

NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE
Policy Number 6Hx17-3.12

TITLE	Course Substitutions for Students With Disabilities
REFERENCE	FS 1007.264
HISTORY	New Policy, Local Language, March, 2000; Revised 6/04

Northwest Florida State College recognizes that certain disabilities may preclude a student from successfully completing a specific course requirement for a degree even with appropriate accommodations. NWFSC recognizes its obligation to accommodate students with disabilities without compromising the integrity of the academic program, therefore, in accordance with State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.041 the following policies and procedures are established for providing reasonable course substitutions for eligible students with disabilities as required by Sections 1007.264, Florida Statutes.

Students seeking a course substitution shall present appropriate documentation to the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs. This documentation needs “to substantiate that the disability can be reasonably expected to prevent the individual from meeting requirements for admissions to the institution, admissions to a program of study, or graduation.” For purposes of this rule, the following definitions shall apply:

A. **Hearing Impairment.** A hearing loss of thirty (30) decibels or greater, pure tone average of 500, 1000, 2000Hz, ANSI, unaided, in the better ear. Examples include, but are not limited to, conductive hearing impairment, high or low tone hearing loss, sensorineural hearing impairment, acoustic trauma hearing loss, or deafness.

B. **Visual Impairment.** Disorders in the structure and function of the eye as manifested by at least one of the following: visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after the best possible correction, peripheral field so constricted that it affects one’s ability to function in an educational setting, or a progressive loss of vision which may affect one’s ability to function in an educational setting. Examples include, but are not limited to, cataracts, glaucoma, nystagmus, retinal detachment, retinitis pigmentosa, and strabismus.

C. **Specific Learning Disability.** A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological or neurological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. Disorders may be manifested in listening, thinking, reading, writing, spelling, or performing arithmetic calculations. Examples include dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysphasia, dyscalculia and other specific learning disabilities in the basic psychological or neurological processes. Such disorders do not include learning problems which are due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, to mental retardation, to emotional disturbance, or to an environmental deprivation.

Students will be informed of services for students with disabilities through the college catalog and handbook, the orientation program, academic advisement, and printed materials available through Student Services.

Requests for substitutions for a particular course or program are considered only when a qualified student with a disability has demonstrated that, even with academic accommodations and services, he or she is unable to successfully complete the course solely because of their disability. However, if the verification of disability supports a substitution without attempting the course, an exception may be granted by the Vice President for Instruction, after consultation with the Coordinator for Services to Students with Special Needs and the appropriate division director/department chair. A student may appeal the denial of a substitution in these circumstances to the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee. The decision of the committee will be final.

The College Curriculum Committee, upon recommendation from the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special needs and the appropriate Division Director/Department Chairs, shall establish a list of pre-approved courses for use as a guideline in selecting appropriate course substitutions for qualified students. The list shall be kept on file in the Office of the vice President for Instruction. The Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs may determine appropriate substitutions from the list, consulting with the Division Director/Department Chair as needed. Substitutions made under these circumstances do not need additional approval. A student may appeal the denial of a substitution in these circumstances to the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee. The decision of the committee will be final.

Course substitutions will not necessarily be limited to the pre-approved list as most disabilities are unique and require individualized plans. If a substitution is requested which involves courses not on the approved list, the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs will consult with the appropriate Division Director/Department Chair and/or the Vice President for Instruction regarding reasonable alternatives. The Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs will have the responsibility of making the substitution decision known to the affected student(s). A student may appeal the denial of a substitution in these circumstances to the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee. The decision of the committee will be final.

Members of the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee will include the Chair of the Communications Department, the Chair of the Mathematics Department, the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs and the Coordinator of Testing. Students may appeal to the Vice-President for Instruction when the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee denies a substitution or rules that the student is ineligible to be granted a substitution.

Northwest Florida State College will honor substitutions granted by other state post-secondary institutions in the State of Florida. If a student who has been granted a course substitution transfers to a state post secondary institution prior to earning the AA degree, the Coordinator of Services with Special Needs will contact the transfer institution to

determine whether the substitution will be honored. The student will be advised accordingly.

Records on the number of students granted course substitutions will be kept by the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs and will include: type of disability, the substitutions provided, the substitutions identified as available for each documented disability, and the number of requests for substitutions which were denied. Records on the number of students granted substitutions through appeal to the CLAST Waiver/ Course Substitution committee will be kept by the Office of the Vice-President for Instruction.

Procedures for Requesting a Course Substitution Based on a Disability

A student requesting a course substitution must make an appointment with the Coordinator of Services to Students with Special Needs at the Niceville Campus. The Coordinator will review the student's documentation of disability and determine if the documentation is appropriate. The student will then complete a Course Substitution Application.

If the request for a course substitution is denied, the student will be given a written explanation of the reasons. In the event that the student would want to appeal a course substitution decision, he/she would then apply for that appeal through the CLAST Waiver/Course Substitution Committee. The decision of the committee will be final.

7/99; revised draft 2/18/00; revised 3/8/00; revised 6/04