

Subject: Course Substitutions and Waivers

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the college’s approach in evaluating and approving course substitution and waiver requests.

2. Policy

When applicable, TCC shall award course substitution credit and waive course credit as determined by qualified faculty at the college. Substitution and waiver requests shall be reviewed and awarded according to procedures and standards approved by those qualified faculty, ensuring procedures are appropriate for the credit awarded or waived. Credit is awarded or waived when it applies to the student’s specified curriculum and does not apply to other curricula.

3. Responsibilities

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer shall be responsible for developing and maintaining procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with applicable policies and procedures of the Virginia Community College System. The Vice President for Information Systems shall be

responsible for developing and maintaining technology applications in support of this policy.

4. Procedures

The following procedures outline TCC's evaluation and awarding of substitution and waiver credit.

4.1. Responsibility of Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee shall review the Course Substitutions and Waivers policy and procedures annually, and recommend changes to the Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer ("Vice President") for review and approval.

4.2. Student Initiation

Requests by students will be made through submission of the *Petition for Course Substitution or Waiver* form ([published on TCC Forms & Publications](#)) along with supporting documentation (e.g., unofficial transcript, course description) to a college counselor or advisor. A current copy of the student's academic advisement report reflecting the student's official program plan and catalog year within the Student Information System (SIS) must accompany the petition. Petitions for students planning to graduate during the semester the substitution or waiver request is made shall be submitted at least 30 days prior to the last day of classes for that semester. Students seeking a course substitution or waiver due to documented disabilities must contact a campus educational accessibility office to determine if additional documentation is necessary. Students seeking financial assistance for a TCC course substitution must have the substitution approved and processed prior to registering for the substitute course.

4.2.1. The counselor or advisor shall review the student's petition with respect to the student's program plan, catalog year, and future educational or career goals. The review shall also ensure appropriateness and compliance with VCCS Policy 5.1 and TCC policy and procedures, to include criteria for the college's general education courses as contained in the TCC Curriculum Procedures Handbook, when applicable.

4.2.2. When substitution or waiver requests are determined to merit further consideration, the counselor or advisor shall complete the *Petition for Course Substitution or Waiver* indicating their support, attach all required and supporting documentation, and route it to the appropriate academic dean/director (or dean of student services for SDV 100 or SDV 108 requests) within five working days of receiving a request.

Substitution or waiver requests that the counselor or advisor does not believe warrant further consideration shall be indicated on the form and submitted to the Office of the College Registrar along with the supporting documentation within five working days of receiving a request. The Office of the College Registrar shall send the student a copy of the decision and

scan the petition with documentation into ImageNow within five working days of receipt.

- 4.2.3. Students wishing to appeal the counselor's or advisor's decision may do so by submitting the initial request along with supporting documentation to the appropriate academic dean/director of the respective program (or dean of student services for SDV 100 or SDV 108 requests). The student shall attach rationale to the request explaining the appeal request and provide any additional information that may be helpful in rendering a decision.

4.3. Review by Qualified Full-time Faculty and Academic Dean/Director

- 4.3.1. The appropriate academic dean/director shall review the student's completed petition (or petition appeal per 4.2.3) in consultation with qualified faculty. The review shall determine if the requested substitution or waiver is appropriate given the student's program plan, catalog year, and future educational or career goals. VCCS Policy 5.1 and TCC policy and procedures, to include criteria for general education courses as contained in the TCC Curriculum Procedures Handbook, shall also be considered. Course learning outcomes for each petitioned course waiver must be compared with the documented knowledge and skills attained by the student. A course successfully completed at TCC or another regionally accredited college or university, and petitioned for substitution, shall be reviewed for alignment with the content and/or spirit of the required course in a student's program plan.
- 4.3.2. Petitions for substitutions by individuals who, by reason of a disability, are unable to complete a requirement of the program pursued by the student, with or without reasonable accommodations, must be reviewed by the appropriate academic dean/director in consultation with educational accessibility faculty/staff. Pursuant to VCCS Policy 5.6.5.0.1, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504 as amended), the student's learning history, recent documentation of a disability that impairs performance in the course petitioned, and the nature and severity of the documented disability shall also be considered when rendering a decision. If the petitioned course is deemed essential to the student's program plan, future educational or career goals, or related to licensing requirements, under no circumstances will the petition be approved. Further, a substitution is permissible only if the student is unable to complete the course with all applicable accommodations. When deemed that a substitution is a reasonable accommodation, the course to be substituted may only be approved by the appropriate academic dean/director, in consultation with qualified teaching faculty, for the original requirement.
- 4.3.3. In accordance with VCCS Policy 5.6.5.0.0, the physical education requirements for the degree, diploma and certificate programs may be waived for veterans, and the college may grant up to three (3) credits of

