

Report on the FAS Registration Process

Report on the Course Registration Process in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Introduction

In March 2018, the Faculty Council discussed the challenges of the current course enrollment process with the Dean of Undergraduate Education and the Registrar. At that meeting, the Dean of the Faculty requested this report on course registration and the possibility of adopting an early registration procedure. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences conducts a student course enrollment process that features a period where students casually attend classes for a week before they are asked to formally enroll. Colloquially, this period is called “shopping week” though that term is not found in student or faculty handbooks. Shopping week is lauded by undergraduate students as a chance to explore the curriculum in order to make informed course choices. In a recent editorial, *The Harvard Crimson* wrote “...students have the opportunity to consider classes and concentrations they would not have otherwise thought about pursuing. Furthermore, students feel that they can have a real experience with a class and its teaching staff before actually enrolling, giving them a chance to think whether a particular class will be a good fit for them.”¹ On the other hand, the *Crimson’s* flyby blog quipped humorously “If you play your cards right, shopping week can simply be an extension of winter break: catching up with friends all day, and then partying every night.”²

For many faculty, graduate students, and some undergraduate students, shopping week is viewed as a period of chaos where course rosters are empty, classrooms are overflowing, course meeting locations are constantly switching, and courses are not fully staffed with teaching fellows. This report provides details about the current registration process, including benefits and costs, and offers alternative solutions. In this work, we are informed by faculty, student, and administrator input, peer school experiences, and data from the Registrar’s Office and the Office of Undergraduate Education.

Impacts of the Current Course Registration Process

In the *Crimson* editorial and in our outreach meetings, students cited shopping week as a way to make informed educational choices. They wrote and spoke of this experience in terms of curricular exploration and intellectual serendipity. However, what students witness during the first week of classes is often an artificial representation of what they will experience the rest of the semester. When a course has to hire teaching fellows unfamiliar with the course material and unprepared to teach it, the academic experience is diminished. Exploration and serendipity are laudable methods for course selection, but this can be achieved in a system that does not sacrifice pedagogical quality during the first two weeks of the semester.

The course registration deadline currently falls on the fifth day of the term or later, depending on the calendar and religious holidays. Analysis of registration activity shows that most undergraduate students wait until the deadline to officially enroll,³ meaning that until the second week of term, students do not begin their work in earnest and key administrative processes cannot reliably be completed. The first week of classes is noted for students sitting in aisles, crowding doorways, or

¹*In Favor of Harvard’s ‘Bureaucratic Headache’*, *The Harvard Crimson*, viewed online 3/22/2018 at <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2018/3/21/editorial-/>

²Enrique, Carmen S., *Shopping Week Mistakes*, *The Harvard Crimson*, viewed online 8/27/2018 at <https://www.thecrimson.com/flyby/article/2018/1/24/shopping-mistakes/>

³ See Appendix 4 for graphs showing student enrollment activity.

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being turned away. The number of students in the classroom can fluctuate without a change to the roster, making it difficult for faculty to predict the number and composition of students in their classes and assign group work. These logistical issues significantly detract from the quality of the academic experience, and this unsettled time leads to disruptive course meetings, uncertainty in teaching fellow assignments, and a delay in sectioning and scheduling. Faculty often do not know with confidence how many teaching fellows to request in advance, and graduate students face uncertainty about securing positions for the upcoming term. The costs of this existing practice are enormous, and the Faculty and the University have an obligation to manage scarce resources in a responsible manner. Just as the course meeting time schedule needed to be revised to reflect an expansive set of course offerings and an increasingly expansive physical campus, so too do we need to update the method and timing for choosing courses.

Academic Experience

The Faculty can substantially improve the academic experience at Harvard by introducing rationality and planning into the registration process. For example, the current process causes students to scramble to meet with advisers, request instructor permission to enroll in courses, and react to course lottery results. This prevents students from being able to thoughtfully prepare for their career at Harvard including their course requirements and concentrations. In addition to the uncertainty built into the first week of classes, undergraduate students may continue to make course changes until the fifth Monday of the semester; graduate students have even longer to add courses. If students know more about course availability or lotteries ahead of time, they can make more intentional decisions about sequencing their courses. Instituting a schedule where students may begin their work from day one and instructors know the size and composition of their courses in advance will help Harvard prioritize teaching and learning over consumeristic course shopping and indecision. Furthermore, prompting students to think of their eight terms of study proactively will enable more thoughtful consideration of concentration choice and their progress towards meeting requirements.

Accessibility

A university focused on inclusion and belonging must do better for students and instructors who rely on accessible facilities and adaptive technology. Students with these needs begin their semesters at a huge disadvantage because their materials might not be prepared until the fourth week of classes.⁴ When we do not know enrollments, and therefore final course locations in advance, we strain to provide an equitable educational experience for students and faculty with physical disabilities. Not all classrooms are accessible, so we typically need to reassign classrooms, convert course materials into accessible formats, or arrange for adaptive technology after the start of the term. Early registration could alleviate concerns around academic choice for students and faculty with accessibility needs.

Canvas

The experience of faculty, teaching fellows, and students with Canvas and our current enrollment procedure is a virtual echo of the physical chaos in the classrooms during course registration. Canvas

⁴ See Appendix 3 for a statement on the challenges that our current system places on students using Adaptive Technology Services.

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was designed as a course resource for enrolled students. However, because we start the semester without enrolled students, we have to adjust permissions so that anyone who adds courses to a Crimson Cart can access the course website. This type of integration is not delivered functionality and had to be custom-developed. It requires close management each semester, placing an administrative tax on teaching staff, Harvard University Information Technology (HUIT), and the Registrar's Office. These adjustments create issues such as students showing up as both guests and enrolled students, losing access prematurely, or maintaining access after they have stopped attending.

Scheduling

Nearly a third of all courses are moved to a different classroom in the beginning of the semester. Course enrollment volatility places an extreme administrative burden on managing classroom assignments and is disruptive to teaching and learning. From one day to the next, faculty and students cannot confidently predict where they will be located for the next class meeting. The shifting of classrooms is intense, often requiring complex four-way room swaps, which can happen regardless of the instructor's preferences or whether the room fits the course's enrollment size and pedagogy. For example, a class might be moved if another course is short on seats or needs an accessible room.

Scheduling is even more unpredictable for sections and non-course events. It is nearly impossible to plan conferences, symposia, special lectures, and other events in advance because rooms cannot be guaranteed until the second or third week of the semester.⁵ At the start of each term, the Registrar's Office can only approve requests 24-48 hours in advance and requests can still be moved later to accommodate a course.

Additional Impacts

Since student schedules are mostly not finalized until the second week of the term, final exams are scheduled in the third or fourth week, creating travel conflicts for faculty and students at the end of the term. This drives up the number of requests for out-of-sequence examinations and adds to the administrative burden on faculty and staff. Another impact of not registering in courses until the second week of the term is that students are not able to verify their enrollment until that time. They need to do this for loan deferments, fellowship and scholarship applications, and to verify insurance eligibility. From May to mid-September, and again in December-January, students are technically unregistered and must wait to verify their status or request a special certification from the Registrar's Office. Early registration would eliminate this problem and considerably reduce the stress and administrative hassles of students.

