

# Priority Registration Policy

## Introduction

The student's schedule of classes is a significant aspect of the quality of the education. The registration process, in which a student receives a schedule of classes, must recognize the principle of equal access. Allowing some students to register before others is a practice that must be justified as fair, ultimately to those last in line and closed out of courses because they are not allowed the privilege of priority registration. This policy defines the categories of need that merit permission to receive priority registration.

## Policy

Permission to enter the registration process is governed by the general principle of earned hours. The more hours a student has earned, the earlier that student may enter registration. In order to accommodate student populations impacted by specific obligations or other circumstances outside their control, approved populations are allowed to register earlier than earned hours alone would dictate.

## Procedure

- I. Students shall be allowed to register in the following order:
  - a. Group 1: Graduate and Law students
  - b. Group 2: Priority students as defined below
  - c. Group 3: Undergraduate students with 91 or more earned hours
  - d. Group 4: Post graduate students
  - e. Group 5: Undergraduate students with less than 91 earned hours
- II. Categories of Group 2 (Priority) students
  - a. Students who are registered with the UA Office of Disability Services
  - b. Students participating in the UA Cooperative Education Program
  - c. Students who participate in intercollegiate sports governed by the NCAA
- III. Registration time slot assignment
  - a. Time slots within groups 2, 3 and 5 are assigned based on number of overall, earned hours (in-progress courses are not considered in the calculation).
  - b. In groups 3 and 5, students enrolled in the University of Alabama Honors College will be given priority over students who share the same student classification (senior, junior, sophomore, freshman). For example, a senior in the Honors College with 91 earned hours would be allowed to register before a senior with 115 earned hours who is not enrolled in the Honors College. Likewise, a senior with 94 earned hours not enrolled in the Honors College would be able to register before any freshman, sophomore or junior enrolled in the Honors College.
  - c. The exact earned credit hour range of each time slot will vary from semester to semester based on the number of students that potentially fit into each slot with consideration for the load placed onto the registration system.

## **Rationale**

The substantial benefit of priority registration must be balanced by equally substantial, relevant and recognized needs. Justification for the inclusion of specific student populations in the priority registration group is as follows:

**I. Students registered with the UA Office of Disability Services**

Priority registration is granted in order to provide students with disabilities an opportunity to establish a class schedule that will accommodate their physical and academic needs. Some students require time between classes due to mobility limitations or testing accommodations. Others may need a balance in the types of classes or additional time to secure specific academic accommodations. Priority registration provides an opportunity for students with disabilities to secure a class schedule that minimizes the limitations of their disability.

**II. Students participating in the UA Cooperative Education Program**

Students participating in the Cooperative Education Program (co-op) alternate semesters of full-time studies with semesters of full-time work. During the on campus semesters, co-op students must adhere to a strict plan of study so as to continue progressing toward a degree. Because their time on campus is so limited, priority registration is granted to ensure that co-op students have every opportunity to complete their program of study in a timely manner.

**III. Students who participate in intercollegiate sports governed by the NCAA**

Student-athletes are required to commit a significant amount of time preparing for and participating in University-sponsored athletic events. Practice schedules both during the competition season and in the off-season pose significant scheduling and time-management challenges for student-athletes. Priority registration allows student-athletes the ability to minimize conflicts occurring because of these University-sponsored athletic obligations.