

Procedure on “double sections” January 2021

Definition: Double sections occur when the class capacity for a given class is doubled, as is the faculty credit load. For example, a 5-credit course with a cap of 25 is doubled—the cap is raised to 50 and the faculty member is credited with teaching a 10-credit course.

Context: Doubling the capacity of a class can be a useful strategy when, for example, the enrollment demand for a class exceeds the class capacity and a reasonable substitution cannot be provided to the students. An example would be an evening statistics class offered in a hybrid/zoom modality. If another instructor cannot be found to teach a second section of the statistics class in that format at those times, with instructor approval, the section might be “doubled”.

However, as a community college, we are known for offering small classes. In addition, the research is clear and compelling that relationships matter to student success—relationships between teacher and students, and among students. Maintaining class capacities that are lower, rather than higher, within the limits of our funding, is an important element in creating conditions that support relational teaching and learning.

Procedure: Double sections of lecture-based classes may not be scheduled in advance. For example, a faculty member scheduled to teach two or more sections of an online lecture-based course may not double the class capacity of that lecture-based class. A section may be doubled with VPAA permission when student demand for a class is high and no reasonable alternative can be created.

Double sections of lab science courses are an exception. In those cases, the lecture portion of the class may be combined. The labs are taught as separate sections. In that way, the college maintains its commitment to offering personalized, relationally-oriented educational opportunities to students.

Approved by Instruction Cabinet – January 11, 2021