

**Name of Change Proposal**

**2.3.13 Course Substitutions -**

Initiating Council:

Joint Instructional Deans Council

Submitting Council:

Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs

Justification for Proposed Changes:

**Background Information:**

(Provide a brief overview of the issue and/or historical information important in considering the change.)

Series of changes to address issues of misunderstanding about what substitutions are and when they can be applied including:

- Providing a definition for course substitutions and acknowledging other methods where a specific course requirement may not be required or met by other means
- Acknowledging that students may have earned a course higher than a requirement that could be an appropriate reason to substitute a lower level course even within the required courses of a transfer pathway
- Removed references to AGECE A,B,S in preparation for sunseting in the new AGECE
- Clarified that program substitutions are approved by the program faculty leadership or designee; other individuals such as deans and VPAs may optionally be included for awareness
- Clarified that substitutions for degree-seeking students should not be considered unless they have earned 15 or more credits at MCCC or another institution, i.e., our default position from the student start on a path is to have students complete curriculum as written unless there is a reason to later deviate
- Provided an option for students to meet to discuss and/or appeal substitutions decisions in a similar manner as other regulations
- Added examples of substitution documentation
- Clarified that substitutions do not expire but may no longer be relevant if a student changes programs or effective terms

Addition of a Course Waiver concept distinct from substitutions which covers circumstances where waivers can apply and impacts to credit requirements for a degree or certificate.

**Supporting Documentation and Rationale for Change:**

(Provide any supporting documentation such as new legislation, legal/statutory or regulatory changes, data, or key findings that would support the need for the change.)

Change is at the request of individual staff and administrators who have asked for clarification of the regulation to support students. Other institutions have distinct waiver and substitution requirements to provide clarity of when these activities can be employed.

**Areas, Councils, or Committees Impacted:**

(List the constituency groups that may be impacted by the proposed change and that reviewed the proposal and provided feedback.)

Council	Distribution List
Accreditation Liaison Officers	dl-alo@memo.maricopa.edu
ASA District Directors	dl-asa-district-directors@domail.maricopa.edu
Center for Curriculum and Transfer Articulation	dl-dssc-ccta@domail.maricopa.edu
Curriculum & Schedulers Council	dl-currtechs@memo.maricopa.edu
Curriculum Development Facilitators	dl-cdfs@memo.maricopa.edu
Department/Division Chairs	Via Deans
Directors of Academic Advisement Council	dl-daac@memo.maricopa.edu
Directors of Admissions and Records Council	dl-dar@memo.maricopa.edu
District Curriculum Committee	dl-dcc@memo.maricopa.edu
Dual Enrollment Council	dl-dssc-dual-enrollment@domail.maricopa.edu
FEC	dl-facexec@memo.maricopa.edu

Financial Aid Managers Council

dl-fam-dir-all@memo.maricopa.edu

**Financial or Budget Implications:**

None

**District Information Technology/Academic and Student Systems Analysis:**

(Working with appropriate DOITS/Academic and Student Systems team to outline any system implications that need to be addressed and the estimated timeline for necessary changes)

None, there are already technical processes to apply course substitutions and waivers.

**Other Considerations:**

Departments and Instructional Councils are encouraged to regularly review course substitutions and waivers to determine if changes to the curriculum are warranted. Substitutions and waivers are intensive for students to pursue and staff to continually process.

**Implementation Impacts:**

- Colleges should have an established business process for course substitutions and waivers, including maintaining documentation of substitutions and waivers. This may alternatively be a district-wide process or form
- Colleges should review existing and/or develop standard course substitution and waiver forms in alignment with the revisions. This may alternatively be a district-wide process or form.
- Colleges should develop an appeal process that is consistent and documented on the substitution and waiver form. This may alternatively be a district-wide process or form.
- Recommendation from members of the Common Pages committee to create a districtwide Standards Committee to review appeals to regulations.

