

# **DRAFT**

## **Los Angeles City College Office of Special Services**

### **Policy for Course Substitutions**

#### Rationale for Requesting Course Substitutions

Los Angeles City College recognizes most students with disabilities can be successful in all subject areas by adjusting the method of course delivery and utilizing a combination of appropriate accommodations. The College also acknowledges some students face barriers achieving a particular graduation requirement because of a disability that interferes with attaining proficiency in a specific academic area. For example, a student with a specific learning disability in math is unable to achieve the level of advanced math required for graduation. If a student with a disability, who is otherwise qualified, deems accommodations and adjustments will not be sufficient for the successful completion of a specific course, the student may request an alteration in the graduation or certificate requirement as an accommodation for the disability.

In considering a request for adjustment of graduation requirements, OSS recommends the consideration of course substitutions. Course substitutions are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation 1973, and Title 5 of the California Administrative Code. Course substitutions must maintain the academic integrity of LACC's degree programs by requiring students to demonstrate skills equivalent to the course in question. Any course substitution provided to a student should guarantee that any grade assigned is based on the student's ability to demonstrate comparable concept mastery. The student must be aware that a subsequent educational institution may not recognize the course substitution.

A course substitution is an alternative method of meeting the graduation or certificate requirement at LACC. Requests for substitution or waiver of program requirements not established by LACC should be addressed directly to the transferring institution or licensing agency where they were established.

## Substitution Petition

The petition request packet is the student's responsibility and must include the following:  
(Please attach pages A and B to the front of your packet). (Please Print):

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ SID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Major \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am requesting a course substitution as an accommodation for my:

Check one             Degree Requirement             Certificate Requirement

2. I have read and understand the rationale, criteria, and procedures for requesting a course substitution.

3. I have provided all information required in the Substitution Request Petition.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

### *Office Use Only*

*A complete course substitution request packet was received from the student on:*

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_ *OSS Administrator Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Checklist for Course Substitution Request

The petition request packet is the student's responsibility and must include the following:  
(Please attach pages A and B to the front of your packet).

- A. A letter requesting a course substitution as an accommodation for the functional limitation(s) caused by the documented disability. The letter must include the following:
  - 1. Description of educational limitations in the academic area under discussion.
  - 2. Identification and explanation of past performance in the courses taken for the academic area under discussion (see criteria 2)
  - 3. A description of how an earnest and reasonable effort was made to meet the requirement under discussion and include a description of accommodations utilized, (see criteria 3)
- B. Attachments to the letter:
  - 1. Form from OSS Learning Disabilities Specialist:
    - a. Verifying the disability (see criteria 1)
    - b. Indicating specific functional limitations in the academic area under discussion (see criteria 1) and
    - c. Verification of usage of all appropriate and available accommodations and services. Example: Show how all appropriate and available accommodations have been used, how often they have been used, and how successfully they have been used, (see criteria 3)
  - 2. Forms from academic counselor:
    - a. Copy of an unofficial transcript (see criteria 4)
    - b. An updated Student Education Plan showing successful completion of all other course work required for degree or certificate (see criteria 4)
    - c. A graduation evaluation for plan A, plan B or certificate ( see criteria 4)
    - d. Copy of LACC catalogue of major requirements showing course in question is peripheral to student's major, (see criteria 5)
  - 3. Any additional supporting information that may further support the petition request.
- C. Turn in completed packet to the OSS Dean.

## Procedure for Processing Course Substitution Request

### Procedures for student submission:

1. Meet with a counselor to evaluate and explore reasonable options for successful completion of the degree requirements. (Student Educational Plan)
2. File a Course Substitution Petition requesting a graduation requirement accommodation if the student believes he/she cannot successfully complete a degree requirement because of a functional limitation resulting from a verified disability and in spite of receiving appropriate accommodations.
3. Submit a Course Substitution Request Form with a completed packet to the Dean of OSS (See checklist)
  - The packet must include the following:
    - Letter (written by student) addressing the six criteria (See Criteria), a copy of a current unofficial transcript and Student Educational Plan showing successful completion of course work required for graduation.
    - Documentation supporting the six criteria (See checklist)
4. Submit the completed petition packet at least 1 semester prior to the semester in which student plans to file for graduation.