Teaching Fellow Assignments

Late enrollment keeps the teaching fellow market in a state of unpredictability, turmoil, and flux. In calendar year 2017 (i.e. Spring 2017 and Fall 2017), 44% of FAS courses either increased or decreased the number of teaching fellows and assistants based on actual enrollment numbers versus

⁵ See Appendix 6 for data on sectioning and special event room scheduling

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predicted.⁶ This is symptomatic of a disorganized system, resulting in great costs on the faculty and student experience to the detriment of teaching and learning. For example, in the interest of opening the TF market and to broaden an instructor's and academic department's pool of potential TFs, HUIT developed the Centralized Application for Teaching Sections (CATS) in partnership with the Office of Undergraduate Education and GSAS at a substantial cost to the University.

Teaching fellow assignments often lag when a course attracts more students than anticipated, leading to delays in payroll and scheduling. By not knowing how many TFs a course requires, instructors and students are left rushing to facilitate an ad hoc hire after the course registration deadline; a student may not be a strong fit to TF for a course, but the course instructor(s) and academic department(s) have no other options due to an unpredictable – and sometimes unreliable – market. An additional result of this delay in finalizing a teaching appointment is that faculty ask that graduate students perform appointment-related tasks before the appointment has been finalized and they end up performing work for which they are not concurrently being paid. GSAS must quickly process late appointments via Aurora and other systems, add TFs to payroll, and process off-cycle checks. Students find themselves asking, “What am I going to get paid? When am I going to get paid? Who is going to pay me?” The chaos that this process creates in graduate students' lives slows their progress to degree as they look to sort out myriad details.

Just as disruptive is when sections must be cut because enrollment did not materialize as hoped and TFs lose work. This issue is deeply problematic for graduate students who depend on teaching for salary purposes. TFs who are appointed into sections that end up cancelled find themselves in a predicament unsure of how their living expenses will be covered. The later a section is cancelled, the greater the chance that the student will be unable to find another teaching opportunity.

Peer Examples

Harvard benefits from the experience of nearly every other university in the country having long used a process such as is proposed here. Our entire Ivy+ peer group conducts course registration prior to the start of the term. These schools open fall registration as early as March (Penn) to late August (Yale). Spring registration periods range from October (Penn) to early January (Yale). Other than Harvard, the latest course registration deadlines belong to Yale. There, first-year students register for classes up to five days prior to the start of term and upper class students register either the day before classes start or on the first day of classes. All of these schools allow for course changes during an add/drop period similar to what is proposed below.⁷

Proposed Framework

Under this proposal, the course registration deadline would move to a period late in the prior semester. For example, spring term registration could take place in November, while fall term registration could take place in April. We provide a specific, dated example below because it is useful to think of this framework in concrete terms, but the Faculty should not consider these dates as anything other than an example. The specific timeline will be worked out by an advisory board and approved by the Dean of the Faculty in consultation with the deans of the College and the Graduate School. This sample registration and add/drop schedule would allow faculty and students to

⁶ See Appendix 2 for analysis of the impact of our current registration process on teaching fellow/assistant appointments.

⁷ See Appendix 5 for details of the Ivy+ registration timelines.

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conduct the enrollment process before the start of the term and gives students time to use available resources to make informed choices while they are still on campus.

Sample Course Registration Framework (Example Only)

<u>Process</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Open Registration Period	April 15 – 17	Nov 18 – 20
Lotteries Run	April 18	Nov 21
Post-lottery Add/Drop Period	April 19	Nov 22
Sectioning	April 20 – 22	Nov 23 – 25
First day of classes and Add/Drop start	September 3	January 27
Deadline to add/drop without fee	September 9	February 3
Deadline to add/drop	September 23	February 17
Deadline to withdraw	October 23	March 16

Lotteries are currently run by some courses that restrict the number of students permitted to enroll. Faculty and students have expressed the hope that a new registration procedure would reduce the need for lotteries. Because lotteries in the current system are conducted at varying times, students often don't know when they will learn the results. Late lotteries cause some students to scramble to find a replacement course well into the semester. This proposal would assign a dedicated time when all course lotteries would be run so that the process and timeline are transparent to students. The Registrar's Office currently is not involved in lotteries, but it could offer a solution integrated with my.harvard for those courses needing it. The add/drop period immediately following lotteries in the proposed framework is a short window of time when students could react to the results of lotteries and then make course changes as needed. This brief add/drop period would close a day or two after the lotteries. Once classes start for that semester, a new add/drop period would open to allow students to make revisions to their schedules. Adding courses at this stage would require permission of instructor just as it does now. Teaching fellow and classroom assignments would be appropriately buffered to allow for modest changes in enrollment numbers.

All stakeholders (students, faculty, staff) must practice advanced planning in order for this change to be successful. To paraphrase what one instructor pledged to students during a discussion of this proposal last spring, we cannot ask students to make earlier decisions if we have not yet planned our courses or published syllabi. We can only make efficient use of the University's limited time, space, material, and finances by coordinating our efforts to plan curricula, instructors, syllabi, and course enrollment choices.

The motion to the faculty will not include a specific set of dates for registration. This is for two reasons:

- First, we want to conduct a thorough planning effort with stakeholders in order to anticipate as many dependencies as possible.
- Second, we need to be responsive as we transition to the new registration pattern. As we learn from experience, it will be important to make adjustments without having to re-legislate minor date changes through the entire Faculty.

Please refer to appendix 1 for draft legislation to be presented to Faculty.

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Principles for Implementation

If approved by the Faculty, we will be guided by the following set of principles in implementing the new course registration procedure:

- An effective course registration schedule will maximize time spent teaching and learning, reduce uncertainty, assist graduate students in teaching fellow appointments, and allow for the effective use of classrooms.
- It is preferable to have students enroll in classes for the following semester while they are still on campus and have access to advisers and other resources.
- Students will be enrolled in the courses they choose during this registration period, and teaching, section, and classroom allocation will be distributed based on these numbers. Students will still have a chance to make course changes if needed during the opening of the term, and we will manage a buffer of spaces to allow for course changes that come later. However, the approximate size of the courses and the resources allocated to them will be determined based on the results of this initial phase of registration.
- Students value the opportunity to gain insight into the pedagogy, requirements, and other classroom conditions when making course choices. All course websites, including full syllabi with readings and assignments, should be published and available before each term's open registration period. Whenever possible, providing sample lecture videos and other informative resources would be an important and potentially much improved method of sampling courses compared to the current first week experience.
- It is desirable to provide a transparent timeline and process for resolving lotteries and acting on enrollment petitions.
- The expansion of the physical campus diminishes the opportunity for students to efficiently sample courses during the first week, while simultaneously increasing the need for FAS to plan classroom assignments, teaching fellow appointments, and faculty/student schedules in advance.
- The unique circumstances of entering first-year students call for consideration of a revised course registration timeline; perhaps coinciding with fall orientation.

Other Considerations

This proposal establishes the basic framework for course selection, but there are more details that would need to be set. For example:

- In addition to a potentially revised timeline for entering students, we would need to create deadlines for adding/dropping module courses during the following sessions: Fall 1, Fall 2, January, Spring 1, Spring 2. January courses are open to GSAS students (and cross-registrants) only.
- We would also want to evaluate whether other deadlines should change (e.g. concentration declaration, deadline to change grading basis, faculty hiring, etc.)
- The course catalogue would need to be ready earlier in the year. The Faculty already vote the courses at the beginning of May, so this proposal does not drastically shorten the time for departments to develop curricula. However, we would still need the catalogue to be more complete by that time than is currently the case. A two-year advance course planning schedule would enable students to have much greater information about course choices and study plans over time.

