

the NEW TRIER NEWS



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Cancelled classes complicate student scheduling

Thirty-two classes cancelled for 2019-2020 due to low enrollment

by Nadia Jaikaran

As the end of the school year approaches, many classes that students at NT had already signed up for have been dropped or cancelled.

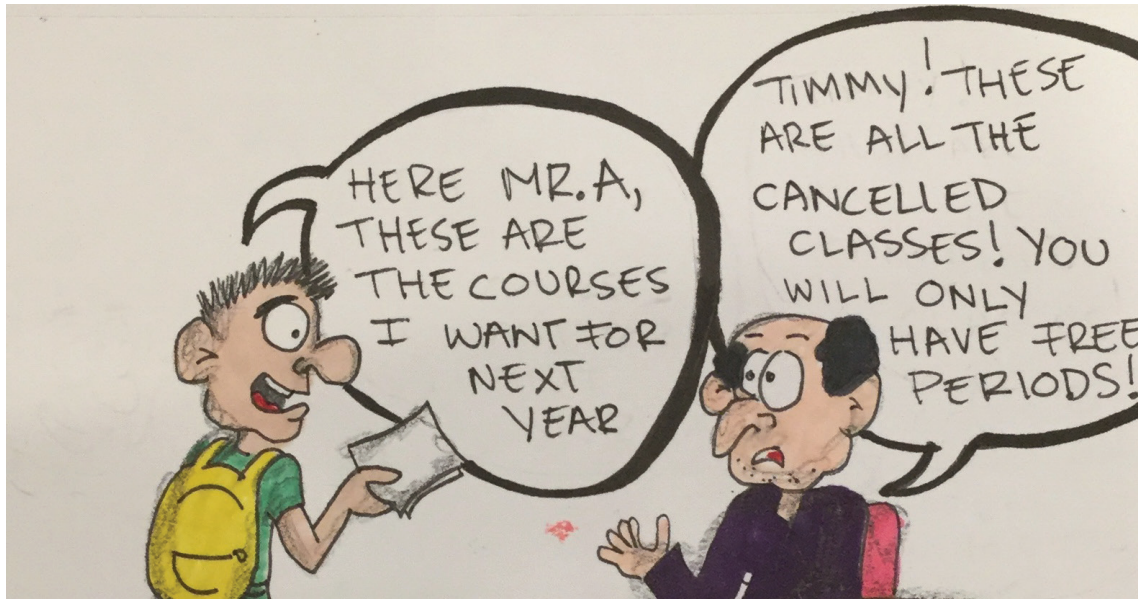
In total, 32 classes that were initially listed in the program of studies are no longer being offered for the 2019-2020 school year.

Many of these courses haven't run in a long time or only end up running every few years, including the Freshmen Intro to Journalism Class, Global Voices, Topics in International Relations, and Consumer Math. But others like Early Bird AP Physics and Yoga and Self Defense are a little more surprising for students.

Junior Lulu McShane said, "I was planning on taking Early Bird AP Physics, but I was told not enough people signed up for the class. It would have allowed me to take an extra class and still have a lunch period."

As a result of its cancellation, McShane consulted with her adviser to help fit regular AP physics into her schedule while having enough room to take all the classes she wanted to.

"[My advisor and I] decided to move my physical education class to an Early Bird class." Expressing gratitude to be able to fit one of her



favorite classes in for next year, McShane added, "We are very lucky at New Trier to be able to take such a variety of classes and to learn about stuff you are truly passionate about."

The main reason why classes are usually canceled is because not enough students sign up.

According to Assistant Principal for Administrative Services Michael Lee, "As an administration, we have to be good stewards of the resources given to us by the Board of Education and by the community. If we run a class of five students, that means one full-time teacher would be teaching a small class, and obviously that's a great scenario, but that means if we did that for every class that was in that situation [of not having enough students], we'd end up hiring 20

more teachers. That's when in terms of being good stewards of taxpayers' dollars and our resources we just simply can't be doing that."

Junior Ellie McGregor had also signed up for the cancelled Early Bird AP Physics class. And like most students who signed up for dropped classes, she had to make sacrifices to her schedule in order to make it work.

"I switched my schedule and now I'm taking Early Bird AP Biology," she said.

Science Department Chair Jason English confirmed that the cause of cancellation for these classes was low enrollment. "Both of these were closed due to insufficient enrollment in the course and section. [However], two sections of AP Physics 1&2

remain open for the 2019-2020 school year," said English.

Four of the 32 classes cancelled were early bird classes, including the aforementioned physics class, KW Team Block, and KW Leaders.

This conflict between students' ambitions for the optimally maximized schedule and the realities of a scheduling system that can't fulfill everyone's desires isn't uncommon or new.

