

SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL
Los Angeles, CA

Course Cancellation Policy

Administrative policy approved April 17, 2023. Effective as of May 1, 2023.

Revision history: Technical edits made and reservation of rights language added in November 2023; technical edits made in January 2025.

Related policies: Academic Policies and Procedures; SCALE Program Policies; and Course Cancellation Policy in the Faculty Manual

Scheduled Review Date: Vice Deans January 2026

A. Circumstances When Courses May Be Cancelled

The Vice Dean(s), in consultation with the Dean, may cancel the following courses:

1. Any course in which ten or fewer students have registered, or enrollment is significantly lower than anticipated. This provision, however, does not apply to courses where low enrollment is part of the class design, such as clinics.
2. Any course in which the assigned professor becomes unavailable to teach and an appropriate substitute cannot be retained on a timely or financially feasible basis.
3. Any course that has become impossible to offer for reasons beyond Southwestern's control.

B. Timing and Notice

Notices of cancellation will be given at different times before the start of the term to balance the needs of Southwestern, students, and faculty. Southwestern desires to allow students as much choice as possible and provide students with sufficient notice to adjust their schedules as needed. Similarly, Southwestern desires to give faculty as much notice as possible to adjust their work obligations and schedules.

Courses typically will not be canceled during the add/drop period unless

enrollment drops to two or fewer students or the faculty member becomes unavailable and Southwestern cannot secure a qualified substitute. The Student Services Office can work with impacted students when a course is canceled.

Typically, Southwestern will employ the following course cancellation approach:

1. For the fall semester and SCALE Quarter 5 electives, initial cancellation decisions will be made two weeks before the specific term begins, although earlier cancellations may be made if it reasonably appears that the course will not achieve the minimum enrollment figures or if another reason listed in Section A occurs. Final cancellations usually will be made one week before the specific term begins but may be made later if enrollment is close to or dips under the minimum noted in Section A.
2. For the January Intersession, initial cancellation decisions will be made eight weeks before the term begins, although earlier cancellations may be made if it reasonably appears that the course will not achieve the minimum enrollment figures or if another reason listed in Section A occurs. Final cancellations usually will be made immediately before Winter Break but may be made later if enrollment is close to or dips under the minimum noted in Section A.
3. For the spring semester and SCALE Quarters 4 and 7 electives, initial cancellation decisions will be made eight weeks before the specific term begins, although earlier cancellations may be made if it reasonably appears that the course will not achieve the minimum enrollment figures or if another reason listed in Section A occurs. A second round of cancellation decisions will be made four weeks before the specific term begins. Final cancellation decisions usually will be made one week before the term begins but may be made later if enrollment is close to or dips under the minimum noted in Section A.
4. For the summer session, the initial cancellation decision will be made six weeks before the term begins, although earlier cancellations may be made if it reasonably appears that the course will not achieve the minimum enrollment figures or if another reason listed in Section A occurs. A second round of cancellation decisions will be made three weeks before the term begins. Final cancellation decisions usually will be made one week before the term begins but may be made later if enrollment is close to or dips under the minimum noted in Section A.

C. Policy Revisions

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without prior notice.