**Recommended Effective Term:**

2025-2026

**Dissemination/Communication:**

(Identify the dissemination/communication needs related to the proposed change)

**Disposition History:**

Date	Status
10.1.2024	Called together initiators and Common Pages committee members facilitating language development
10.15.2024	Sent to initiators and Common Pages committee members facilitating change for feedback before sending to stakeholders.

10.16.2024	Presented to Common Pages Committee
10.28.2024	Sent to Sponsoring Council (VPAA) for feedback
11.13.2024	Sent to stakeholders as identified for feedback

PROPOSED CHANGES:

**2.3.13 Course Substitutions AND WAIVERS**

**A COURSE SUBSTITUTION IS A COURSE THAT TAKES THE PLACE OF A COURSE REQUIREMENT IN A DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE WHEN A CLEAR RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN THE TWO. COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS ARE MADE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS WITH THE INTENT THAT THE INTEGRITY OF THE LEARNING WILL NOT BE COMPROMISED. COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS DIFFER FROM WAIVERS OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OUTLINED IN THE CURRICULUM OR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.**

Course substitutions should only be made in a consistent and transparent manner, according to Administrative Regulation 2.2.4 (Transfer Credit and Prior Learning Assessment Policy (A.R. 2.2.4)), academic policies, and the following guidelines:

Students may seek to have course(s) requirements (including required courses, restricted electives, and prescribed general education requirements) in their declared bachelor's, associate in applied science or certificate program substituted.

Because a substituted course may not be accepted by a transfer institution or meet transfer degree requirements, ~~no~~ course substitutions are **NOT** allowed in any of the required course areas of the **Associate in Arts** or **Associate in Science** degrees **(INCLUDING THE "with emphasis" VERSIONS)**, Associate In Business - Gr, Associate Of Business - Sr, Associate In Arts, Elementary Education, or the

FINAL LANGUAGE APPROVED BY COMMITTEE:

**2.3.13 Course Substitutions and Waivers**

A course substitution is a course that takes the place of a course requirement in a degree or certificate when a clear relationship exists between the two. Course substitutions are made on a case-by-case basis with the intent that the integrity of the learning will not be compromised. course substitutions differ from waivers of program requirements outlined in the curriculum or Prior Learning Assessment activities.

Course substitutions should only be made in a consistent and transparent manner, according to Transfer Credit and Prior Learning Assessment (A.R. 2.2.4), academic policies, and the following guidelines:

Students may seek to have course(s) requirements (including required courses, restricted electives, and prescribed general education requirements) in their declared bachelor's, associate in applied science or certificate program substituted.

Because a substituted course may not be accepted by a transfer institution or meet transfer degree requirements, course substitutions are not allowed in any of the required course areas of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees (including the "with emphasis" versions), Associate In Business - Gr, Associate Of Business - Sr, Associate In Arts, Elementary Education, or the Associate In Arts, Fine Arts with emphasis. Substitutions in the required course areas of these degrees may be considered in limited cases when a student has successfully

Associate In Arts, Fine Arts **WITH EMPHASIS**. **SUBSTITUTIONS IN THE REQUIRED COURSE AREAS OF THESE DEGREES MAY BE CONSIDERED IN LIMITED CASES WHEN A STUDENT HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED A COURSE THAT REQUIRES THE SUBSTITUTED COURSE AS THE PREREQUISITE.**

The course being used as a substitution must meet the **EQUIVALENT** content and/or **RIGOR-spirit** of the substituted course in the student's pathway plan (or for date status petitions by reason of disability). If the pathway course **BEING SUBSTITUTED** satisfies an Arizona General Education Curriculum (**AGEC A, B, or S**) requirement, the ~~course~~ **SUBSTITUTED COURSE** must meet that same requirement. Considerations for substitutions should also include impact to satisfying transfer pathway; **AND** industry requirements. Substituted courses should provide the skills and knowledge specified by the pathway learning outcomes.

Course substitutions should not be processed for **DEGREE-SEEKING** students who have earned fewer than 15 credits (at Maricopa or elsewhere).

