

Arkansas State University
Access and Accommodation Services
Course Substitution Policy

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, colleges must be willing to modify academic requirements so that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability, against a qualified applicant or student. Modifications must be considered to the greatest extent possible without compromising a student with a disability's course of study and without compromising the integrity of any student's certificate or degree. Therefore, qualified students with disabilities may request that appropriate course substitutions be considered as a programmatic accommodation. **Academic requirements directly related to licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory in relation to course substitution.**

On occasion, a student with a learning disability or other disabilities that present significant learning difficulties, may encounter a course(s) which the student is not capable of passing due to their disability condition (s). These courses usually are part of the core curriculum in the student's choice of major and are highly protected by accreditation criteria/requirements. When a situation arises where a student has given their "best effort" in a particular subject, but continually struggles to pass or even fails the course because of their disability, some type of action needs to be in place to assist these students. To this end, the Access and Accommodation Services office offers course substitutions to students who encounter this problem.

A course substitution allows a student to replace a course such as College Algebra or Foreign Language with a course of the same level (usually 1000 or 2000 level) of the student's advisor's and chair's choosing or approval. Course substitution is a very delicate matter which requires the collaborative work of several university personnel. The process for requesting and receiving a course substitution is as follows:

1. Student must present up-to-date information about their learning disability and/or mental capabilities. Information can come in the form of psycho-educational evaluations, Individualized Education Plans (IEP), or detailed letter from a psychologist, mental health counselor, licensed rehabilitation counselor, or other healthcare professional. The information will be reviewed by a committee and recommendations will be made regarding the need for additional documents or other matters.
2. The student requesting a course substitution must be registered with the Access and Accommodation Services office (A&AS). To complete the registration process, the student must:
 - a. Complete the online/paper registration form
 - b. Participate in an intake-interview with the director or a counselor in the A&AS office, and
 - c. Turn in appropriate documentation.
3. The student must complete a Course Substitution application, which includes submitting any and all information that might be supportive to their request. This includes but is not limited to: a letter written from the student detailing a history of struggling in a specific academic area, letters from instructors, records of tutoring sessions, statements from tutors, information about the frequency and duration of study periods.
4. The student's documentation will be reviewed by the Access and Accommodation Services office as required. An A-State Course Substitution Committee will review the student request and documentation for course substitution. Once the student's course substitution case is thoroughly reviewed by the committee, and discussed with the chair of the student's department major and advisor, a decision will be made and the student will be notified accordingly.

As it stands, the current course substitutions are as follows: College Algebra can be substituted for Critical Thinking (under University College) or Logic and Practical Reasoning (under Philosophy). As per the undergraduate bulletin, students can take Quantitative Reasoning instead of College Algebra if they

choose. This course can be found under mathematics. However, Quantitative Reasoning is not a course substitution, so students don't have to go through the course substitution process for this. If a student wishes to take Quantitative Reasoning instead of College Algebra, this has to be approved by the chair of their department major.

Course substitutions for foreign languages are currently being explored. Therefore, requests can be made but the approved course will have to be decided on by parties outside of the committee (i.e. department chair, advisor, academic affairs, etc.).

Access and Accommodation Services will notify the student, department chair, academic advisor, and the Registrar's Office if approval is granted.

Please contact the Access & Accommodations Services office for more information regarding the course substitution process.

Contact Information

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