Junior Chloe Moslener signed up for AP European History last year before it was cancelled and she instead had to take AP Government and Politics.

"While I ended up enjoying [AP Government and Politics] a lot, I was really looking forward to taking AP European History. This

year I enrolled again, and I'm hoping it doesn't get cancelled again, but it most likely will be due to many of my peers signing up for AP Government and Politics because it fulfills the civics requirement while AP European History does not."

So far the AP Euro Class isn't included in to the list of cancelled classes, so it should be running next year.

About 22 percent of the classes cancelled were in the Applied Arts category, which includes classes like Human Growth and Child Development, Intro to Design Technology, and Fashion Construction.

Lee explained the process of notifying a student about a cancelled course, "A staff member from my office will notify the adviser to tell their students in the advisery that the classes they registered for got cancelled. The adviser would then share the recommended courses the Department Chair chooses."

Since cancelled courses have ignited frustration among students, advisers try their hardest to compensate for cancelled courses and re-arrange schedules to get the necessary graduation requirements in.

While certain courses have been cancelled for the upcoming school year, it doesn't always mean they are gone forever. Most of the time, it just has to do with student interest and if enough students register for a course in that given year.

What it's like to be a minority at an 83.3% white school

Students of color share experiences within a notoriously homogenous school

by Ghousia Anwar

Every high school student has a unique experience, especially people of color (POC) in a predominantly white school.

It can be difficult for POC students to fit in and find their place at a school like New Trier where 83.3% of the student body is white.

Xariah Chase, a junior African American student, described how she was made aware of her race.

"I get glances like, 'Woah who's that girl? I never knew someone like her could exist at a school like this,'" said Chase.

While Chase understands that certain things like race can't be changed, she also believes that many POC students have become accustomed to strange behavior directed towards them.

"I'm always going to be a black student in a white school," stated Chase "We kind of become immune, which is sad to say and it shouldn't be challenging for you to be who you are."

Many POC students have been called derogatory names because of their ethnicities.

Junior Tala Talamantes said,

"I've been called illegal and wetback due to my color because I'm Mexican."

She said she had been discriminated against and expressed the difficulties of being a minority.

Nylah Jones, a sophomore who is African American, experienced similar situations where she was called racial slurs.

"I've been called crude names," said Jones. "Last year this kid called me the n-word."

Being singled out by her peers because of her hairstyle has made her feel uncomfortable.

"I had braids in the beginning of the year and people would ask, 'can I touch your hair,' but they wouldn't ask other students," said Jones.

She has questioned her self-belonging because of the behavior of some students.

"I remember students asking me how to cook chicken out of all the kids in the class," stated Jones adding that "It makes me feel unwelcome."

Sophomore Aaron Matthew Lariosa, an Asian American, believes that while ignorance is why people are racist, the topic of race itself is sensitive.

"People are ignorant in a way," stated Lariosa. "The topic [of race] is really touchy."

Sydney Gaines Wheeler, a junior who has African American, Indian and White ancestry describes how the expectations of a New Trier student impacts her as a POC student.

"I feel like going to a school like



Nylah Jones spoke of alienating microaggressions she's experienced | Towers

New Trier, there is automatically a stereotype that everyone is in all AP's and rich, but that's just not true. As a POC, you walk on eggshells and I sometimes feel like if I don't do well on an assignment I could get even more judgement," said Wheeler.

Like Talamantes and Jones who have been singled out and called racial slurs, Wheeler also feels the pressure of being both an NT student and also a POC student.

"I've been [called] the n-word on multiple occasions. One time a

friend did it as a joke and they even whispered it so it was as if they knew they shouldn't say it but they said it anyway," recalled Wheeler.

Students who are ethnic minorities are often left feeling alienated because of their physical appearance.

"In the musical [The Addams Family] I have to play a dead character and I might have to wear 'white face' to look dead," said Wheeler, "It feels odd and uncomfortable."

Despite struggling to fit in,

many POC students appreciate their teachers and advisers for helping them and treating them equally.

"I do notice that most of my teachers are willing to really help when I struggle and they don't necessarily put me aside," said Talamantes.

Advisers and teachers are trying to educate students regarding race to provide a safer atmosphere for POC students.

"Here at New Trier, our advisers and teachers are telling us to get more aware with current social problems, especially relating to race," said Lariosa.

POC students struggle like any other student to fit in and find their place; they just deal with a lot more along the way than a typical high school student.

"Everyone, especially in an area like this, needs to be more aware of equality and recognition for students of color," said Chase.

A lively member of our NT News class and a part of our greater New Trier community, Ghousia Anwar channeled her compassion and enthusiasm for social action through her writing. We hope to honor that spirit by publishing these two articles written by her as a way of sharing her voice, the issues she cared about, and the impact she's had on our community. We commit to continuing our work in this spirit.