

# **Academic Governing Council Decision Report**

## **Course Substitutions and Course Waivers: Policy 7.19 December 18, 2024**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of Policy 7.19 is to ensure fairness for all students who need a course substitution or waiver to complete a degree/certificate, while maintaining the integrity of the degree/certificate that they receive. The policy seeks to reduce barriers for students as they complete their degree/certificate.

### **Decision**

On December 3, 2024, the AGC membership voted to approve the revised Policy 7.19: Course Substitutions and Course Waivers as part of a regularly scheduled review. The new policy statement follows:

Students are expected to complete their program curriculum outlined in the Grand Rapids Community College Catalog according to their plan of study and academic year. Programs are carefully organized and reviewed to ensure that the curriculum is staying abreast to our changing society. In some cases, a substitution or waiver can be used to assist students in overcoming barriers to complete a degree and/or a certificate.

- Course substitutions are approved in the context of the program requirements and must maintain the integrity of the program as substituted courses must provide a learning experience that is significantly similar to the required course.
- Course waivers are approved when the student has provided proof of their competencies/experiences for a particular course required for a program.
- Students who are granted substitutions or waivers must still earn the total credit hours required for their academic program.

### **Sponsors**

Co-Chairs: Christopher Remley (Associate Registrar, Student Records) and Lakisha Beck (Registrar, Student Records)

Committee Members: Sulari White (Assistant Professor, Academic Advisor), Meredith Harleton (Adjunct Faculty, Biological Sciences), and Judith Graham (Assistant Professor, Computer Information Systems)

### **Rationale/ Supporting Data**

The committee updated the policy as follows:

- Definitions were removed from the policy statement.
- The version of this policy approved in September 2021 had repetitive language for both the substitution and waiver sections. This language has been combined into a single section.
- The purpose of the policy is addressed in the updated policy statement.

The committee reviewing this policy:

- Sought and included input from AGC members at three meetings.
- Responded to any input from departments, programs, and individual faculty members

## Implications for Action

The policy committee recommends continuing to include the following in the definitions section of the policy document:

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

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

Student Records is currently working on updating the processes to request course substitutions and waivers. These processes should be included in the updated policy document.

## Date of Decision by AGC

Date passed by AGC: December 3, 2024

- **Yes:** Passed 48 yes, 3 proxy yes
- **No:** 0 no, 0 proxy no

## Section to be Completed by the Provost

### Evaluation Plan

The Course Substitutions and Course Waivers Policy will be evaluated according to the next scheduled review of the policy. This evaluation and review will include feedback from GRCC faculty members and College stakeholders as well as benchmarking from peer institutions.

Next scheduled review of policy: Academic Year 2027-28

### Response from Provost

I received this AGC Decision Report on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. I approve of the revised policy statement recommended by the AGC as outlined above. I am charging the Student Records Office, led by the College Registrar, to coordinate implementation of this policy revision. This will include updating the policy document, reviewing the procedures, and making updates to the procedures according to the implications for action outlined above. Additionally, the Records Office will update supporting reference materials related to this policy (for example, FAQ sheet, approval flow charts, and similar resources). This will be followed by an update to the Academic and Student Affairs Council once the policy document has been reviewed and updated. Additional steps of implementation will include working with the Provost's Office to update the policy document on the appropriate GRCC webpage and a communication plan about the updated policy document. Full implementation of this revised policy statement should be accomplished no later than the start of the next Academic Year in August 2025.



February 20, 2025