

Guidelines for Assessing Internal Course Substitution Forms

Internal substitutions are created when extenuating circumstances require one Goodwin course to be used in place of another Goodwin course to satisfy a requirement in a student's chosen program of study. Internal substitutions are created for individual students on a singular basis and will not be set as precedents for the award of credit for other students.

Upon assessment of an individual student's coursework, a program director or department chair may determine that a substitution of one Goodwin course for another is appropriate. Extenuating circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Current offerings in the course schedules do not allow a student to take a required course, thereby preventing completion of the program in accordance with the student's anticipated date of graduation. This would be restricted to the last two semesters before the anticipated date of graduation.
- Change in course code (where the student took the course under the old code, but the student's current program lists the new course code)
- Change in a student's major (where courses taken under one program of study are relevant to the new program of study)
- Assessment of a student's career goals (where an elective course may be more relevant than a core requirement)

Occasionally, a program director/department chair may request an internal course substitution that uses a course within their content area for another Goodwin course that falls under another department's content area. In this case, the curriculum director/program director responsible for that content area must also review the substitution form and approve or deny the substitution.

- For example, a student in Human Services may have taken a Psychology course (which falls under the Social Science Department) that covers statistical methods in research. The program director has asked that this PSY course be substituted for STAT 167. Because STAT 167 falls under the General Education Department, the curriculum director for STAT 167 would need to review the substitution. The curriculum director has the ability to approve or deny the substitution.

Please use the following guidelines for assessing course substitutions:

1. Please keep in mind that substitutions are, by definition, a one-time exception for a student, based on extenuating circumstances.
2. A substitution is not an equivalency; rather, like transfer substitutions, the content should be similar enough to justify one course being used in place of another.
3. Substitution forms should always have an explanation of the substitution in the "Justification" section of the form. This is the starting place for evaluation of the appropriateness of the substitution.
4. If additional information is required, program directors and curriculum directors can request the learning outcomes and/or syllabus for the course that is substituting the other course for comparison. (If we continue with the above example, the curriculum director for Statistics would request the learning outcomes or a syllabus from the Social Science Department for the Psychology course in question).

- a. Keep in mind that looking for a percentage match of the content for the two courses may not always be appropriate with substitutions, particularly when the extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration.
The course content should be similar enough to justify a substitution. For example, HSR 410 Research in Human Services is similar enough to HSC 420 Methods in Research and Practice, in regard to methods used and expected course outcomes, to justify a substitution.
 - b. If more information is still needed, a conversation between the requesting program director and the reviewing program director/curriculum director may be helpful in understanding the reasoning/justification behind the substitution.
5. The program directors and curriculum directors are the content experts and “guardians” of their courses. As such, the program director/curriculum director should, under no circumstances, feel obligated to sign the substitution form. Review of these substitutions ensures the integrity of the degrees that we award to our students. Alternatively, the circumstances which necessitated the substitution, as well as the student’s progress as a whole, should be carefully considered when evaluating the proposed substitution.