### Procedures for petition review

5. The Accommodations Review Committee will be comprised of the following individuals:
  - An OSS representative
  - The Department Chair or designee for the course in question
  - The Department Chair or designee of the student's major/course of study
  - The student's academic counselor
  - The Dean of OSS (will only vote to break a tie).
  - The appropriate Dean of Academic Affairs
6. Within 20 working days from receiving the completed packet, the Dean of OSS will convene a meeting of the Accommodations Review Committee.
  - The Committee will review all evidence presented in the packet.
  - The student or advocate has the right to present other evidence but only as it relates to the case.
  - The committee's decision will be determined by a majority vote. The OSS Dean will only vote to break a tie.
7. The committee will forward its written recommendation within 5 working days to the student and to the Office of Admissions.
  - The recommendation will then follow the approved process for graduation
  - If the student is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may follow the college administrative procedures for academic accommodation grievances.
  - The appeal must be received within 10 working days from receipt of the committee's decision

#### Note:

- Incomplete petitions will be returned to students.
- Any course substitution provided to a student should guarantee that any grade assigned is based on the student's ability to demonstrate comparable concept mastery to that of other students enrolled in the course being replaced.
- If the substituted course is required for transfer and the student plans to transfer, the student is responsible for contacting the transferring institution regarding the acceptability of the substitution.
- The student must be aware the subsequent educational institution may not recognize the course substitution.

## Criteria for Evaluating Requests for Course Substitution

The following six critical factors are considered by The Accommodations Review Committee when responding to a student's request:

1. Comprehensive documentation of disability and description of functional limitations in the academic area under discussion.
2. Evidence and explanation of past performance in academic area under discussion.
3. Evidence of an earnest and reasonable effort to meet the requirement, unless documentation definitively predicts the student would not be successful in the course in question, (Based on May 1997 ruling by U.S. Department of Education, San Francisco Office of Civil Rights). Earnest and reasonable includes:
  - regular attendance
  - the completion of all course assignments
  - use of all appropriate and available accommodations and services such as extended time on tests, special tutoring or assistive technology
4. Evidence the student is otherwise qualified by showing success in completed coursework in all other areas required for the degree or to transfer.
5. Evidence the course in question is peripheral to the students major, transfer goals, and employment goals. In addition, evidence the student will not require further classes or training in the specified subject area.
6. Evidence the request would not require a fundamental alteration to an essential component of an academic requirement.

## **Federal and State Laws and Regulations to Provide Academic Adjustments**

The California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 56027, (5 CCR56027) mandates that:

"Each community college district receiving funding... shall establish a policy and procedure for responding to, in a timely manner... accommodation requests involving academic adjustments. This procedure shall provide for an individualized review of each request. The procedure shall also permit the Section 504 Coordinator, or other designated district official with knowledge of accommodations requirements, to make an interim decision pending a final resolution".

Additionally, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act provides the following pertinent regulations:

No qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity or be subjected to discrimination by any public entity. {28CFR35.130(a)}.

{An institution}... must make such modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability... Modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for the completion of degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses are conducted {34CFR104.44(a)}.

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (PL 101-336) (ADA) specifies that a public agency may not, directly or indirectly...

1. Deny opportunities to persons with disabilities to participate in or benefit from any aid, benefit or service. {28CFR35.130(b)(1)(i)}
2. Deny persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate as members of planning or advisory boards. {28CFR35.130(b)(1)(vi)}
3. Deny persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate in programs, services or activities that are separate or different from those offered others, even if the agency offers permissibly separate or different activities, {28CFR35.130(b)(2)}
4. Make selections, in determining the location of facilities that have the effect of excluding or discriminating against persons with disabilities {28CFR35.130 (b)(4)(i)}

Under ADA {28CFR35.130(b)(7)}, a public entity must make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability. Unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

Forms created at LACC by:  
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# Accommodation Review Committee Meeting

Date of Committee meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Summary Comments:

Committee Decision:

Substitution Approved

\_\_\_\_\_ substituted for \_\_\_\_\_ as an accommodation for functional limitation

Substitution Not Approved  Reason \_\_\_\_\_

## Committee Members

Dean, Student Services /Equity (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair for major (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Counseling Dept. Chair (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Dept. Chair of course discipline (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

OSS Specialist (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Counselor (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Student Services/Admissions (print name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_

***The Committee's written decision was forward to the student and Admissions Office on: \_\_\_\_\_***