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- While we do not usually make changes like this mid-year, it would be preferable to start this new schedule with spring registration, which means we may choose to first adopt the new timeline and process mid-year in December 2020 for Spring 2021 registration.

Feedback from Stakeholders

Starting in the academic year 2017-2018, Harvard College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences participated in numerous formal interactions with faculty, students, and staff in order to gather stakeholder input into this proposal and to accept feedback on the possible framework. The former Dean of Undergraduate Education, Jay Harris, and the Registrar of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Mike Burke, led discussions at the Faculty Council, the April 2018 FAS Faculty meeting, the Undergraduate Educational Policy Committee, the Graduate Policy Committee, the Committee on Undergraduate Education, the Committee on Graduate Education, several divisional chair and departmental meetings, a meeting of Harvard Athletics coaches, the June all-College annual retreat, and a faculty/student panel organized by the Undergraduate Council.

For the 2018-2019 academic year, we have initiated a campaign to request invitations to faculty and staff department meetings, and we will once again be meeting with the Faculty Council and the full Faculty. The Registrar will also convene an implementation advisory board to decide the specific timing of the proposed framework.

In addition to the formal channels for feedback described above, we have received numerous suggestions, endorsements, and critiques of the proposal. While the vast majority of the formal and informal feedback from faculty, graduate students, and staff has been enthusiastically supportive, we have also heard from those not in support of this plan or specific aspects of it. Our interactions with undergraduates have produced mixed feedback. While the students at these meetings acknowledged the challenges we face, and can understand the impetus for this proposal, many are concerned they will lose the opportunity for serendipitous course selections. This was by far the most common concern cited. Beyond this, both undergraduate and graduate students focused on the timing of the registration period. Many students were concerned that we might choose a period too late or too early in the prior semester to ask them to enroll in courses. If too early, students might not know how they're doing in their current courses. If too late in the semester, it may add to the stress of reading period and preparations for final examinations and papers.

Undergraduate athletes, on the other hand, were more apt to embrace the proposal if it offered the opportunity to figure out their complex schedules well in advance of the start of the term. Coaches, who were already concerned about the impact of the new course meeting schedule on practice and training time, were likewise hopeful that advance registration could ease their logistical challenges.

Supportive input from faculty included numerous comments centered on the concept that we cannot afford to give away the first week of classes. Adding to this thread of comments was the notion that a week of shopping leads to consumeristic, rather than intellectual, behavior and that there are much better ways to provide students with information about course pedagogy, requirements, and content well in advance of the start of term. Numerous students and faculty suggested we could create a better course selection process by preceding the new registration

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timeline with an intensive advising period similar to Advising Fortnight and by offering sample lectures on video. The challenge, as one faculty member put it, is to inform students as much as possible, as early as possible. Another instructor challenged us to dislodge the very mindset and language of shopping and introduce instead the concept of advanced planning.

Some faculty members challenged the notion that we need to have students engage in advanced planning where they make choices ahead of time. Some, such as Professor Jim Waldo in Computer Science, suggest that there is a better alternative. He writes “We can get a more accurate prediction of the size of enrollment in courses by connecting the history of enrollments and some simple machine learning.” If the exercise were simply to predict enrollment size, then he is likely correct that a better prediction algorithm could be created. However, this proposal is aimed not only at predicting numbers, but in actually getting students to plan their courses of study earlier. A predictive model would be useful for estimating the number of teaching fellows needed in a semester, but it would not bring other benefits such as starting the semester in earnest on day one, knowing who exactly is in a course so that sections, labs, work and study groups can be created, and informing students of the outcomes of lotteries, waitlists, and petitions so that they may enroll in restricted courses.

Prediction is not the goal of this initiative. Prediction, however effective, has been our model for generations. We are not trying to improve our ability to predict enrollment. We want instead to eliminate the need to predict enrollment by having students enroll in courses before the start of the semester. Our aim is to introduce a rational advanced planning process so that students may make informed choices based on thoughtful study plans. This will enable us to match teaching fellows with courses, assign classrooms, determine sectioning needs, resolve lotteries transparently in a timely manner, and begin academic work on the very first day of the semester with faculty and students earnestly engaged in the intellectual enterprise. Registering for courses before they begin is an essential element in academic planning. Our current process is an exercise in reaction based on the imperfection of prediction.

Conclusion and Next Steps

At a time when courses at Harvard College numbered in the dozens and the classroom buildings could be numbered on a single hand, Harvard students and faculty could reasonably accommodate the type of enrollment process that Harvard has used for years. However, with nine thousand courses, hundreds of buildings, and a campus extending from the Quad to Allston to Longwood, a shopping procedure allowing casual attendance and chaotic shuffling of classrooms, last-minute hiring and firing of teaching staff, and a deficient experience for students needing physical and technological accommodations, it is time for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to adopt a system that emphasizes thoughtful planning and efficient use of scarce resources. It is not too much to ask that departments, faculty, staff, and students participate in a process that maximizes the academic experience and minimizes uncertainty.

If the proposal is adopted, the Registrar will convene an advisory board to determine the following:

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- The optimal timing to conduct the advance registration process each semester
- Assess the impact on the curriculum development timeline
- Determine how an advance registration system would work for incoming students; a modified enrollment period may be needed for First-Year College students and G1 GSAS students
- Consult with the other Harvard schools to inform them of this change and to gauge the impact on their schedules

The advisory board will be informed by meeting with faculty, student, and staff stakeholders this academic year and will report back to the Faculty by the end of the 2018-2019 academic year with a plan for implementation.

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has been leading change in areas such as diversity and inclusion, technology, pedagogy, student financial aid, and intellectual breadth. With the new time schedule and the vastly expanding campus coming online, it is time to create systems that support our academic mission and make efficient use of our resources.

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Appendix 1 – Draft Course Registration Legislation

On behalf of the College, Professor Amanda Claybaugh, Dean of Undergraduate Education, moves:

1. That, starting with the academic year 2020-2021, the student course registration period change from the beginning of a term to a period in the latter half of the prior term.
2. That the specific dates for the registration period be determined by an advisory committee convened by the Registrar of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and consisting of representative faculty, staff, and students, subject to the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.
3. That the curriculum, course web sites, syllabi, and related material be available for all courses prior to the start of registration.

