

8.1.1P
ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS, ALTERATIONS, COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS/WAIVERS
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
BOARD REVIEW: DECEMBER 14, 1993
REVISED: NOVEMBER 14, 1995
REVISED: NOVEMBER 14, 2000
REVISED: NOVEMBER 12, 2003
REVISED: MARCH 11, 2008
TITLE 5: 56027

Sonoma County Junior College District has developed the following procedures to respond in a timely manner to accommodation service requests by students with disabilities. Accommodations fall into three categories:

1. Academic Adjustments
2. Course Requirement Alterations
3. Course Substitutions and/or Waivers

Academic Adjustments

Academic adjustments serve as bridges between the functional limitations of a person's disability and the curriculum and services of the college. Examples of adjustments include (but are not limited to) adapted furniture, note taking services, technological accommodations (i.e., specialized software), the use of auxiliary aids, and test taking facilitation. The goal of all academic adjustments is to minimize the effects of the disability on the student's ability to learn. The student requires the opportunity both to acquire information and to be evaluated in a manner allowing the student to fully demonstrate his/her knowledge of the subject. The provision of academic adjustments should not lower academic standards, fundamentally alter a course, or reduce the essential content or complexity of a course.

1. When a student makes a request for disability-related services, the student's disability is confirmed by a DSPS Specialist according to state mandated criteria. The Specialist, in consultation with the student, determines educational limitations based on the disability and authorizes appropriate academic adjustments. If the student is deemed ineligible for services and wishes to appeal this decision, he/she will follow District Procedure 2.7, Discrimination and Complaint.
2. With the consent of the student, instructors are informed of authorized academic adjustments. It is the responsibility of the instructor to allow auxiliary aids and/or arrange for the delivery of academic accommodations. If necessary, the Disability Resources Department will assist with the implementation. Typically, instructors arrange for alternative testing such as extended time, announce the need for a note taker and screen prospective note takers' notes, and adjust seating arrangements to accommodate a sign language interpreter. Typically, the Disability Resources Department provides interpreters, access to books on tape, specialized equipment, and facilitates alternative testing arrangements when the instructor is unable to do so.
3. If a student believes that an instructor is denying the academic adjustments that the district has agreed to provide, the process for appeal will begin with the student meeting with the instructor to discuss the issue. The student may invite the DSPS Specialist to this meeting, who may assist the student in achieving resolution of the matter. If the issue is not resolved the issue may be

referred to the District Compliance Officer for resolution. The District Compliance Officer will make an interim decision within two working days pending a final resolution.

Course Requirement Alterations

A course requirement alteration is a special kind of academic adjustment, in which an alternate means of fulfilling the course requirements and/or district policy is requested. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case based on the functional limitations of the student and the requirements of the class or policy. An example of a course requirement alteration is an alternate assignment for a deaf student in a Humanities class that requires a project based on listening to particular pieces of music.

1. When a student who is otherwise qualified for a class has functional limitations that preclude him/her from fulfilling course expectations or complying with District policy, consideration may be given to grant a course requirement alteration. The functional limitations are to be based on information from medical experts and/or diagnostic testing verified by the student's specialist.
2. The first step in requesting a course requirement alteration is for the student to meet with the instructor to discuss the issue. The student may invite the DSPS specialist to this meeting.
3. If the issue is not resolved, the student will submit a written request that addresses the following:
 - a. Evidence that standard academic adjustments do not sufficiently address the limitations of the student's disability.
 - b. Evidence that the request for this course requirement alteration is reasonable and will not fundamentally alter the essential academic objectives of the of the class requirements.

The student's request for a course requirement alteration will be evaluated by a review panel consisting of:

1. DSPS Specialist and/or DSPS Coordinator
2. District Compliance Officer or designee
3. Department Chair or designee, and instructor from the department of the course for which an adjustment is requested
4. Student at large appointed by Student Government

In order to expedite the process, the committee will convene in a timely manner. If a temporary resolution is necessary prior to the committee's action, the Compliance Officer will make an interim decision. The committee's recommendation and/or decision will be made by consensus*. If the student is dissatisfied with the committee's decision he/she may follow District Procedure 2.7, Discrimination and Complaint.

Course Substitutions and/or Waivers

1. When the severity of the disability of an otherwise qualified student precludes successful completion of a course required for the purpose of graduation or certificate completion from SRJC, despite an earnest effort on the part of the student to complete the course and despite the provision of academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, the student may request a course substitution and/or waiver of the course requirement as an alternative method of meeting the graduation requirement by doing the following: The student will submit a petition (obtained from the Admissions Office) requesting a course substitution and/or waiver of the course requirement as an alternative to meeting the graduation requirement, along with a letter written by the student addressing the following four criteria:
2. Documentation of disability with specific test scores and/or description of educationally related functional limitations in the academic area under discussion.

3. Evidence of the student's earnest effort to meet the graduation requirement, including:
 - a. A reasonable effort in attempting to meet the requirement, including but not limited to at least one attempt to complete the required course or its prerequisite.
 - b. Regular attendance, completion of all assignments.
 - c. Use of all appropriate and available academic accommodations such as test accommodations.
4. Evidence that the student is otherwise qualified:
 - a. Student's success in completing course work in all other areas required for the degree.
5. Evidence that the course in question is not essential to the student's course of study, major, transfer goals, or employment goals.

Students are also invited to submit any additional supporting documentation. The student's request for a course substitution or waiver will be evaluated by a panel consisting of:

- a. Dean of Admissions and Records
- b. District Compliance Officer
- c. DSPS Specialist
- d. Department Chair and an instructor from the department of the course for which a substitution is being requested and/or an additional instructor from the department or related area
- e. SRJC Counselor who is knowledgeable in the area of the student's program of study.

The committee's decision will be made by majority vote, with at least four (4) members voting. If the committee recommends a course substitution, the committee will request that the department in which the course being petitioned is housed identify courses that would be considered appropriate substitutions. Based on the totality of the evidence, the committee may recommend a waiver of the course requirement. If a waiver is granted, the student will remain responsible for obtaining the necessary number of units required for graduation. If the student is dissatisfied with the committee's decision for a course substitution waiver, he/she may follow Procedure 2.7, Discrimination and Complaint.

*Consensus, as used in this procedure, means that each individual on the panel either agrees with the decision or can live with it, and that it takes more than one dissenting member to block consensus. Should more than one member dissent, the panel must reconsider options.