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Acceptable Wait Time For Classes

What do you consider an acceptable amount of wait time for a student to get into a class?

Some time ago I heard that exceeding 8 weeks becomes too long. Let me know what you think!

MARYLAND

In general no more than 30-days. Here in MD with more supply than demand a customer can usually get a seat in a class in a week, usually no more than two.

Regards.

~Phil Sause

MINNESOTA

Our demand has fallen off so much over the past five years that once our training season begins, wait times never exceed three weeks and are usually only two. When we were training over 10K students a year, six week waits, and occasionally eight week waits were common early in the season, but not after the first couple of months. That said, if you registered for a class today, you'd have almost a three month wait as we don't start training in MN until the second weekend of April; or about the time you start seeing open water again.

~William Shaffer

IDAHO

Good Day,

Here in Idaho, wait times typically do not exceed 3-4 weeks; however, we've experienced similar ebbs and flows as seen in Minnesota and since 2008, demand has not been as high.

To mitigate schedule flooding and longer wait times, we open our schedule up in increments, beginning with March and April opening for registration in early February. Subsequently, each month we open another month out: On 3/2, students can register for classes through May; 3/30 through June; 5/4 through July; 6/1 through August, and so forth.

Depending on when a student registers, they may be able to get into a class almost immediately.

A four-week wait time seems reasonable to me, but I'm not a fan of anything beyond 4-5 weeks. Although many of us are not in direct competition for providing rider training (except, of course, different schools in the same market), given today's culture of desire for instant gratification and immediate consumption, we still risk losing the customer. ...and the opportunity to formally train a rider. (was implied...)

Cheers,
~Sunshine Beer

OREGON

Oregon's wait times are generally 2-5 weeks. That translates into 2-3 weeks at our busiest sites during the busiest time of year. Longer times are found at remote (mobile) sites, particularly during early spring and late fall.

On our end-of-course evaluation forms, student responses to "the wait time to take the course was reasonable" average 8.5 out of 10, with 10 being highest. (Not bad, considering our training is mandatory.)

I conclude from this that our students think 3-4 weeks is reasonable, and I agree.

We use a method of publishing a schedule for the year, but holding back courses every weekend to be opened as demand allows, i.e. if a site fills up on a given weekend, rather than open a course on a later weekend or at a different site, we are able to add a course that weekend, that site - generally.

I think only 50-60 percent of the total courses available for the year are visible to students at the outset; we pull the levers to open the flow of seats as demand requires.

~Pat Hahn

VIRGINIA

Pete, here in VA we are experiencing the same as the other states. We had wait times 2 to 3 months in past years and that was too long. I believe that 4 to 6 weeks is long but acceptable.

~Bruce Biondo

MICHIGAN

Here in Michigan the wait for a training in grant funded courses can be as much as 6 weeks at peak times. Our 13 grant funded training sponsor all have work around practices for keeping the empty seats which can result, filled. Training offered by our 19 private sponsors is always available within a week, two at the most.

~Joe Kelly

MARYLAND

An amusing anecdote about wait times. During our heyday in 2008 we had wait times that were 2 - 3 months. As our capacity grew and enrollment decreased

we were able to get folks in a class within a couple of weeks. But still we heard that classes are full and there is a waiting list.

What we discovered is that if a customer could not get into the class he/she wanted there was a wait list even if one didn't exist. BTW, we have never maintained a waiting list as they are too hard to manage.

Also at one point we did standby on a first come-first served basis. It reminded me of the days of waiting in line outside of the Hecht Company to buy concert tickets (for you youngsters that was pre-Internet). We'd have folks lined up at the door to the MVA before dawn.

One day I came in and folks were waiting in the cafeteria. One person said to me, "You've got a problem. There are two waiting lists." I responded, very nicely, "Ah, I don't have a problem, you do. When I come back in an hour you will have one list." They did.

Since that didn't work we went to a standby lottery system. Ping pongs balls with numbers, drawing cards, etc.

~Phil Sause