physical education/health credits for basic military training to satisfy physical education/health credit requirements for the veteran's curriculum, as applicable. Per VCCS Policy 6.4.0.3, the student development course (SDV 100, 101, or 108) may be waived for students who hold an associate degree or bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution.

- 4.3.4. Advanced standing credits may be awarded to a student as provided in the college's Advanced Standing Policy and Procedures (Policy #2109).
- 4.3.5. Within five working days of receiving a substitution or waiver request, the appropriate academic dean/director must indicate approval or disapproval via completion and submission of the *Petition for Course Substitution or Waiver* to the Office of the College Registrar along with supporting documentation.

4.4. Application of Credit

Approved petitions shall be recorded on the student's record in the Student Information System by the Office of the College Registrar within five working days of receipt. A copy of the decision (approved or unapproved) shall be sent to the student and scanned in ImageNow, within five working days of receipt.

4.5. Right to Appeal

If the academic dean/director does not approve the petition, the student may file an appeal to the Vice President within five working days of notification of the academic dean/director's decision. The student shall submit the initial request along with supporting documentation and rationale explaining the appeal request and provide any additional information that may be helpful in rendering a decision. The Vice President shall render a decision and notify the student in writing within five working days of receiving the student's appeal. The Vice President's decision is final.

5. Definitions

Substitution: A course completed at TCC or another regionally accredited college or university that meets the content and/or spirit of a required course in a student's program plan (or when petitions because of disability are approved). Courses approved as substitutions are reflected on the student's official transcript and appropriate academic credit is awarded.

Waiver: A course that does not need to be taken by the student because the course learning outcomes have been successfully attained through the student's demonstrated knowledge and/or skills. An approved waiver is not reflected on the student's official transcript and academic credit is not awarded, but the waiver is processed within SIS and appears on the student's academic advisement report. If sufficient replacement credits are not available, the student may be required to complete coursework to account for outstanding credit hours in the student's specified curriculum.

6. References

[Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#)
[Rehabilitation Act of 1973, section 504 as amended](#)
[TCC Curriculum Procedures Handbook](#)
[TCC Policy 2109 Advanced Standing](#)
[TCC Policy 2212 Student Development Course \(SDV\)](#)
[VCCS Policy Manual \(5.1\)](#)
[VCCS Policy Manual \(5.6.5.0.0\)](#)
[VCCS Policy Manual \(6.4.0.3\)](#)

7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility

The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer shall review this policy annually on the anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

8. Effective Date and Approval

This policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on June 29, 2017.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.
President

Daniel T. DeMarte, Ed.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs &
Chief Academic Officer

9. Review and Revision History

This initial version of this policy was approved April 7, 2016 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.

- Revision 1 imposes a deadline for students who seek financial assistance for a course substitution, and aligns this policy with Policy 2212 Student Development Course (SDV) by including the dean of student services in the approval flow for student development courses that are not overseen by an academic dean (i.e., SDV 100 and SDV 108).
 - Approved October 27, 2016 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.
- Revision 2 clarifies the deadline for students submitting a course substitution.
 - Approved June 29, 2017 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.