To pursue a course substitution, students must obtain a course substitution petition from the Admissions and Records office or Academic Advisor. Substitutions must be approved by the Program Department Chair, Program Division Chair, Academic/Occupational Program Director, or designee **RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**. ~~and the appropriate Instructional Dean~~. The Department Chair, Division Chair, or Academic/Occupational Program Director will work with other departments as needed for courses **WITHIN THE DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE THAT ARE** outside of the discipline. **THE STUDENT MAY ALSO REQUEST TO MEET WITH THE DESIGNATED COLLEGE PERSONNEL TO DISCUSS OR APPEAL A SUBSTITUTION DECISION.**

If the credits of a substituted course are fewer than the original requirement, the missing credit hours

completed a course that requires the substituted course as the prerequisite.

The course being used as a substitution must meet the equivalent content and/or rigor of the substituted course in the student's pathway plan (or for date status petitions by reason of disability). If the pathway course being substituted satisfies an Arizona general education curriculum requirement, the substituted course must meet that same requirement. Considerations for substitutions should also include impact to satisfying transfer pathway; and industry requirements. substituted courses should provide the skills and knowledge specified by the pathway learning outcomes.

Course substitutions should not be processed for degree-seeking students who have earned fewer than 15 credits (at Maricopa or elsewhere).

To pursue a course substitution, students must obtain a course substitution petition from the Admissions and Records office or Academic Advisor. Substitutions must be approved by the Program Department Chair, Program Division Chair, Academic/Occupational Program Director, or designee responsible for the degree or certificate program. The Department Chair, Division Chair, or Academic/Occupational Program Director will work with other departments as needed for courses within the degree or certificate that are outside of the discipline. The student may also request to meet with the designated college personnel to discuss or appeal a substitution decision.

If the credits of a substituted course are fewer than the original requirement, the missing credit hours are not granted by a substitution. Students must complete the minimum credit hours required by the award. Refer to General Graduation Requirements (A.R. 2.3.9) Regarding exceptions/appeals to minimum credit hours to meet graduation requirements.

Students are encouraged to seek substitutions prior to enrollment in an intended substitute course, but can be reviewed and determined as a part of the graduation process if the substitute course has already been taken. Requests for course substitutions

are not granted by a substitution. Students must complete the minimum credit hours required by the award. **REFER TO GENERAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (A.R. 2.3.9) REGARDING EXCEPTIONS/APPEALS TO MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS TO MEET GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.**

Students are encouraged to seek substitutions prior to enrollment in an intended substitute course, **BUT SUBSTITUTES CAN BE REVIEWED AND DETERMINED AS A PART OF THE GRADUATION PROCESS IF THE SUBSTITUTE COURSE HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN.** Requests for course substitutions and supporting documentation (**E.G. TRANSCRIPTS, COURSE OUTLINES/SYLLABI, CATALOG DESCRIPTIONS OF THE REQUESTED COURSE, ETC.**) should be submitted as soon as possible when transcripts are reviewed. For assistance, students should meet with an Academic Advisor specific to the declared transfer emphasis. Students seeking Title IV financial aid and veteran benefits for a course substitution must have the substitution approved and processed prior to registering for the substitute course.

**COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS DO NOT EXPIRE BUT MAY NO LONGER BE APPLICABLE IF A STUDENT CHANGES ACADEMIC PLANS OR CATALOG YEARS.**

### **COURSE WAIVERS**

**A COURSE WAIVER IS AN EXEMPTION FROM A COURSE WITHIN THE PROGRAM BECAUSE THE COMPETENCIES OF THE COURSE HAVE ALREADY BEEN ATTAINED DUE TO PRIOR TRAINING, EDUCATION, OR WORK EXPERIENCE BUT FOR WHICH PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA) IS NOT APPLICABLE. A DEMONSTRATION OF THESE COMPETENCIES BY THE STUDENT WILL BE REQUIRED AS PART OF A WAIVER REQUEST PROCESS. A COURSE WAIVER MUST HAVE**

and supporting documentation (e.g. transcripts, course outlines/syllabi, catalog descriptions of the requested course, etc.) should be submitted as soon as possible when transcripts are reviewed. For assistance, students should meet with an Academic Advisor specific to the declared transfer emphasis. Students seeking Title IV financial aid and veteran benefits for a course substitution must have the substitution approved and processed prior to registering for the substitute course.