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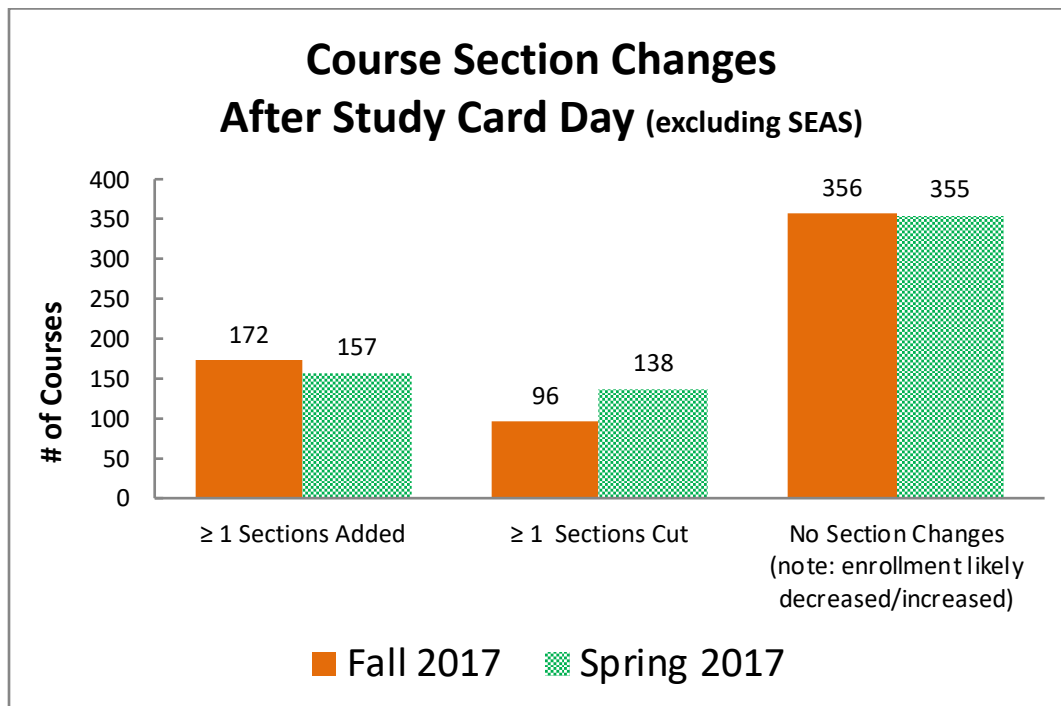
Appendix 2 – TF Assignments

TF/TA Assignments Pre- and Post- Course Registration Deadline

(March 2018)

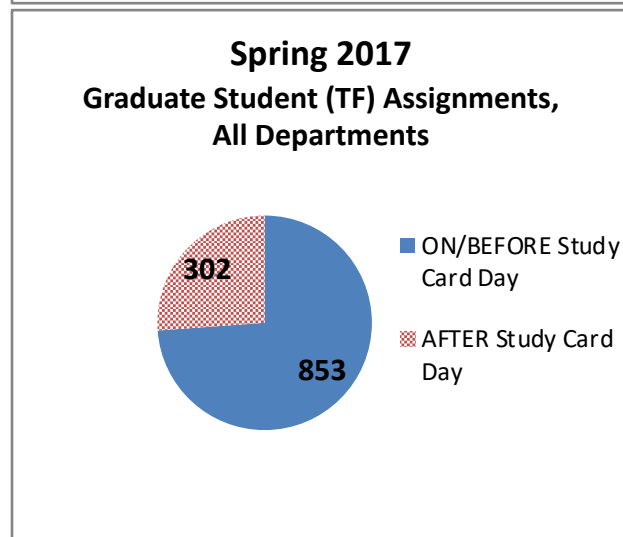
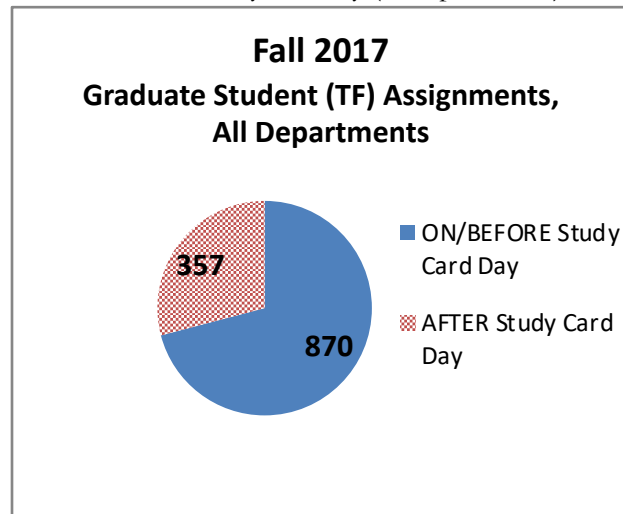
Section Changes from a Course Perspective

Note: Courses with “No Section Changes” may not have had a section change due to: priority student guaranteed teaching—*so no cuts*; distribution of students among already scheduled sections (e.g., languages, labs, etc.)—*so no cuts*; unable to identify new teaching staff—*so no additions*, etc.

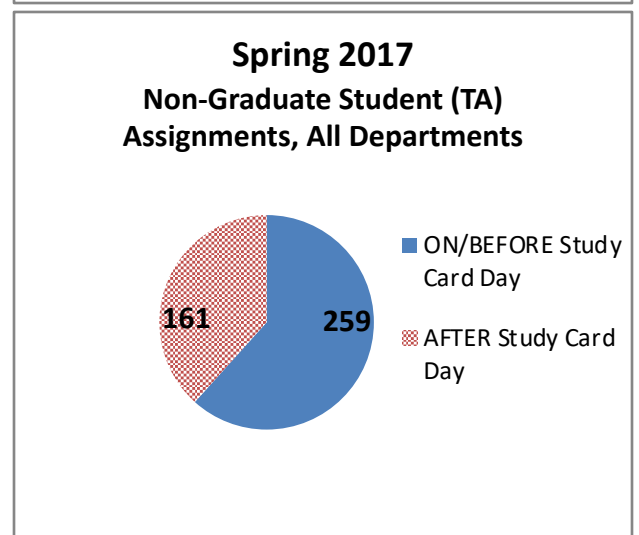
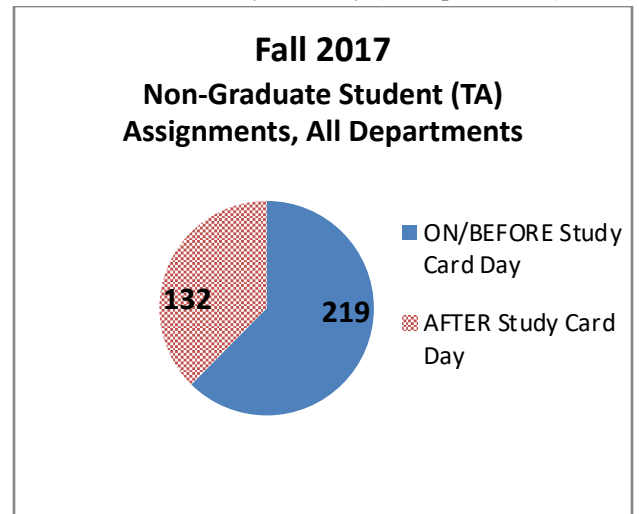


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Graduate Student (TF) Assignments made
before and after study card day (all departments)



Non-Graduate Student (TA) Assignments made
before and after study card day (all departments)

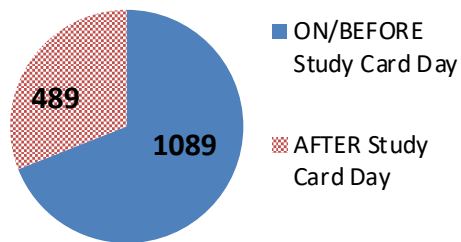


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Graduate Student (TF) and Non-Graduate Student (TA) Assignments made before and after study card day (all departments)

