



# RESEARCH BRIEF

## OIR

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Initiatives

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### Mandatory On-Time Registration – Faculty Survey Results: Fall 2014

This Research Brief presents an overview of the results of the faculty survey on mandatory on-time registration. As part of NOVA’s efforts to increase student success outcomes, NOVA enacted six policy changes in Fall 2014, one of which requires all NOVA students to comply with its on-time registration policy. Under the former registration policy, students were allowed to add, drop, and swap classes during the first week of the session, and could add classes in the second week of the session with permission from the faculty. The new on-time registration policy requires students to register by 11:59 p.m. the day before a session begins.<sup>1</sup> After the deadline has passed, the ability to add, change, or swap a class is greatly restricted. There is a limited schedule adjustment period during the first week of classes if students have documented mitigating circumstances that impacted their ability to register on time. Surveys were conducted to collect feedback from faculty and students on the policy change.

NOVA emailed the survey to 3,299 faculty and 832 responded, resulting in a 25 percent response rate. The number of respondents varies by question as not all participants answered every question in the survey. For several items, respondents were given the opportunity to provide multiple responses. The total number of responses is divided by the number of respondents to calculate the percentage of respondents. Therefore, percentages do not always add up to 100 percent.

Table 1 (next page) present results from the questions, “Were you aware that students could no longer register for courses late (i.e., after 11:59 p.m. the day before the session begins)?” and “Do you think the on-time registration policy change is beneficial to students?” Ninety-seven percent of faculty (800 respondents) reported they were aware of the on-time registration policy. Only 25 respondents (3 percent) reported they were not aware of the policy prohibiting late registration. Of these 25 respondents who were not aware of the policy, 22 respondents (88 percent) indicated they were adjunct faculty. The majority of respondents (614 respondents, 79 percent) indicated they thought the policy was beneficial.

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<sup>1</sup> At NOVA a semester refers to an academic term. Each academic year there are three semesters: Fall, Spring, and Summer. A session refers to the number of weeks within a semester during which a course is scheduled to meet. NOVA offers several different sessions each semester to provide a variety of course and scheduling options. For example, in addition to the standard 16- and 8-week sessions, sessions may be taught in 12 or 14 weeks.

**Table 1. Awareness of and Agreement with On-Time Registration Requirement**

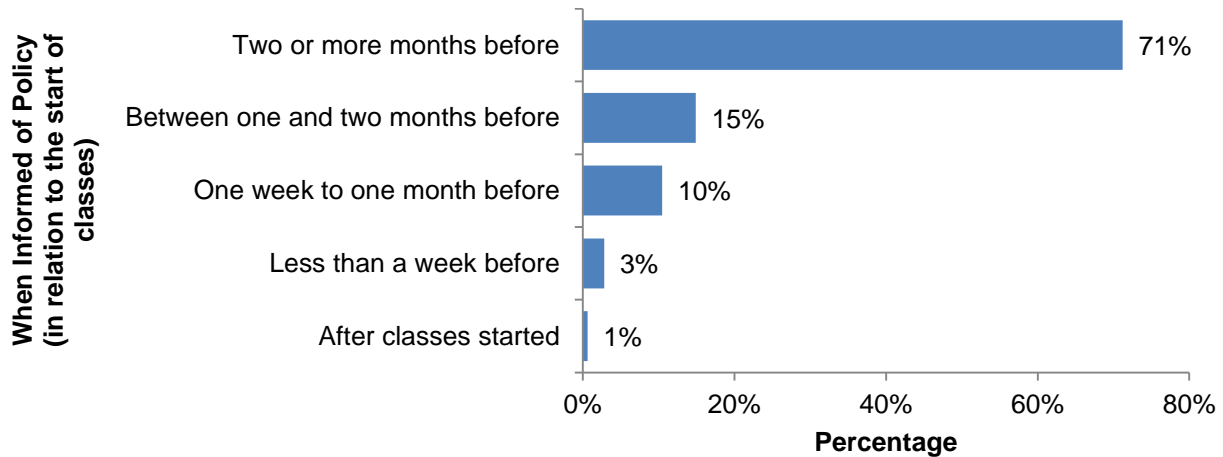
Responses	Aware of On-Time Registration Policy?		Is On-Time Registration Policy Beneficial?	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	800	97.0	614	79.3
No	25	3.0	160	20.7
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Respondents were asked to indicate when they had been informed of the policy (Table 2 and Figure 1). Seventy-one percent (559 respondents) indicated they knew of the policy two or more months before the start of classes. Twenty-seven respondents (4 percent) did not know of the policy until either less than a week before the start of classes or after classes started.

**Table 2. When Were You Informed of This Policy?**

When Informed of On-Time Registration Policy	Responses	
	#	%
Two or more months before start of classes	559	71.2
Between one and two months before start of classes	117	14.9
One week to one month before start of classes	82	10.4
Less than a week before start of classes	22	2.8
After classes started	5	0.6
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 1. When Were You Informed of This Policy Change?**



Respondents were asked how they learned about the policy. Table 3 and Figure 2 (next page) show the sources from which faculty members received on-time registration policy information. Faculty members were able to choose more than one information source. The majority of faculty (295 respondents, 38 percent) indicated they learned of the policy through email. Other means mentioned by a large number of respondents were through a division dean (197 respondents, 25 percent), posters and flyers around campus (132 respondents, 17 percent), and through the NOVA website (125 respondents, 16 percent).