Course substitutions do not expire but may no longer be applicable if a student changes academic plans or catalog years.

### **Course Waivers**

A course waiver is an exemption from a course within the program because the competencies of the course have already been attained due to prior training, education, or work experience but for which prior learning assessment (pla) is not applicable. A demonstration of these competencies by the student will be required as part of a waiver request process. A course waiver must have prior written approval of the program director, department/division chair, or designee who has oversight for the degree or certificate and/or in the cases of general education the disciplinary subject matter expert. Documentation of rationale and approval must be included as part of the waiver request process.

Course waivers do not require the student to make up the deficient credit(s). However, there are limits to the number of credits that can be waived in a program. Waivers may not drop a student's required credits under 60 hours for an associate degree. The amount of credit earned toward the program requirements are 120 for bachelor's degrees and 60 for associate degrees. No more than 10% of the minimum required number of credits within a certificate of completion credits can be waived.

PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT/DIVISION CHAIR, OR DESIGNEE WHO HAS OVERSIGHT FOR THE DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE AND/OR IN THE CASES OF GENERAL EDUCATION THE DISCIPLINARY SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT. DOCUMENTATION OF RATIONALE AND APPROVAL MUST BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE WAIVER REQUEST PROCESS.

COURSE WAIVERS DO NOT REQUIRE THE STUDENT TO MAKE UP THE DEFICIENT CREDIT(S). HOWEVER, THERE ARE LIMITS TO THE NUMBER OF CREDITS THAT CAN BE WAIVED IN A PROGRAM. WAIVERS MAY NOT DROP A STUDENT'S REQUIRED CREDITS UNDER 60 HOURS FOR AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE. THE AMOUNT OF CREDIT EARNED TOWARD THE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS ARE 120 FOR BACHELOR'S DEGREES AND 60 FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREES. NO MORE THAN 10% OF THE MINIMUM REQUIRED NUMBER OF CREDITS WITHIN A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION CREDITS CAN BE WAIVED.

BECAUSE A WAIVER MAY NOT BE ACCEPTED BY A TRANSFER INSTITUTION OR MEET TRANSFER DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, COURSE WAIVERS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE ASSOCIATE IN ARTS OR ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE DEGREES (INCLUDING THE "WITH EMPHASIS" VERSIONS), ASSOCIATE IN BUSINESS - GR, ASSOCIATE OF BUSINESS - SR, ASSOCIATE IN ARTS, ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, OR THE ASSOCIATE IN ARTS, FINE ARTS WITH EMPHASIS.

See also,

Administrative Regulation [3.5 Course Substitution for Students With Documented Disabilities](#).

Because a waiver may not be accepted by a transfer institution or meet transfer degree requirements, course waivers are not allowed in the associate in arts or associate in science degrees (including the "with emphasis" versions), Associate In Business - Gr, Associate Of Business - Sr, Associate In Arts, Elementary Education, or The Associate In Arts, Fine Arts With Emphasis.

See also,

Administrative Regulation [3.5 Course Substitution for Students With Documented Disabilities](#).

Administrative Regulation [2.2.4 Credit For Prior Learning](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION [2.3.9 General Graduation Requirements](#)

AMENDED through the Administrative Regulation Process, June 12, 2023

ADOPTED through the Administrative Regulation Process, June 24, 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION 2.2.4 CREDIT  
FOR PRIOR LEARNING

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION 2.3.9 GENERAL  
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

**AMENDED through the Administrative  
Regulation Process, June 12, 2023**

**ADOPTED through the Administrative  
Regulation Process, June 24, 2021**