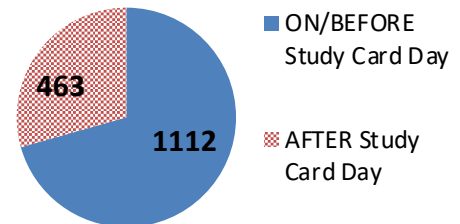
Fall 2017

Graduate Student (TF) and
Non-Graduate Student (TA)
Assignments,
All Departments



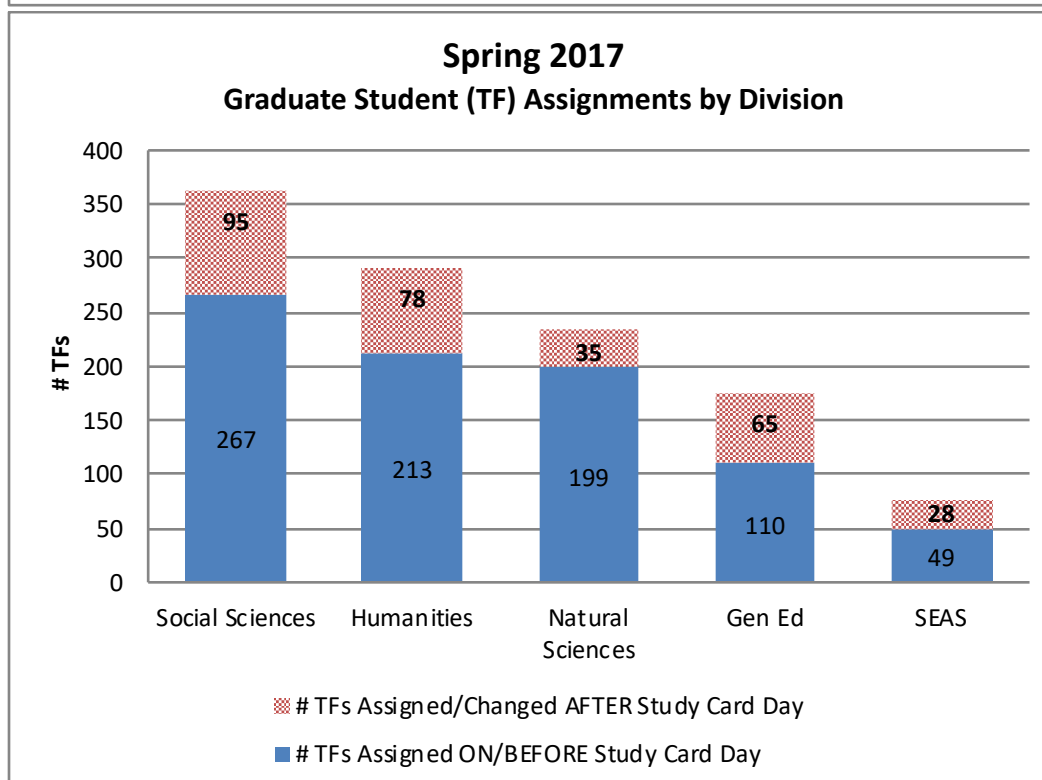
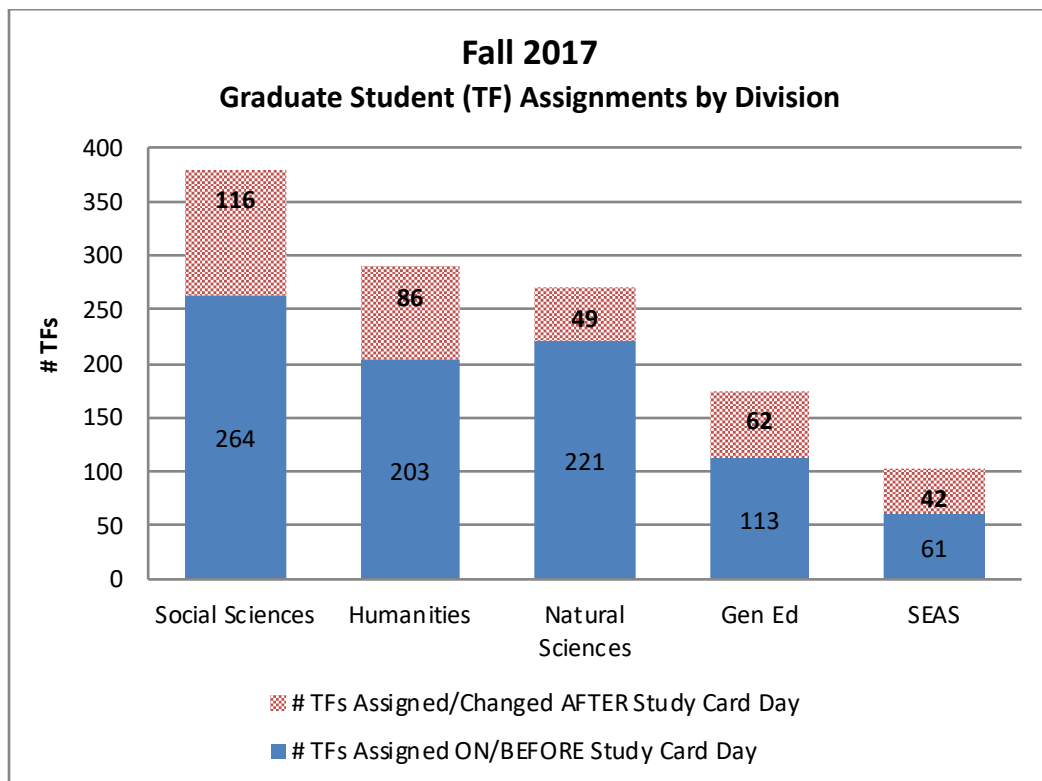
Spring 2017

