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### **Accessibility-Related Course Substitution Policy**

Requests for Accessibility related course substitutions or significant alterations are considered in rare and limited circumstances when reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids and other academic supports do not allow students with documented disabilities full and equal access to the academic degree and certificate programs offered at Massachusetts Bay Community College.

Consistent with federal law and MassBay's commitment to both access and excellence, the College examines written requests for accessibility-related course substitutions on a case-by-case basis. Any substitution must, in the view of the College, maintain the essential standards required by the degree or certificate program in which the student is participating.

MassBay considers Accessibility-Related Course Substitutions:

- When an "otherwise qualified" student demonstrates an ability to complete successfully all other program requirements;
- When a student has a specific, well-documented and relevant disability that creates an artificial, insurmountable or unfair barrier to his or her ability to complete a non-essential aspect of the program;
- When the use of traditional accommodations, auxiliary aids and academic supports have not adequately met the student's need for equal access due to his or her disability;
- When a requested course substitution would not significantly undermine the academic integrity and/or educational standards of the degree or certificate program the student is pursuing.

Accessibility Related Course Substitutions, granted by MassBay, might not be accepted as meeting specific program requirements at senior institutions. The Equal Access Committee is not responsible for determining if the requested substitution or alteration would limit the student's future participation in seeking subsequent degrees and/or certification.

#### **Requesting a Course Substitution**

Any student interested in requesting a Accessibility Related Course Substitution or significant program alteration should begin the process by meeting with MassBay's Accessibility Resources Coordinator. The Accessibility Resources Coordinator will work with the student to prepare a formal portfolio that will include:

- The student's written request for a course substitution;
- A demonstration that the student is "otherwise qualified" -- typically an unofficial course transcript and the relevant degree or certificate curriculum guide;



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- A summary of the student's disability diagnosis and documentation, academic history, and (when appropriate) his or her use of traditional accommodations, auxiliary aids and academic supports.
- A detailed rationale for requesting a course substitution, as well as an explanation of the course chosen as a substitution and why it is a reasonable alternative.
- A reference to applicable civil rights laws, as well as best practice decision-making guidelines used at MassBay when considering disability-related course substitutions or significant program alterations.

MassBay's Accessibility Resources Coordinator will provide the substitution request, along with the data described above, to the Academic Dean in whose division the applicable degree or certificate program is housed. The dean will consider the substitution request and determine if it is a reasonable accommodation, and whether it maintains the academic standards and integrity of the program in which the student is participating.

The student may request a face-to-face hearing with the dean to articulate, clarify, explain or support further his or her rationale for requesting the disability-related course substitution.

The dean will determine whether the request maintains the academic integrity of the program, addresses the right to equal access, and if the substitution or alteration is necessary to remove an insurmountable barrier that would result in discrimination against the student with a disability.

The student has the right to appeal in writing the judgement of dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost within ten business days. The Provost will have 10 days to hear and decide the student's appeal.