**Table 3. How Did You Learn About This Policy? Select All That Apply.**

Method of Notification	Responses	
	#	%
Email	295	37.6
Division Dean	197	25.1
Posters/flyers	132	16.8
NOVA website	125	15.9
Assistant Dean	116	14.8
Town hall/campus meeting	113	14.4
Provost	106	13.5
Colleague	88	11.2
Faculty Advising Manager (FAM)	60	7.7
Many of the above means	25	3.2
Other*	15	1.9
Involved in policy planning process	12	1.5
Cannot recall	9	1.1
Faculty Convocation	5	0.6
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>784</b>	

Note: As respondents could choose more than one option, totals will not equal 100 percent.  
 \*\*Other\* includes all responses indicated by fewer than five respondents.

**Figure 2. How Did You Learn About This Policy? (Top Responses)**

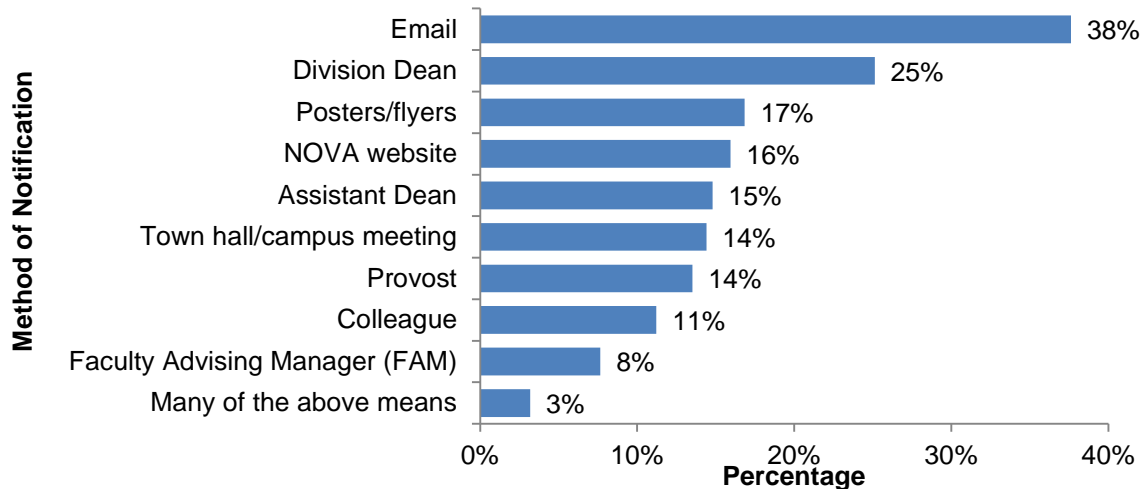


Table 4 shows respondents' answers to whether they felt the on-time registration policy affected their teaching or other responsibilities. The majority of faculty (510 respondents, 65 percent) felt the policy had not affected their responsibilities.

**Table 4. Has the On-Time Registration Policy Affected Your Teaching or Other Responsibilities?**

Policy Affected Responsibilities	Responses	
	#	%
Yes	281	35.5
No	510	64.5
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Faculty who indicated that the on-time registration policy had affected their teaching or other responsibilities were also asked an open-ended question regarding how their responsibilities had changed due to the implementation of the policy. Table 5 and Figure 3 show the responses on the types of changes faculty experienced as a result of the on-time registration policy. Over half (157 respondents, 59 percent) mentioned that they had fewer administrative duties than under the previous policy, and were able to begin coursework sooner, particularly in the first week of class. Another 15 percent (39 respondents) noted increased time advising students and answering policy questions. Ten percent of faculty (26 respondents) indicated they had fewer students in class, with 5 percent (13 respondents) noting it as a positive or general observation, and 5 percent (13 respondents) commenting on the negative effect that fewer students has on pay, scheduling, or planned activities for the class.

**Table 5. How Has the On-Time Registration Policy Affected Your Teaching or Other Responsibilities?**

Effect on Responsibilities	Responses	
	#	%
Begin coursework sooner/fewer administrative duties	157	59.2
Increased time advising or assisting students/answering policy questions	39	14.7
Complicated class scheduling/increased difficulty of enrolling students/forced session change	23	8.7
Other*	15	5.7
Fewer students - positive or general comment	13	4.9
Fewer students - negative impact on pay, schedule, syllabus	13	4.9
Class was cancelled	12	4.5
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>265</b>	

Note: As respondents could list more than one option, totals may not equal 100 percent.

\*"Other" includes all responses indicated by fewer than five respondents.

**Figure 3. How Has the On-Time Registration Policy Affected Your Teaching or Other Responsibilities?**