Graduate Student (TF) and
Non-Graduate Student (TA)
Assignments,
All Departments



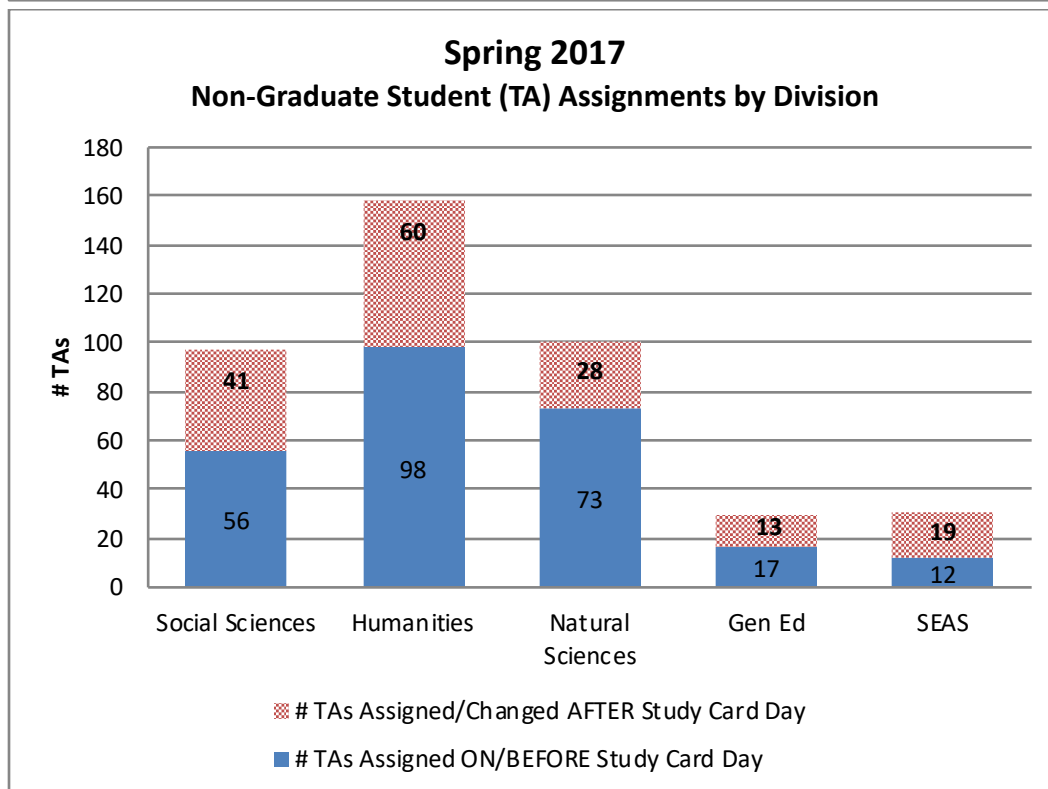
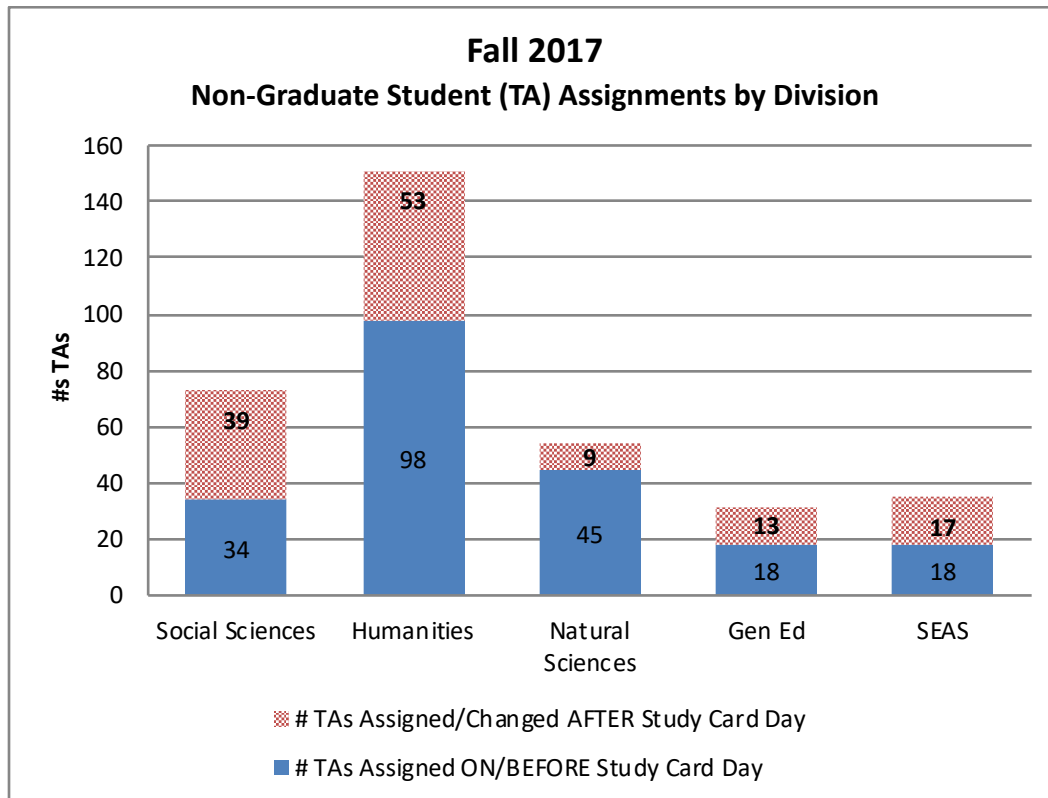
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Graduate Student (TF) Assignments made before and after study card day (by division)



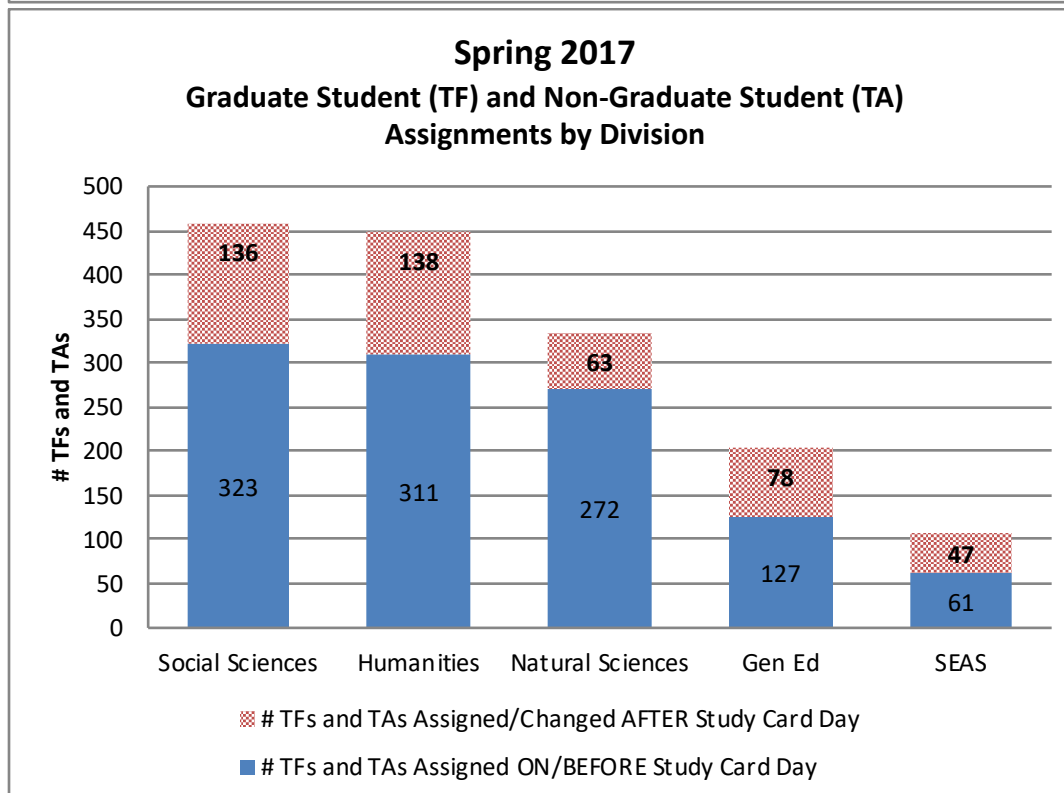
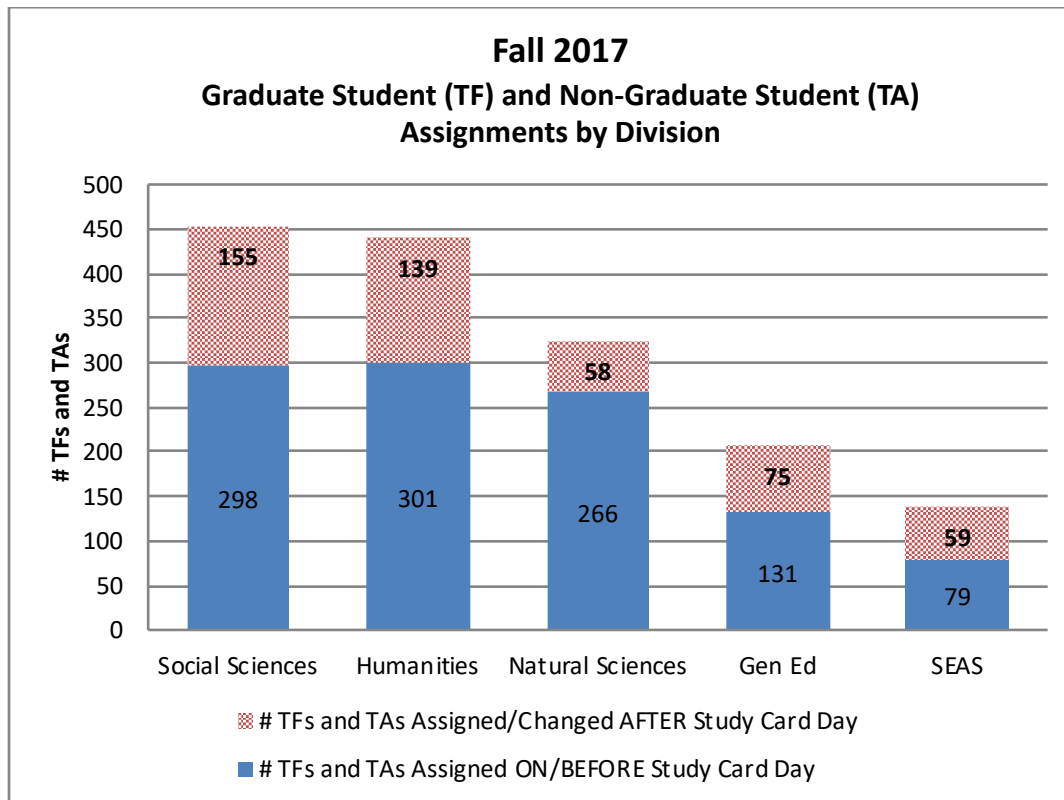
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Non-Graduate Student (TA) Assignments made before and after study card day (by division)



