complex and students need individualized support, particularly if they are involved in research projects. Additionally, class sessions often involve discussion and student presentations so the class size needs to be kept smaller.