

## COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS & COURSE WAIVERS

### I. Policy Section

7.0 Instruction

### II. Policy Subsection

7.19 Course Substitutions and Course Waivers Policy

### III. Policy Statement

**Course Substitutions**—A course substitution allows students to use an alternative course to meet a program requirement.

- Course substitutions are made in the context of the program requirements.
- Course substitutions must maintain the integrity of the program.
- Substituted courses provide a learning experience that is significantly similar to the required course.
- Students who are granted substitutions must still earn the total credit hours required for their academic program.

**Course Waivers**—A course waiver allows students to graduate without completing a graduation requirement or a program requirement.

- Course waivers are made in the context of the program requirements.
- Course waivers must maintain the integrity of the program.
- Students who are granted waivers must still earn the total credit hours required for their academic program.

### IV. Reason for the Policy

- Need for standards and criteria that are consistent across the College in order to ensure the integrity of GRCC degrees.
- Need to ensure that GRCC students, at the time of graduation, have the skills and knowledge they need for work or transfer.
- Need to meet Higher Learning Commissions (HLC) core components.

### V. Entities Affected by this Policy

GRCC Students  
Department Heads/Program Directors  
Academic Administration

Registrar's Office  
Academic Advising & Transfer Center  
TRIO Student Support Services  
Occupational Support Services  
Disability Support Services  
Faculty/Staff

VI. Who Should Read this Policy

GRCC Students  
Department Heads/Program Directors  
Academic Administration  
Registrar's Office  
Academic Advising & Transfer Center  
Faculty/Staff

VII. Related Documents

- A. 7.20 Graduation Requirements Policy
- B. 8.5 Catalog Year Policy
- C. 8.26 Multiple Degrees Policy
- D. 8.31 Minimum Institutional Credit Policy
- E. GRCC Catalog
- F. Petition for Exception to College Graduation Requirements
- G. Course Substitutions and Course Waivers FAQs
- H. Course Substitutions and Course Waivers Process Flow Charts

VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: Registrar's Office  
Associate Deans  
Department Head/Program Directors  
Dean of Instructional Support

IX. Definitions

Course Substitution—A course substitution allows students to use an alternative course to meet a program requirement.

Course Waiver—A course waiver allows students to graduate without completing a graduation requirement or a program requirement.

X. Procedures

- A. Guidelines and Procedures for Course Substitutions
  - 1. Students are encouraged to meet with their program faculty member/advisor regarding course substitution requests.
  - 2. Course substitution requests are submitted using the Course

Substitution Request Form on the GRCC website.

3. All institutional graduation requirement waivers must be approved by the Provost or her/his designee. Department course substitutions are first approved by the DH/PD of the student's declared program. This approval is followed by the School Associate Dean's approval. If the request is for a general education course, then the Dean of Instructional Support makes the final approval.
4. A course may only be used once as a substitution for each program.
5. Program requirements for minimum course grades must be met. If no program grade requirements are specified, the GRCC institutional grading policy applies.
6. Substitutions can only be made if the program learning outcomes are maintained.
7. Substitutions can only be granted using GRCC courses or evaluated transfer courses.
8. If a substitution is requested for a particular general education distribution course, another course in that distribution category may be substituted if the program learning outcomes can still be achieved.
9. All course substitutions requested for articulated programs must also be approved by the articulated transfer institution.
10. When advising, faculty members are encouraged to work with students to determine any impact regarding course transferability when requesting a course substitution.
11. The final deadline for substitution approvals is the last day of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.
12. One (1) course may be substituted per certificate.
13. Three (3) courses may be substituted per degree.
14. Requests for exceptions to the maximum number of course substitution(s) allowed per program as noted above can be submitted using the Petition for Exception to College Graduation Requirements form available from the Registrar's Office.

**B. Guidelines and Procedures for Course Waivers**

1. Students are encouraged to meet with their program faculty member/advisor regarding course waiver requests.
2. Course waiver requests are submitted using the Course Waiver Request Form on the GRCC website.
3. All institutional graduation requirement waivers must be approved by the Provost or her/his designee. Department course waivers are first approved by the DH/PD of the student's declared program. This approval is followed by the School Associate Dean's approval. If the request is for a general education course, then the Dean of Instructional Support makes the final approval.
4. Program requirements for minimum course grades must be met. If no program grade requirements are specified, the GRCC institutional grading policy applies.
5. Waivers can only be made if the program learning outcomes are

maintained.

6. All course waivers requested for articulated programs must also be approved by the articulated transfer institution.
7. When advising, faculty members are encouraged to work with students to determine any impact regarding course transferability when requesting a course waiver.
8. The final deadline for waiver approvals is the last day of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.
9. One (1) course may be waived per certificate.
10. Three (3) courses may be waived per degree.
11. Requests for exceptions to the maximum number of course waiver(s) allowed per program as noted above can be submitted using the Petition for Exception to College Graduation Requirements form available from the Registrar's Office.

XI. Forms

Online Course Substitution Request Form  
Online Course Waiver Request Form

XII. Effective Date

Original Policy: Start of Fall Semester 2016  
Updated Policy: Start of Fall Semester 2021

XIII. Policy History

Approved at AGC on November 10, 2015  
Reviewed by AGC in 2020-21; updated policy approved on February 9, 2021

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

2024-25 Academic Year