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Graduate Student (TA) and Non-Graduate Student (TA) Assignments made before and after study card day (by division)



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Appendix 3 – Adaptive Technology Services

If the students preregistered and submitted their course selections several weeks prior to the start of classes, they would not experience a time when course materials were not accessible. This would prevent them from being behind their classmates in completing assignments and following lectures.

These are our “heavy user” client estimates for the last two years.

	Total	PDF	Electronic Text
Fall 2016	18	7	11
Spring 2017	18	6	12
Fall 2017	18	5	13
Spring 2018	23	2	21

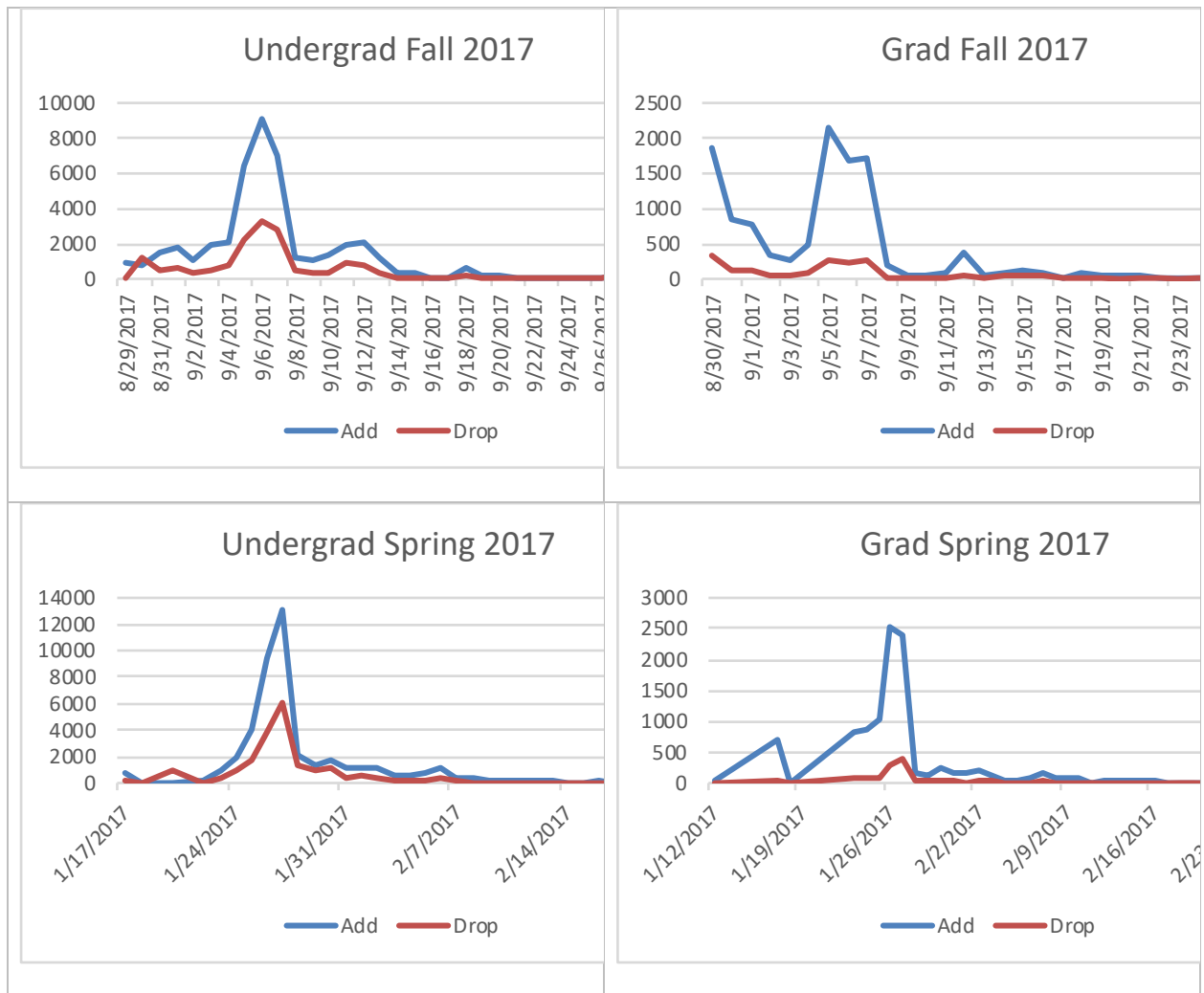
Clients who receive PDFs as their final format obtain their materials much more quickly than students who receive electronic text, as PDF materials take much less time to process (they are scanned, and have page numbers set, and bookmarks added in longer works). Electronic text has to be scanned, run through optical character recognition, and then that output must be checked for accuracy and corrected and formatted for the student’s needs. Electronic text for a novel, in English, with little formatting can be done at almost 100 pages per hour, but for math, science or multilingual materials, it may be as slow as 5-10 pages an hour. Most PDF clients receive their materials in about a week and half to two weeks from when they tell us their courses.

Clients who use electronic text may not get all of their course materials by the time they need to read them until 3-4 weeks after they tell us which courses they are taking. (If a student is a mid-semester referral, we may ask if they want this week’s material or next week’s first, then we do the materials from the beginning of the semester after the other materials are completed.

