

Values for Admitting Students into Limited Enrollment Classes

AFVS Critical Pedagogy Working Group

As a department we are committed to creating an anti-racist, inclusive and accessible environment. The admission procedures for limited enrollment classes have been identified by students as a significant barrier to many BIPOC and FGLI students. We, the Critical Pedagogy Working Group, composed of students, staff, and faculty, have established a set of **shared values** to make this process more equitable and inclusive.

Building upon two core values—**transparency** and **accessibility**—this document provides guiding principles not only for AFVS faculty but also for visitors unfamiliar with the format of limited enrollment classes.

Transparency

- **Transparency** is paramount in any competitive admissions process.
- Limited enrollment classes in particular can make students insecure about their “performance” in an interview process; **conducting the application process** as a **conversation and exchange of ideas** about the class, rather than an examination of their skills and previous knowledge, can alleviate their potential anxieties.
- **Admissions procedures** and **selection criteria**, whether by lottery or interview, should be clearly stated—including relevant department policies—on the course website and syllabus.
- These procedures and criteria should be also **communicated** to individual students who inquire about the course.

Accessibility

- Faculty determine admission to their classes in **various ways**. These procedures should be **inclusive of and responsive to** students’ existing skills and interests relevant to the course.
- Provide **application materials and clear instructions** on the Canvas site **in advance**, explicitly stating options for applications and space to articulate accessibility needs.
- When possible, reserve **larger classrooms** for the shopping period to accommodate all prospective students.
- There are **invisible barriers** of which we must be mindful in all communication with prospective students. This includes expecting and accepting that some students will not yet have had access to the **anticipated skills** and being careful about using **specialized language** that may be unfamiliar.
- Students **communicate in different ways**—give them **multiple options**, e.g. a written questionnaire or an interview, or give them time to formulate their thoughts by offering them the option to send their questionnaire via email (rather than submitting it in class).
- Provide **suggestions** for alternate classes when a student is not admitted to yours. Consult the department’s **live spreadsheet of class enrollments** during the shopping period, which should be institutionalized and consistently maintained.
- When students are not admitted to your class, **prioritize** them for admission to future classes. The department should keep them **informed** about AFVS resources, workshops, and events by maintaining lists of the emails of students who applied to classes but were not admitted.