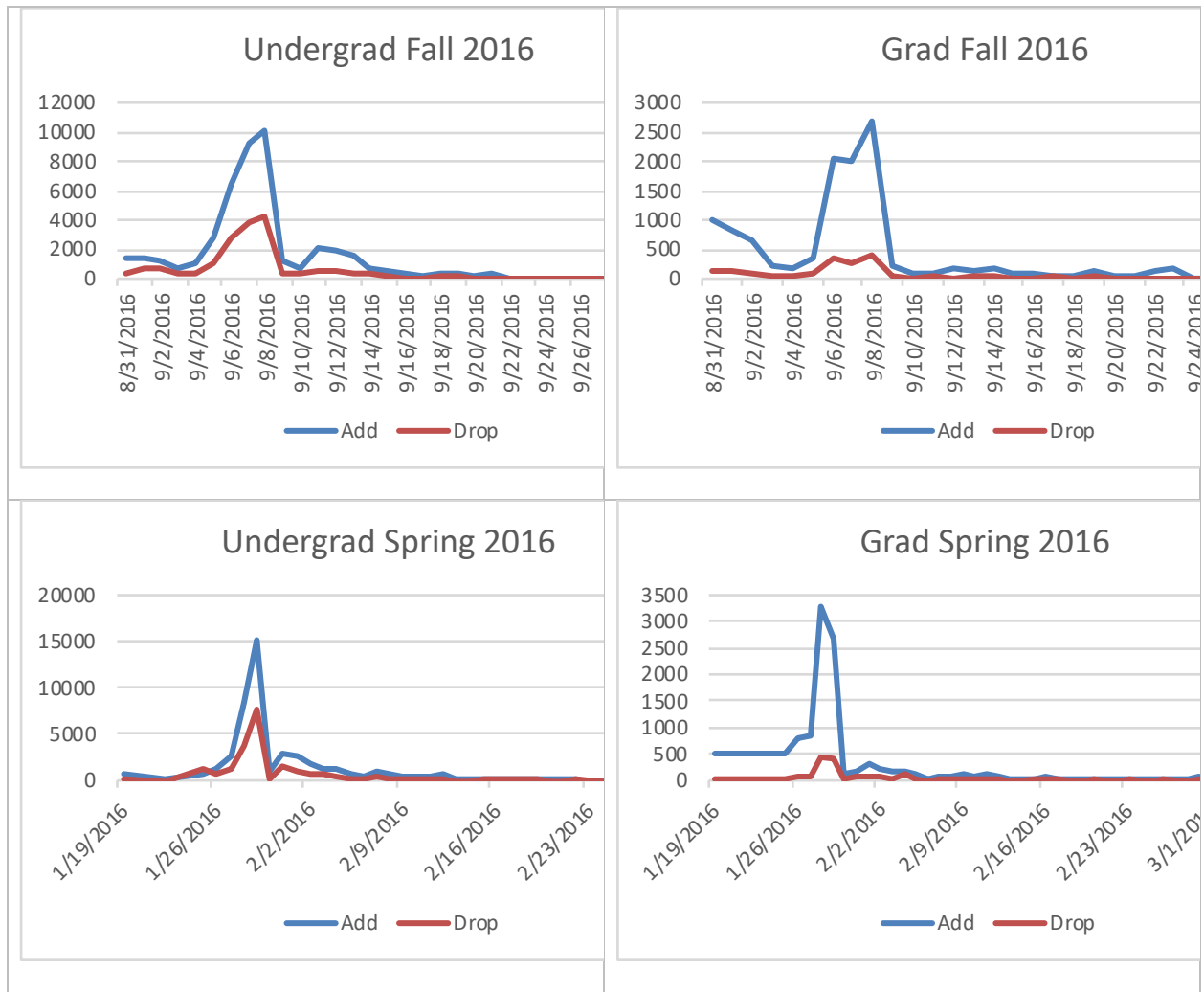
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Appendix 4 – Enrollment Activity

Enrollment Activity



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Appendix 5 – Peer School Schedules

Peer Institutions Registration Data

School	Fall Begin	Fall End	Fall Add/Drop	Spring Begin	Spring End	Spring Add/Drop
<i>Brown</i>	4/14	4/25	9/9 – 9/19	11/7	11/14	1/24 – 2/6
<i>Columbia</i>	4/17	4/21	10/10	11/13	11/17	2/20
<i>Cornell</i>	8/15	9/5	9/5	10/25	10/27	2/7
<i>*FROSH</i>	7/10	7/18	9/5	11/8	11/10	2/7
<i>Dartmouth</i>	5/9	5/17	6/22 – 8/23	2/7	2/15	2/23 – 3/6
<i>UPENN</i>	3/19	4/1	10/8	10/29	11/11	2/22
<i>Princeton</i>	4/30	5/2	9/26	12/6	12/8	2/16
<i>Yale</i>	8/25	8/29	9/22	1/15	1/16	2/2
<i>MIT</i>	5/1	6/19	10/6 / 11/22	12/1	12/28	3/9 / 4/26
<i>Stanford</i>	On quarter term system					

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Appendix 6 – Classroom Assignments Swaps, Sectioning, Special Events

Course Move Data

Timeline: Preferences for rooms are submitted by each department to the Registrar's Office about two months prior to the start of term. After the initial assignment process, course locations are released to departments, which are then allowed to request changes before locations are sent to faculty. One week after departments request changes, faculty are emailed their room assignments and may subsequently request changes as well. During shopping period the RO refrains from making changes until final enrollments have stabilized; otherwise, a course may move multiple times without knowing what size room they truly need. The RO will move courses after enrollments are stabilized, with priority given to courses requiring a larger room. Course locations are settled about two weeks after the registration deadline.

Percentage of courses in a different location from original assignment one month into term

The numbers below only reflect how many courses landed in a final room assignment that was different than their initial assignment. The numbers below do not capture courses that moved multiple times before their final location.

Fall 2016: 35% - 556 courses changed locations

Spring 2017: 30%- 442 courses changed locations

Fall 2017: 30% - 481 courses changed locations

Spring 2018: 32%- 462 courses changed locations

Sections/Event Requests

Timeline: Roombook opens about two weeks before the start of term for course discussion sections, lab sections, and event requests. Until approximately one to two weeks after the registration deadline, RO staff may only approve requests one day at a time, 24-48 hours in advance. The RO often has a backlog of 10,000 individual section and event requests. All section and events requests are approved with the caveat that if a course requires that location, the event will be bumped out of the space. About a week after the registration deadline once course locations are stabilizing, the RO begins to approve requests further in advance.

Number of events/sections occurring in the first month (Registrar-managed space only):

Fall 2016: 3,165

Spring 2017: 3,001

Fall 2017: 2,935

Spring 2018: 3,251

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Academic Planning Staffing Resources

The Academic Planning team in the RO designates a span of five weeks as “start of term” period for classroom management. This period begins mid-August (or mid-January) and extends two weeks after the Shopping and Registration deadline period. A large percentage of Academic Planning staff resources are devoted to classroom management. This work includes initial course placement and swaps; confirming discussion and lab section space requests; confirming special event and student event requests. The chart below indicates how many staff hours were devoted to start of term classroom management for AY 2017-2018.

Week	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
1	81	77
2	79.5	60.5
3-Reg Deadline Wk	94	77.5
4	85	88.5
5	86	85
Totals	425.5	388.5